Public Document Pack

Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 8 September 2026
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Membership: (Quorum 3)
Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Shane Bartlett, Matt Bell, Simon Clifford, Jack Jeanes, Steve Robinson, Clare Sutton, Gill Taylor and Ben Wilson

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset.

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services
Meeting Contact 01305 252234 - kate.critchel@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements please contact the Democratic & Governance Services Officer named above.

For easy access to all the council's committee agendas and minutes download the free public app called Modern.Gov for use on your iPad, Android, and Window tablet. Once downloaded select Dorset Council.

Agenda

Page No

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES 5 - 22

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2026.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below. Further information read [Public Participation - Dorset Council]

All submissions must be emailed in full to Kate.Critchel@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Thursday 3 September 2026.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g., the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to kate.critchel@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 8.30am on Thursday 3 September 2026.

Dorset Council Constitution – Procedure Rule 13

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

To consider passing the following recommendation:

Recommendation

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in item(s) No 11, 12 and 13 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered. (Any live streaming will end at this juncture).

Reason for taking the item in private
Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

11. **MODIFICATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONTRACTS OVER £500K: 0-19 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING AND SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES** 103 - 110

Para 3

To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention & Communities.

12. **COMMERCIAL PROPERTY DISPOSAL** 111 - 120

Para 3

To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets.

13. **GRANT FUNDING FROM LNMF FOR NITROGEN MITIGATION, POOLE HARBOUR CATCHMENT** 121 - 134

Para 3

To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning.

CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28 JULY 2026

Present: Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Jon Andrews, Shane Bartlett, Matt Bell, Simon Clifford, Steve Robinson, Clare Sutton, Gill Taylor and Ben Wilson

Apologies:

Also present: Cllr Piers Brown, Cllr Toni Coombs, Cllr Spencer Flower, Cllr Jack Jeanes, Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Craig Monks and Cllr Hannah Hobbs-Chell

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):
Jan Britton (Executive Director - Economy and Environment), Sean Cremer (Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer), Paul Dempsey (Executive Director - Children's Services), Jen Furnell (Corporate Director for Education and Learning), Julia Ingram (Director - Adult Social Care), Jonathan Mair (Director - Assurance (Monitoring Officer)), Christopher Whitehouse (Projects Team Manager), Jon Bird (Service Manager for Economic Development and Skills), Laura Cornette (Business Partner - Communities and Partnerships), Liz Crocker (Head of Strategy), Mike Garrity (Corporate Director for Planning), Katie Hale (Head of Revenues and Benefits) and Catherine Howe (Chief Executive)

31. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

32. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest to report.

33. **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from the public for this meeting.

34. **Questions from Councillors**

There were two questions from Councillor H Hobbs-Chell; these along with the responses are set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

35. **Forward Plan**

The draft Cabinet Forward Plan, together with the additional items added since the publication of the agenda, was received and noted.

36. **Dorset Council Annual Report 2025 - 2026**

The Leader of the Council set out the Annual Report, which provided an overview of the Council's performance and progress against the Council Plan over the past year. The report highlighted the achievements delivered despite significant financial pressures and increasing demand for services, and recognised the contribution of staff, councillors, partners, volunteers, businesses and local communities.

There had been significant progress across the Council's key priorities of housing, the economy, communities, and climate and nature, while also identifying areas for further improvement.

Cabinet Members took this opportunity to outline key achievements and challenges within their respective service areas.

In response to a question regarding the front door customer service, the Cabinet Member for Transformation, Customer & Workforce confirmed that he would investigate the issues raised and report back to the member concerned direct.

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr S Clifford

Decision

That the Dorset Council Annual Report for 2025-2026 be received and noted.

Reason for the decision
The annual report provided a summary of the council's performance and achievements over the past year and demonstrated delivery against the Council Plan priorities. Approval of the report allowed for it to be formally published as part of the council's commitment to transparency, accountability and effective governance.

37. **Dorset Local Visitor Economy Partnership Destination Management Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth and Strategic Assets presented a report on Dorset Local Visitor Economy Partnership Destination Management Plan (DLVEPDM). The Plan set out a 10-year strategy to establish Dorset as a welcoming, vibrant and year-round visitor destination. He further highlighted that the visitor economy was a significant driver of Dorset's economy, supporting businesses, employment, cultural and heritage assets, transport and infrastructure.

Cllr Bell seconded the recommendation and emphasised the wider benefits of a strong visitor economy, including its positive contribution to health, wellbeing and thriving communities.

In response to a question relating to funding, the Cabinet Member confirmed that no additional funding was required to develop the Destination Management Plan. However, the Cabinet Member for Resources advised that delivering the plan's longer-term ambitions may require additional investment. Any future funding proposals would be supported by a business case and considered through the Council's budget-setting process, including approval by Full Council as part of the 2027/28 budget.

Cabinet welcomed the report and emphasised the importance of increasing visitor spend throughout the year, reducing reliance on seasonal tourism, and ensuring Dorset remained an attractive destination for visitors of all budgets. Members also highlighted the need to reflect the distinct identities of communities across the Dorset Council area and welcomed the use of community engagement to help inform the development of the wider visitor economy.

It was proposed by Cllr R Biggs and seconded by Cllr M Bell

Decision

(a) That the Dorset Local Visitor Economy Partnership Destination Management Plan (DLVEPDM) be adopted and

(b) That additional funding be added to the 2027/2028 budget to meet the aspirations within the plan.

Note: additional funding to meet the aspirations of the Destination Management Plan would be subject to the agreement of Full Council as part of setting the 2027/28 budget.

(c) That the local offering be recognised in the wording of the DLVEPDM action plan.

Reason for the decision

The visitor economy affected tourists, businesses, employment opportunities, cultural and heritage assets, transport networks, and infrastructure across Dorset. The Destination Management Plan was developed collaboratively with businesses, stakeholders, and cultural partners to provide a clear strategic framework for the visitor economy. Adoption of the Plan supported the development of a more resilient, sustainable, and competitive visitor economy, delivering benefits to communities, businesses, and visitors across Dorset throughout the year.

38. **SEND Reform Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education presented a report on the final Dorset SEND Reform Plan that had been submitted to the DfE on 19 June 2026.

The plan had been developed through extensive partnership working with education, health and council colleagues, alongside children and young people with SEND and their families. Subject to DfE approval, which was expected in September, the plan would unlock significant financial support through the High Needs Block Stability Grant. Implementation was already underway, supported by £1.8 million of DfE funding for the Dorset Expertise Offer, with progress overseen by the independently chaired Dorset Alliance for Inclusion and Excellence in Education.

In response to questions regarding the higher rate of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) growth in Dorset compared with the national average, members were advised that the exact reasons for this increase were not yet fully understood. However, Dorset's rural characteristics were likely to be a significant factor. Many children in Dorset beginning their education in small, close-knit primary schools where their needs were well understood and effectively supported. Transitioning to larger secondary schools presented additional challenges, and both families and schools may seek the reassurance of an EHCP to ensure appropriate support was in place.

To address this, the council was developing a range of initiatives, including Inclusion Hubs and the Experts at Hand service, delivered through the locality-based Family Help model. These were intended to provide earlier access to specialist advice and support, strengthen inclusive practice in mainstream schools, and give families and education settings greater confidence that children's needs could be met effectively without necessarily requiring a statutory plan.

Responding to further detailed questions, the Cabinet Member advised that it was not possible to provide a full response at the meeting and invited the member concerned to submit their questions directly after the meeting so that a detailed response could be provided. However, she highlighted that specialist schools remained the right provision for some children and young people, while others could achieve better outcomes in mainstream schools with the appropriate support in place.

She emphasised that improving workforce skills and teacher training would be critical to the success of the reforms, noting that the DfE had set aside funding to support workforce development. The Executive Director also acknowledged concerns that Inclusion Hubs could unintentionally become a route to exclusion, but assured members that these risks were recognised and that mitigating actions would be put in place. The council would also continue to support and invest in its special school sector as an important part of the overall SEND system.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and seconded by Cllr S Clifford

Decision

(a) That the content of Dorset's Local Area SEND Reform Plan (2026-2029) be noted.

(b) That the plan submitted to the Department for Education be endorsed.

(c) That the proposed programme of reform and associate transformation activity be supported.

(d) That further updates on delivery, performance and financial impact be brought back to Cabinet at key milestones.

Reason for the decision

The Reform Plan was a key strategic priority for the Council and a mandatory requirement under the Government's SEND reform programme. Its approval and delivery would help address growing financial pressures, improve outcomes for children and young people, increase local educational provision, and reduce reliance on costly out-of-area placements, creating a more sustainable and inclusive SEND system.

39. **Dorset Council Local Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement advised that, in response to changes introduced by the Government to the local plan-making system, Dorset Council was required to transition to the new-style Local Plan framework, with a timetable a 30-months. He noted that Dorset was not alone in facing this challenge, with many local planning authorities across the country working to adapt to the new requirements.

In response to comments, the Cabinet Member acknowledged members' frustrations regarding the time taken to develop a new Local Plan and recognised the importance of maintaining momentum as implementation progressed.

It was proposed by Cllr S Bartlett and seconded by Cllr N Ireland

Decision

(a) That Cabinet agrees to progress the Dorset Council Local Plan via the new plan-making system;

(b) That the governance arrangements outlined in the report be agreed, delegating the detailed arrangements to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement in consultation with the Corporate Director for Planning;

(c) That the indicative timetable for the production of the local plan as set out in Appendix 1 (of the Cabinet report – 28 July 2026) be agreed with the detail being delegated to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement and the Corporate Director for Planning, to review and vary this timetable and update and publish when necessary;

(d) That the content and publication of the formal Notice of Intent to Commence Plan Making included in Appendix 2 (of the Cabinet report – 28 July 2026) be agreed;

(e) That the outline of the focused Scoping Consultation and Consultation Strategy in Appendix 3 (of the Cabinet report – 28 July 2026) be noted with the detail to be agreed with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement;

(f) That the spend of up to £1,000,000, initially funded from Local Plan Reserves, to bring in additional support to the project as and when needed, be agreed.

Reason for the decision
To put the necessary arrangements in place to enable the Dorset Council Local Plan to be prepared as quickly and efficiently as possible under the new plan-making system.

40. **Dorset History Centre - approval sought to proceed with development of capital project**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration Economic Growth and Strategic Assets sought approval to proceed with the development of the "Past Lives, Future Proofed" project in preparation for the stage 2 application to the National Lottery heritage Fund in November 2027. The project would extend the working life of the Dorset History Centre by decades.

It was proposed by Cllr R Biggs and seconded by Cllr M Bell

Decision

(a) That the Dorset History Centre's request to proceed with externally funded development work on its capital project Past Lives, Future Proofed further to the anticipated submission of a Stage 2 application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in November 2027 for £3.8 million and subsequent Delivery Phase of the project whose total value over both phases is £5.28 million, be approved.

(b) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth and Strategic Assets to approve spend decisions, including procurement, contract award, and payment of invoices, within the Total Scheme Budget for the Dorset History Centre capital project as detailed in paragraph 4.2, of the Cabinet report of 28 July 2026.

All activity will be undertaken in accordance with Dorset Council's Contract Procedure Rules, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation and applicable law. Procurement of services for the Delivery Phase of the project is contingent upon a successful Stage 2 application to NLHF.

(c) That Dorset Council acts as financial guarantor: Dorset History Centre intends to bridge the current budget gap of £110,000 (see para 4.3 of the Cabinet report of 28 July 2026) by fundraising from a variety of sources.

In the event that this proved challenging, Dorset Council will meet the budget shortfall to ensure the viability of the project and the securing of the large capital grant from National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Reason for the decision
To support and endorse the development of a project that would result in significant inward investment in Dorset's cultural infrastructure through the provision of capital improvements to Dorset History Centre and a pan-Dorset public engagement programme.

41. **Procurement - Dorset Highways Contractor Resource (Labour Top up) Framework**

Cabinet considered a report that sought approval to amend the estimated Dorset Council total spend over the contract term from £20 million to £60 million, while retaining the existing eight-year contract period. Members were advised that the originally approved value did not accurately reflect the intended scope and potential usage of the framework and could unintentionally constrain its use, create compliance risks, disrupt service provision, and necessitate an unplanned procurement exercise. The amendment would ensure that the procurement documentation accurately reflected the framework's intended value and provide continued flexibility to meet future service requirements.

Cabinet unanimously supported the recommendation.

It was proposed by Cllr J Andrews and seconded by Cllr C Sutton

Decision

That the 'Estimated DC Total Spend over Contract Term' value of £20m as set out in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report of 12 March 2024 be replaced with a value of £60m.

Reason for the decision
To ensure compliant spend in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

42. **Crisis and Resilience Fund**

The Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention and Communities presented the report and its recommendations, noting that the item had also been considered by People & Health Overview Committee on 6 July 2026. The Crisis and Resilience Fund had replaced the Household Support Fund and the report set out the proposed approach in detail to strengthen and develop the Council's longer-term resilience offer.

It was proposed by Cllr M Bell and seconded by Cllr S Clifford

Decision

That:

(a) Interim governance of the Crisis and Resilience Fund programme be provided through the Communities and Prevention Delivery Board, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Housing.

(b) An annual report on Crisis and Resilience Fund spend and impact be presented to the People and Health Scrutiny Committee.

(c) The proposals set out in Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report of 28 July 2026, for the allocation of Crisis and Resilience Fund funding to the resilience services and projects identified, be agreed.

Reason for the decision
To provide clear interim governance and decision-making for the Crisis and Resilience Fund through the Communities and Prevention Delivery Board, as part of the council's senior leadership delivery arrangements.

43. **E-Scooter Micromobility Rental Service**

The Cabinet Member for Place Services set out the report and its recommendation. It presented an opportunity for Dorset Council to participate in the nationally recognised e-scooter trial, which sought to explore how micromobility could support and enhance the wider transport network. The trial would also provide a safe and regulated alternative to existing unlawful e-scooter use, expand travel options for residents and visitors, and contribute to the Council's environmental and economic priorities.

He further advised that this proposal had also been considered and was supported by the Place and Resources Overview Committee on 6 July 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr J Andrews and seconded by Cllr N Ireland

Decision

(a) That the commencement of the proposed e-scooter rental service be approved, comprising:

Weymouth, Dorchester, Portland and Chickerell, through the appointment of a competitively procured operator; and
Corfe Mullen and Upton, through an extension of the existing Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) e-scooter rental scheme.

(b) That officers be authorised to co-produce geofencing arrangements with Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils, ensuring that local concerns and priorities are reflected in the scheme design, and to engage with the Department for Transport regarding the provision of appropriate warning signage to promote public awareness and safety.

Reason for the decision
The introduction of regulated e-scooter rental schemes supports Dorset Council's adopted strategic objectives, including those set out in the Local Transport Plan, Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Sustainable Transport Plan.

44. **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Working Group - Final Report and Recommendations to Cabinet**

Prior to consideration of the following item, the Director of Assurance and Governance apologised to the Chair of People & Health Scrutiny Committee (PHSC) and the Leader of the Council regarding the timing of the report. He explained that, in accordance with Council procedures, the report should have been presented to Cabinet earlier. Following the meeting of the People & Health Scrutiny Committee in April, formal notification of the Committee's recommendations should have been sent to the Leader of the Council, triggering the two-month period for Cabinet consideration. This process was not followed, and the required timescales were not met. The Director indicated that measures had now been put into place to prevent a recurrence.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education presented a report responding to the recommendations made by the People and Health Scrutiny Committee. She proposed that Cabinet accept all the recommendations, as they were broadly consistent with the service's existing direction of travel and the improvements already being implemented, except for recommendation two. In relation to that recommendation, it was proposed that a phased approach be adopted.

The Chair of People & Health Scrutiny Committee thanked all those involved in the review. She outlined the process undertaken by the working group as part of its investigation, including the inquiry day, and summarised the report's key findings and recommendations for Cabinet's consideration.

In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that further work was required to improve the timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and achieve the target of issuing 75% within the statutory 20-week timescale. She highlighted that performance had improved significantly during the period reviewed by the Committee, increasing from 22% in September

2025 to 58% in Quarter 1 of 2026/27, exceeding the latest national average of 46%. The Cabinet Member also noted that delivery of the EHCP process was dependent on contributions from health partners and education providers, which could affect overall performance.

While supporting continued service improvement, the Cabinet Member advised that a target of 75% (in relation to the PHSC recommendation 2) was not considered realistically achievable on a consistent basis at this stage. It was therefore proposed that Cabinet adopt an initial target of 65%, with a stretch target of 75% from January 2027, following the implementation and embedding of the service improvements set out in the report.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Scrutiny Working Group for their work and effort on this matter and welcomed their continued support and challenge going forward.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and seconded by Cllr J Andrews

Decision

That the responses to the recommendations of the People and Health Scrutiny Committee, made on 16 April 2026 following its inquiry into Education, Health and Care Assessment and Planning, be agreed.

Reason for the decision
The Scrutiny Committee's recommendations were consistent with actions that the service had already implemented or had identified as necessary to improve the experiences of children and families accessing the service. The service recognised and accepted the Scrutiny Committee's role in holding it to account for performance in this area and welcomed the recommendations as supporting ongoing improvement activity.

45. **Youth Justice Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Children Services, Families and Education presented the report, noting that it had previously been considered by the People and Health Overview Committee on 6 July 2026.

During discussion, several detailed questions were raised. The Cabinet Member advised that full responses could not be provided during the meeting and invited the member concerned to submit their questions afterwards so that a detailed written response could be provided.

The Cabinet Member then invited the Head of Service for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service to comment on a few of the issues raised. It was noted that:

- A task and finish group was currently reviewing the membership of the Board, including opportunities to strengthen voluntary sector involvement and ensure that victims' voices were more effectively represented.
- The rate of younger children entering the youth justice system for the first time continued to be closely tracked and monitored.
- In relation to gateway crimes, the service was working closely with Dorset Police and Community Safety colleagues to develop and deliver appropriate intervention plans.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and seconded by Cllr N Ireland

Recommendation to Full Council

That the Youth Justice Plan 2026/2027 be approved.

Reason for the recommendation
Youth Justice Services were required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which should be approved by the Local Authority for that Youth Justice Service. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service worked across both Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Approval was therefore sought from both Dorset Council and from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

46. **Coombe House School - Future Site Options**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education presented the report and recommendations of the Dorset Centre of Excellence Shareholder Committee. The recommendations sought Cabinet's support for further work to be undertaken to explore options for the wider site and associated assets, including Coombe House School.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and seconded by Cllr N Ireland

Decision

(a) That the Executive Director for Children's Services work with the Company to model the impact of the 2026 Schools' White Paper and the impact of the proposals relating to Osprey Quay.

(b) That the Chief Executive establishes a working group to review the commercial options for the site, with the Company.

(c) Cabinet recognised the need for a short-term investment plan for the site to ensure it was being maintained, (whilst acknowledging the work required in respect of the long-term plan for the site) and instructs the

Executive Director Economy and Environment, to prepare the short-term investment plan.

Reason for the decision
The Council needed to establish its future approach to the use and investment of the wider site and asset.

47. **Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 - First Review**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement presented a report on the adoption of the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 First Review following an independent examination.

It was proposed by Cllr S Bartlett and seconded by Cllr N Ireland

Decision

(a) That the Council ‘makes’ the Modified Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan2019-2031 (as set out in Appendix A of the Cabinet report of 28 July 2026) part of the statutory development plan for the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Area.

(b) That the Council offers its congratulations to Shaftesbury Town Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group for producing a successful neighbourhood plan review.

Reason for this decision
To formally make the modified neighbourhood plan part of the statutory development plan for the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Area. In addition, to recognise the significant amount of work undertaken by the Town Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group in preparing the plan review and to congratulate the Council and the Group on their success.

48. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items considered at the meeting.

49. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business considered at the meeting.

50. **Coombe House School - Future Site Options**

The exempt appendices associated with agenda item 17 “Coombe House School – Future Site Options” were not discussed at the meeting. The report was considered in open business as set out in min no. xx to these minutes.

Appendix 1 - Councillor Questions

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 8.48 pm

Chair

....

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet 28 July 2026

Questions from Councillors

1. Question from Cllr H Hobbs-Chell

Youth employment

We have all seen the statistics and renewed interest in youth unemployment at a national level, and indeed I have read with interest the latest statistics release in June from the House of Commons. This release showed that nationally unemployment increased, employment rate down, compared to the previous year. Whilst the figures are not currently at the peak historically, the trends are clear – increasing youth unemployment is occurring. This makes for important reading, and, when combined with the SEND reforms coming forward, the cost-of-living difficulties, and the housing crisis faced, I know I am not alone in feeling a renewed sense of duty to do all we can to support our young people to have the opportunities, life experiences and feeling of agency as they embark upon adult life. Furthermore, we as a Council recently published our Economic Development strategy and are working on our Local plan and Design code, housing strategy and delivery, family hub and best start in life reforms, and responding to the SEND reforms as previously mentioned. In all these conversations, youth unemployment, opportunities, and the statistics on youth retention have been topics of great concern and attention, and we all have spoken about the need to examine and support this. At a front-line level, both as a Councillor and in my role as the chair of our food and essentials bank and community support organisation in Ferndown, am acutely aware of the growing problem facing our young people who are desperate to find paid employment, but cannot find the job vacancies, or struggle with interviews, and find that jobs are incredibly oversubscribed and competitive. This is despite young people actively volunteering and having additional skills and experience above and beyond formal education often. Whilst at a local level I am working with the business community to support this, I feel there is a wonderful opportunity for Dorset Council to proactively seek improvements and better outcomes for our young people, in partnership with businesses and the VCS sector. I am therefore asking if the Cabinet lead for Economic Development, and/or other members of the cabinet as best fits, as well as group leaders or nominated representatives, would commit to an initial round table discussion (tor to be decided pre round table) with business leaders in Dorset and other organisations supporting youth employment and skills, to examine the issues and opportunities we have within Dorset?

Response from Cllr Richard Biggs;

Thank you, Councillor.

You are absolutely right to highlight the importance of youth employment and the challenges many young people face as they move into adulthood.

Supporting young people into employment, training and enterprise remains a key priority for Dorset Council and our partners. We recognise that barriers can include skills development, transport, housing affordability, confidence and, for some, additional support needs.

Importantly, Dorset already benefits from a strong partnership approach through the recently approved Local Skills Improvement Plan 2026–29, which was developed through extensive engagement with employers, education and training providers, Dorset Council, BCP Council, employer representative organisations and workforce development partners. The Plan provides a clear framework for addressing current and future skills needs across the area.

Whilst I welcome continued discussion on this important issue, my view is that our priority should be the successful delivery of the actions already identified within the Plan. The focus now needs to be on implementation, accountability and outcomes rather than producing additional strategies. This is an area where scrutiny, the Dorset Skills Board and partners all have an important role to play in monitoring progress and ensuring that commitments translate into real opportunities for young people.

We should also recognise the opportunities presented through devolution. Greater local influence over skills, employment support, economic development and investment has the potential to strengthen the alignment between education, training and employer demand, helping us create more pathways into good-quality jobs and careers for Dorset residents.

I am committed, through my role on the Dorset Skills Board and through the Council's wider economic growth agenda, to working with partners to ensure that young people are equipped with the skills, experience and opportunities they need to succeed.

Supporting young people into employment is not only important for individual life chances but is critical to Dorset's future prosperity, productivity and resilience.

2. Question from Cllr H Hobbs-Chell

School crossing patrol

Whilst much has been discussed and debated recently with regards the school crossing patrol in Ferndown, and notwithstanding the huge importance of children’s safety, I would like to take the opportunity to be able to clarify some of the facts which appear to have become unclear during this process. For clarity, the crossings do not sit directly in my ward, however, having taken advice, due to their setting within the schools that serve all of Ferndown, I have a responsibility and desire to reflect and support the considerable number of residents from my ward for whom the schools are their education point.

I recognise and thank the Ferndown North ward members Cllrs Lugg and Parkes for campaigning for many years for permanent crossing points at Church Road, and also thank this Cabinet and Cabinet lead for recognising the urgency of need at this site and delivering the over quarter million pound investment in safer crossing points for both our young people and indeed all our residents, at any time of the day or night, making this stretch much more age and pedestrian friendly. I also wholeheartedly thank Sarah and all our other school crossing patrol officers for their dedication and commitment to ensuring our young people are looked after. Specifically, please could you provide clarity on the following:

Dorset Council have previously advised that it is on the advice of the Police that Dorset Council are not able to continue with a permanent school crossing patrol at this site with the installation of 2 permanent crossing points. Please could you confirm this to be the case, and publish the written advice in the written response to this question?

Confirm commitment to continuing to examine the possibility of a School Street at Mountbatten or Church Road, a school walking bus, and speed reductions at school drop off times, as deemed to be appropriate and necessary to ensure safe travel, (I am grateful to the Cabinet lead and officers as I know this feasibility work is already underway having discussed and sought assistance with this myself)

Outline the specific safety concerns and confusion relating to having a school crossing patrol on a zebra crossing, or advise whom I can contact within the Police to advise on this

Confirm how many near misses and accidents within 50m of either crossing have been reported since the introduction of the permanent crossings.

Confirm that as part of the consultation with ward members, local partners, and the public, the removal of the school crossing patrol from September 2026 was included as currently stated on the Dorset Council web page entry. As part of this, could you confirm the public outcome of the consultation responses from the public.

Response from Cllr Jon Andrews

I thank Cllr Hobbs-Chell for these questions, which I know are important to local families and the wider Ferndown community.

Dorset Council's policy is that School Crossing Patrols do not operate at zebra crossings. Drivers already have a legal duty to stop at a zebra crossing when someone is crossing or waiting to cross. The zebra crossing therefore already provides a controlled place to cross. We do not operate a School Crossing Patrol at the same location, and this approach is supported by Dorset Police's Road Safety team. This avoids having two different crossing arrangements at the same point and provides a clear and consistent approach for drivers and pedestrians.

I will provide the written advice received from Dorset Police as part of my written response, where it can legally be shared.

I'm aware that Cllr Lugg has raised a near miss with our Road Safety team. Other than that, since the zebra crossings were introduced, there have been no recorded injury collisions and no near misses formally reported to Dorset Council within 50 metres of either crossing. However, both Dorset Council and Dorset Police recognise the importance of safe driving around schools apart from an email from one of the ward councillors. We will continue to work together during the next school term to monitor the situation, consider any concerns that are raised and support enforcement activity where appropriate.

The permanent zebra crossings were installed through an investment of more than £250,000 to improve safety. Unlike a School Crossing Patrol, which operates only at certain times of the school day, the crossings are available for pupils, parents, residents and other pedestrians throughout the day and night.

The decision to remove the School Crossing Patrol followed a change in Council policy, supported by Dorset Police about the operation of School Crossing Patrols at zebra crossings. As the consultation on the crossing scheme took place before this policy position was adopted, the future operation of the School Crossing Patrol was not included in the consultation and was not something people were asked to comment on. The policy change was subsequently communicated to ward members and the public.

The consultation related to the introduction of the permanent crossings. Feedback received during that process was considered before the scheme was finalised. A summary of the consultation findings is available in the published consultation documents.

We remain committed to looking at other ways to improve safety around Ferndown schools. This includes exploring the potential for a School Street scheme, supporting the development of a walking bus where there is local interest and capacity, and considering any request for a 20mph speed limit, either at school times or on a permanent basis, in line with Dorset Council policy.

The safety of children travelling to and from school remains our priority. We will continue to work with schools, parents, councillors, residents and Dorset Police to identify practical measures that support safe and active travel.

The Cabinet Forward Plan - October 2026 to January 2026
(Publication date – 28 AUGUST 2026)

Explanatory Note:
This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Cabinet and Council. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions
Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions of the Cabinet which are likely to -

(a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (***Thresholds - £500k***); or
(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

In determining the meaning of *"significant"* for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Cabinet Members and Portfolios 2026/27

Nick Ireland	Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Communications, Performance & Safeguarding
Richard Biggs	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets
Jack Jeanes	Place Services
Shane Bartlett	Planning and Planning Enforcement
Simon Clifford	Resources& Finance
Matt Bell	Public Health, Prevention & Communities
Steve Robinson	Adult Social Care & Health
Clare Sutton	Children, Families & Education
Gill Taylor	Housing & Homelessness
Ben Wilson	Transformation, Customer & Workforce

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
2026					
October 2026					
Review of Financial Assessment and Care Contributions Policy **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** The policy was due to be reviewed and to update the policy in line with some legal challenges to the Care Act 2014 since its implementation. In doing so we have also amalgamated the Financial Assessment and Care Contributions policy and the Deferred Payment Agreement Policy and the two impact significantly on each other.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 6 Oct 2026**	People and Health Overview Committee 21 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health, Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Communications, Performance & Safeguarding	*Nicola Fowler, Financial Assessments Team Manager nicola.fowler@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)*
Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** This is the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report 25/26 detailing the Partnership's activity from April 2025-March 2026 and is for Cabinet's information.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 6 Oct 2026**		Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education	*Megan Cameron-Brown, Head of Quality Assurance and Partnerships megan.cameron-brown@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director - Children's Services (Paul Dempsey)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Temporary Accommodation Policies **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** These provides the oversight regarding factors that need to be taken into consideration when securing temporary accommodation for households. The policies include: Voids Placement Sourcing and Rent	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **6 Oct 2026**		Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness	*Sharon Attwater, Head of Housing* *sharon.attwater@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Housing, Prevention and Communities (Sam Crowe)*
Transforming Public Buses and Community Transport **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** A comprehensive review of the Transformation Management Office's (TMO) public buses and community transport options and opportunities. The review sets out the case for change, explores a range of delivery options, and identifies a preferred approach to be taken forward.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **6 Oct 2026**		Cabinet Member for Place Services	*Owen Clark, Strategic and Policy Team Manager* *owen.clark@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Re-procurement - Enforcement Agent Provision **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** Dorset Council re-procurement of a council wide contract provision for the engagement of required enforcement agent provisions.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **6 Oct 2026**		Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance	*Katie Hale, Head of Revenues and Benefits* *katie.hale@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery (Lisa Cotton)*
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre Rollback Scheme (Hensleigh House Acquisition) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** The Cabinet Report requires a decision on the proposal to use the Environment Agency 'Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme' (CTAP) external funding, to acquire the 'Hensleigh House' property in Charmouth as a future relocation site for the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre (CHCC), a community asset projected to be lost to coastal erosion by 2055.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **6 Oct 2026**		Cabinet Member for Place Services	*Jack Wiltshire, Corporate Director for Highways and Engineering* *jack.wiltshire@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)*
Mampitts Community Hub Progress Update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open**	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **6 Oct 2026**		Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement	*Andrew Galpin, Infrastructure & Delivery Planning Manager* *andrew.galpin@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Report providing an update on the delivery of the Mampitts Community Hub, Shaftesbury against the funding award milestones set by Dorset Council Cabinet on 9 October er 2026 and 15 October 2024.					*Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)*
Parking Review and Strategy **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Part exempt** To consider the Parking Strategy for Dorset Council.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 6 Oct 2026**	Place and Resources Overview Committee 9 Jul 2026	Cabinet Member for Place Services	*David Rosselli, Transport & Parking Strategy Lead david.rosselli@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Jack Wiltshire, Corporate Director for Highways and Engineering jack.wiltshire@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)*
Dorset Community Safety Plan 2026 - 2029 **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** New statutory three-year community safety plan for the Dorset Council area. The plan has been written and agreed by the Council and partners through the Dorset Community Safety Partnership and now requires formal adoption by Dorset Council.	**Decision Maker Dorset Council**	**Decision Date 22 Oct 2026**	Cabinet 6 Oct 2026 People and Health Overview Committee 21 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness	*Andy Frost, Service Manager for Community Safety andy.frost@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Housing, Prevention and Communities (Sam Crowe)*
November 2026					

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
September 2026 (period 6) financial management report 26/27 **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To consider the period 6 financial management report 2026/27.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 10 Nov 2026**		Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance	*Sean Cremer, Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer) sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Sian Hedger, Deputy s151 Officer sian.hedger@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)*
Dog Related Public Space Protection Order 2027 **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** A Cabinet decision is required whether to approve the New Order, following a recommendations report from the Place and Resources Overview Committee in Oct 2026.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 10 Nov 2026**	Place and Resources Overview Committee 1 Oct 2026	Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention & Communities	*Janet Moore, Service Manager for Environmental Protection Janet.Moore@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Housing, Prevention and Communities (Sam Crowe)*
December 2026					
Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** To consider the adoption of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 8 Dec 2026**	Place and Resources Overview Committee 19 Nov 2026	Cabinet Member for Place Services	*Russell Goff, Senior Ranger russell.goff@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Mid year performance update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To provide an update on mid-year progress in council plan delivery and broader organisational health.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 8 Dec 2026**		Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Communications, Performance & Safeguarding	*Liz Crocker, Head of Strategy liz.crocker@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Chris Heighway, Performance and Analytics Team Manager chris.heighway@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Chief Executive*
Adult Directorate CQC Inspection Findings and Improvement Plan **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** To provide Cabinet with an overview of the recent CQC inspection of Adult Services and the directorates ambitions for improvement.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 8 Dec 2026**	People and Health Overview Committee 30 Nov 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	*Amy-Jane White, Quality Assurance and Programme Lead amy-jane.white@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)*
February 2027					
Crisis and Resilience Fund **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** The policy to back up the Crisis and Resilience Fund Governance.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 2 Feb 2027**		Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention & Communities	*Laura Cornette, Business Partner - Communities and Partnerships Laura.cornette@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery (Lisa Cotton)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
December 2026 Quarter 3 financial management plan 2026/2027 **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To consider the Quarter 3 financial management plan 2026/27.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **2 Feb 2027**		Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance	*Sean Cremer, Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer) sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Sian Hedger, Deputy s151 Officer sian.hedger@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)*
Budget & Medium-term financial plan strategy report (MTFP) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** To consider the medium Term Financial (MTFP) and budget strategy.	**Decision Maker** **Dorset Council**	**Decision Date** **11 Feb 2027**	Cabinet 2 Feb 2027	Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance	*Sean Cremer, Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer) sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Sian Hedger, Deputy s151 Officer sian.hedger@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer*

Private/Exempt Items for Decision
Each item in the plan above marked as ‘private’ will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
   (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet

8 September 2026

July 2026 financial management report 2026/27

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr S Clifford, Finance & Capital Strategy

Local Councillor(s):
All

Senior Leadership Team:
S Cremer, Director Resources, Section 151 Officer

Report Author: Lee House
Job Title: Acting Head of Finance Business Partnering
Tel: 01305 225032
Email: lee.house@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

1. Executive Summary:

1.1. This report sets out Dorset Council's financial position at the end of July 2026, Period 4 of the 2026/27 financial year. It provides Cabinet with an assessment of the forecast revenue outturn, the delivery of savings and transformation plans, the main financial risks facing the Council, and the capital programme changes requiring approval.

1.2. At this stage of the year, the Council is forecasting a net revenue overspend of £8.136m, representing 1.7% of the approved net budget of £466m. This is a material pressure, but one that remains within a scale that can be managed through focused action, continued budget discipline and the careful use of reserves if ultimately required. The priority is therefore to reduce the forecast through in-year controls.

1.3. The principal drivers of the forecast overspend are demand-led pressures in services supporting vulnerable adults and children, alongside delays in the delivery of savings associated with the Our Future Council transformation programme. Children's Services is forecasting an overspend of £3.048m, primarily linked to the cost and availability of external residential and specialist placements for children in care. Adult Social Care is forecasting an overspend of £3.022m, driven principally by higher activity and increasing average package costs. In addition, £4.000m of savings linked to transformation are currently forecast as delayed with some benefits now expected to be achieved in future years.

1.4. These pressures are partly offset by forecast underspends across a number of areas, including Modernisation and Customer Delivery, Capital Financing, the Chief Executive's Office and Resources. The forecast therefore reflects both the structural cost pressures affecting local government nationally and the Council's continuing capacity to manage elements of its own cost base through vacancy management, service-level controls and active financial oversight.

1.5. The financial position should be interpreted in the context of a wider operating environment in which local authorities continue to experience sustained growth in demand, market price pressures and uncertainty around future funding. The current risk is assessed as medium because the forecast overspend is below 2% of the net budget and remains potentially manageable. However, the residual risk is assessed as high, reflecting the continuing structural pressures in adult social care, children's social care, SEND and the Dedicated Schools Grant.

1.6. Cabinet is asked to note the forecast financial position and associated risks, including progress on savings and transformation delivery. Cabinet is also asked to approve additions to the capital programme for the Wimborne Community Sports Hub and Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5, and to note the number and extent of contract exemptions. The position will continue to be monitored through monthly Directorate and Senior Leadership Team budget management arrangements, with further reporting to Cabinet as the year progresses and as the Medium-Term Financial Plan is updated.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

2.1. Note SLT's forecast as July 2026 including progress in addressing demand for services and on the transformational and efficiency savings incorporated into the budget.

2.2. Approve the addition of the Wimborne Community Sports Hub capital budget (£2.289m) to the Capital Programme (Business case in Appendix C).

2.3. Approve the addition of the Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5 (The Cobb) capital budget (£8.365m) to the Capital Programme.

2.4. Note the decision to extend the Mosaic contract which required a retrospective update to a September 2023 Cabinet record of decision (Appendix B)

2.5. Note the number and extent of contract exemptions. (Appendix B)

3. Reason for Recommendation:

3.1. Although the report is primarily for noting the outturn position, Cabinet approval is required for the changes to the Capital programme.

3.2. The report does not seek Cabinet approval of the forecast of the financial position at 31 July 2026. The information contained in this report is critical in informing the refresh of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the development of the 2027/28 and 2028/29 budget strategy.

3.3. It is important for Cabinet to review the risks the organisation now faces and to consider areas where it wishes to make strategic investments and/or to repurpose and prioritise its reserves to facilitate these aims.

3.4. It is also important for Cabinet to understand the developing financial performance and projected position this year. This ensures that resources are deployed to deliver the Council's services in line with the Council Plan priorities, and so that the organisation remains in good financial health and that service delivery remains sustainable. The Council makes a significant contribution in supporting employment, training and economic prosperity, as well as being a provider and commissioner of critical public services. Balancing all of these strategic, and often, competing priorities is a responsibility taken extremely seriously.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Financial implications are covered within the body of this report.

5. Climate Implications

5.1 The forecast includes revenue and capital spend which support the delivery of the Council's climate and ecology strategies.

6. Well-being and Health Implications

6.1 The Council has total service budgets of £466m of which £304m (65%) is spent within the directorates responsible for adult social care, children social care and housing which aims to improve aspects of well-being and health across Dorset. Further resources are available through the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant allocation of £18.130m.

7. Other Implications

7.1 None specific.

Risk Assessment

8.1 Having considered the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

8.2 Current Risk: Medium

8.3 Residual Risk: High

8.4 Despite the mitigations and governance framework around strategic and financial performance that the Council has in place, the S151 Officer deems the current risk to be **medium.** The current risk reflects that

a) the Council's local position of a forecast overspend less than 2% of the net budget which is within a range which could be managed down through continued diligence in managing spend across the Council. In the event that this overspend falls to reserves, this level of overspend would not be "high risk" given the Council's overall reserve position.

b) Dorset has successfully submitted a SEND Reform Plan, which is a key milestone in securing a 90% write off of the cumulative DSG overspend.

8.5 This situation will remain under close supervision and is discussed with SLT at the monthly budget management meetings.

8.6 The residual risk being **high** principally reflects the national picture and economic conditions affecting all local authorities. Pressures continue to build in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for demand led service delivery to support vulnerable Adults and Children and around the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Sustainable funding for these services continues to lag behind the rate at which need continues to grow.

8.7 The context of these risks is detailed later in this report.

9. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

9.1 **No specific equalities issues have emerged in drafting the Council's various reports on financial performance and position.**

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Climate Wheel
Appendix B – Contract Exemptions
Appendix C – Capital bid - Wimborne Community Sports Hub

11. 11. Background Papers

2025/26 outturn report
2025/26 budget strategy report

12 Overall projection

12.1 At Period 4, the Council is forecasting a net revenue overspend of £8.136m (1.7%) against the approved budget of £466m.

12.2 Pressures from delayed OFC/ Transformation savings total £4.000m and there are service pressures within Children's Services (£3.048m overspend) and Adult Social Care (£3.022m overspend)

12.3 These pressures are partially offset by underspends across a number of services, most notably Modernisation and Customer Delivery (£1.143m), Capital Financing (£1.000m), Chief Executive's Office (£0.352m) and Resources (£0.232m).

12.4 Service directorates collectively forecast a net overspend of £4.573m (1.0% of budget), reflecting continued demand-led pressures, particularly in social care services.

12.5 SLT are developing mitigation to help support services most affected by demand and the extent to which reintroducing spend control measures around discretionary spend is more closely managed collectively. This will build on the current budget control measures managed within directorate budgets and aiming to arrive on budget by March 2027. Without mitigation the current forecast would require use of reserves.

12.6 The directorate variances are summarised in the table below.

Directorate	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Children's Services	105,434	108,481	(3,048)	(2.9%)
Adult Social Care	177,753	180,775	(3,022)	(1.7%)
Housing, Communities and Prevention	20,876	20,868	8	0.0%
Economy & Environment	105,528	105,910	(383)	(0.4%)
Chief Executives Office	12,739	12,387	352	2.8%
Resources	8,061	7,829	232	2.9%
Modernisation and Customer Delivery	26,999	25,856	1,143	4.2%
Assurance & Governance	8,964	8,818	145	1.6%
Total Service Budgets	**466,353**	**470,925**	**(4,573)**	**(1.0%)**
General Funding - including Our Future Council	(10,118)	(6,118)	(4,000)	(39.5%)
Capital Financing	18,992	17,992	1,000	5.3%
Contingency	(5,155)	(5,155)	0	0.0%
Precepts/Levy	23,607	23,620	(13)	(0.1%)
Central Finance	(505,469)	(504,926)	(543)	(0.1%)
Retirement costs	1,707	1,713	(6)	(0.4%)
Whole Authority	**(10,084)**	**(1,949)**	**(8,136)**	
Dedicated Schools Grant budgets	10,084	83,821	(73,737)	

12.7 More detail on the specific directorates is set out in the following paragraphs.

13. Children’s Services

13.1 The Children’s Services forecast is £108.5m compared with a net budget of £105.4m an overspend of £3.0m (2.9%).

Childrens Services	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Quality Assurance	4,387	4,286	101	2.3%
Care & Protection	65,305	68,768	(3,463)	(5.3%)
Commissioning and Partnerships	6,605	6,758	(153)	(2.3%)
Director's Services	3,193	2,733	460	14.4%
Education and Learning	15,247	15,240	6	0.0%
DSG recharges	0	0	0	0.0%
Birth to Settled Adult	10,697	10,696	1	0.0%
Total Directorate Budget	**105,434**	**108,481**	**(3,048)**	**(2.9%)**

Dedicated Schools Grant budgets	10,084	83,821	(73,737)	

13.2 The forecast continues to be driven primarily by the cost of placements for Children in Care (CiC), particularly external residential and specialist placements where market demand, complexity of need and placement availability continue to exert significant financial pressure.

13.3 The largest pressure remains within Care & Protection, which is forecasting an overspend of £3.5m against a budget of £65.3m. This reflects continued reliance on high-cost external residential placements and specialist provision for children with complex needs. Financial pressures arising from external placements are partially offset by favourable variances within in house residential provision, fostering services and other placement budgets.

13.4 Quality Assurance is forecast to underspend by £0.1m, largely due to timing between the recruitment of apprentice social workers and the subsequent movement of staff into substantive social work roles.

13.5 Commissioning and Partnerships is forecasting an overspend of £0.15m. This position is driven primarily by the Outdoor Education Service, which is forecasting a pressure of approximately £0.35m, partially offset by underspends elsewhere within the service.

13.6 Director's Services is forecast to underspend by £0.46m, reflecting a combination of lower than budgeted premature retirement costs and additional

Home Office funding received in relation to Chickerell Camp. The forecast also assumes delivery of savings associated with the Dorset Children Thrive programme and therefore remains subject to ongoing review as implementation progresses.

13.7 Education and Learning (Dorset Council budgets) is reporting a broadly balanced position, with only a marginal forecast underspend. Vacancy management has contributed positively to the forecast, although the full financial implications of the Thrive operating model are still being assessed.

13.8 Overall, the Children's Services Directorate is forecasting a net overspend of £3.05m. Underlying financial position remains highly sensitive to placement activity, with a small number of additional complex placements capable of materially affecting the forecast.

Children in care

13.9 As mirrored nationally, pressure on external placements for our children in care population continues. Increasing numbers of Children in Care not only impact placement budgets, but non-placement budgets are also affected including assessment costs, legal, interpreter fees and travel costs.

13.10 The Children in Care placements budget is currently forecast to overspend by £4.6m, this includes fostering and in house residential provision.

13.11 An overspend is reported for supporting our children in care, and this is mainly driven by three factors: our children’s needs increasing in complexity, rising costs and an external residential placement market that isn’t functioning effectively.

13.12 There were 441 Children in Care (excluding unaccompanied asylum seeking children) at the end of July 2026, an increase of 11 from June 2026 (430), but still 9% lower than the September 2020 baseline of 475. Whilst overall numbers remain below historic levels, the mix of placements continues to generate significant financial pressure.

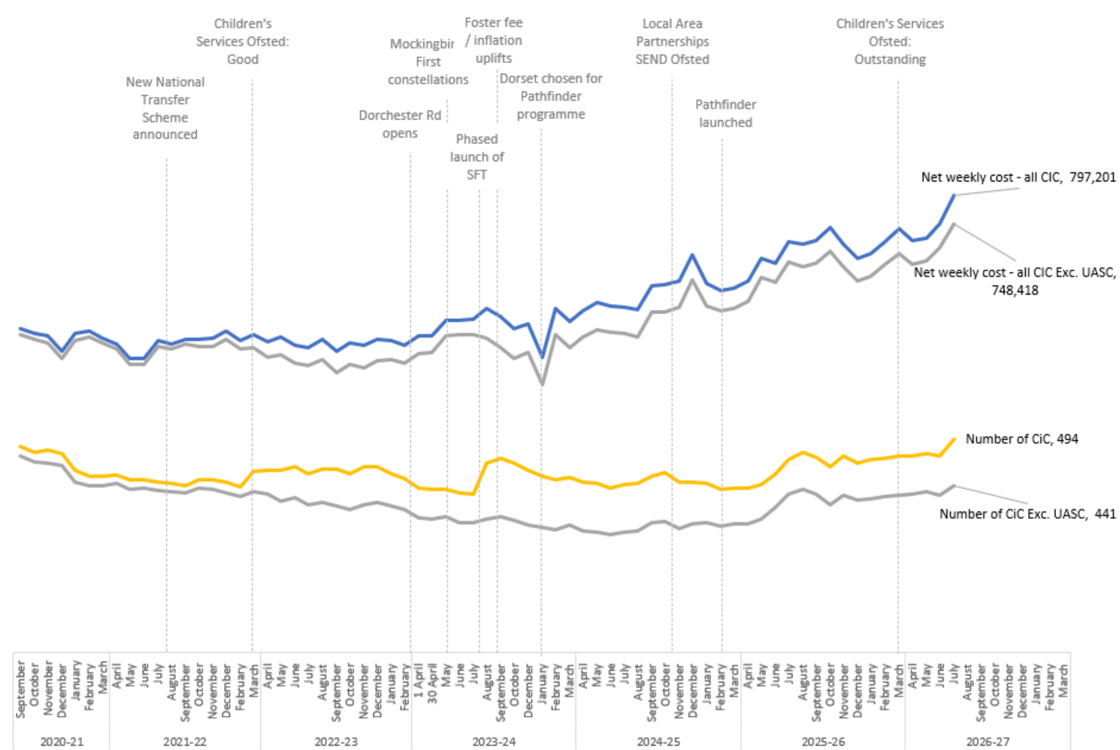
13.13 The number of children in external residential placements increased to 56 in July 2026, compared with 54 in June 2026 and 51 in April 2026. At the same time, the average weekly cost of external residential placements has risen to £6,870 per week (£360k per year), representing a 72% increase since September 2020. High-cost supported accommodation placements remain a key area of financial pressure, with average weekly costs reaching £3,906 per week (£203k per year), 51% higher than the September 2020 baseline.

13.14 Encouragingly, Dorset Council's in-house fostering provision remains strong, with 215 children placed with Dorset Council foster carers in July 2026, broadly consistent with recent months and slightly above the September 2020 position.

Alongside relatively stable costs within Dorset Council residential provision, this continued reliance on in-house placements helps to offset some of the budget pressures arising from the external placement market.

13.15 Despite an overall reduction in Children in Care numbers since 2020, rising placement costs, particularly within the external residential and supported accommodation sectors, along with a growing number of Children in Care continue to be the primary driver of financial pressure within the placement budget.

Dorset Council: Children in Care - net weekly cost and number of children



13.16 If the number of children in care (exc. our unaccompanied children) had remained at 475, at July averages, it is estimated an additional £3.0m of annual cost would be incurred.

Risks and mitigations

13.17 The forecast remains subject to a number of significant risks and uncertainties:

a) Further Children in Care placement activity, particularly external residential or specialist placements, could materially increase the forecast overspend.
b) Delivery of the remaining Children in Care savings programme remains challenging and is dependent upon sustained reductions in high-cost placement expenditure.
c) Demand for support packages within the Birth to Settled Adulthood service may increase during the year.
d) The full financial impact of organisational changes associated with the Dorset Children Thrive model is still being evaluated.
e) Ongoing inflationary pressures within the residential care market may further increase placement costs.
f) SEND-related expenditure continues to present a significant risk, particularly where increased demand for specialist provision. SEND pressures are felt in the revenue budgets as well as the DSG.
g) Future health funding arrangements and partner contributions remain uncertain

13.18 Overall, while the forecast position represents a 2.9% overspend, the directorate continues to face significant demand-led pressures, particularly in relation to Children in Care placements and SEND services, and close monitoring of expenditure and savings delivery remains essential throughout the remainder of the financial year.

14. Adult Social Care

14.1 Adults Social Care is currently forecasting a net expenditure of £180.775m against a budget of £177.753m, resulting in a projected overspend of £3.022m (1.70%). The overspend is primarily due to pressures from increased demand.

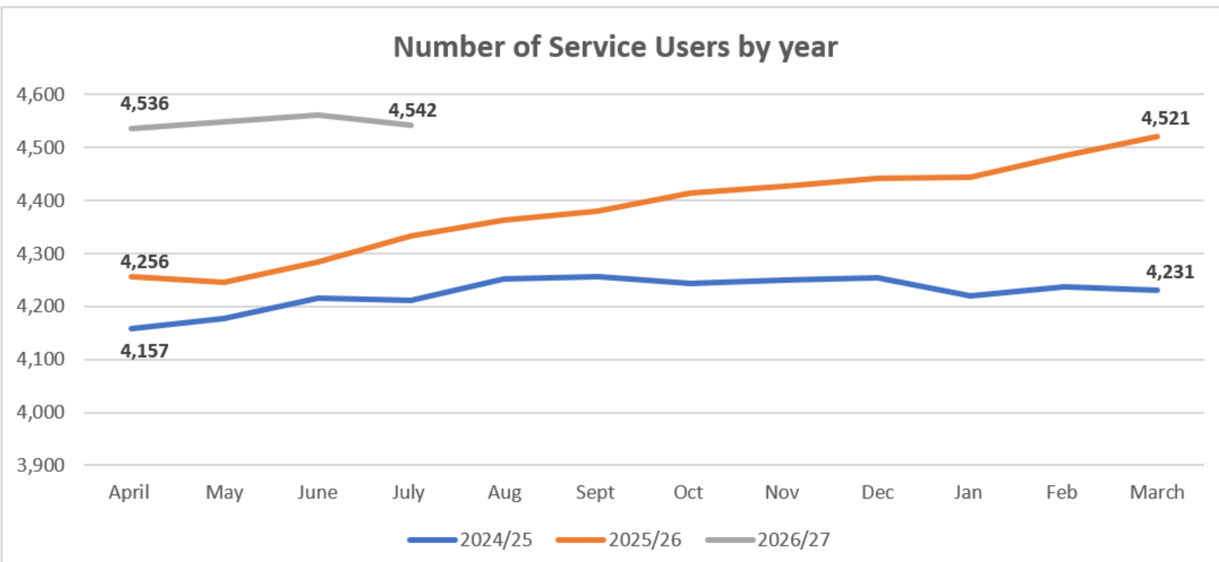
Adult Social Care	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Adult Care Packages	153,995	158,159	(4,164)	(2.7%)
Adult Care Operation	21,570	20,414	1,156	5.4%
Directorate Wide	2,188	2,202	(14)	(0.6%)
Total Directorate Budget	**177,753**	**180,775**	**(3,022)**	**(1.7%)**

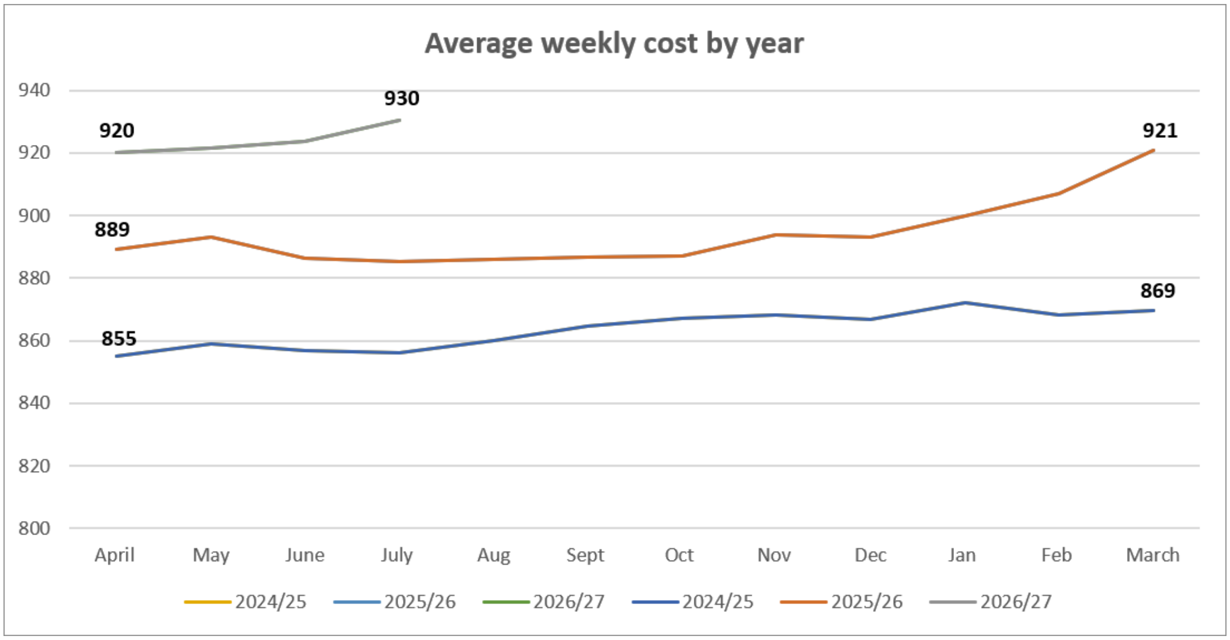
Adult care packages

14.2 The 2026/27 budget assumed 4,415 people would be supported at an average weekly cost of £887. That activity level had already been exceeded by the start of the year, with 4,536 people receiving support and the average weekly cost increasing to £921. This represented 121 more people than budgeted for and a £34 increase in the average weekly cost before the year had commenced. Additional contingency funding of £3.5m has been allocated to support the cost of rising demand since the budget was set.

14.3 Demand has continued to grow during the first four months of the year. As at July, the number of people being supported is now 4,542, while the average weekly cost has risen to £930 per week. The combination of the higher than budgeted activity levels and increasing package costs continues to place pressure on the budget and is the primary driver of the forecast overspend.

14.4 The below charts show number of services users by year and average cost.





14.5 The Directorate continues to experience pressures from health-related funding changes, currently estimated at £0.748m, arising from jointly funded packages that are no longer eligible for health funding and from Continuing Healthcare (CHC) hand backs.

14.6 Care packages continue to be reviewed under the oversight of Corporate Directors, in line with the scheme of delegation. Existing system-wide activity is focused on reviewing packages for appropriateness, exploring joint funding opportunities, and assessing eligibility for continuing healthcare. These efforts are being factored into the forecasting process to improve accuracy and financial control.

14.7 Significant progress has been made in vacancy management, with vacancy factor savings currently delivering 65% of the total vacancy target. It is anticipated that the Directorate will exceed the vacancy factor target, generating additional savings and contributing to the forecast underspend of £1.156m, which is offsetting the pressure on placement costs.

14.8 **Contributions from Partners**

14.9 Below is a summary of health contributions.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 forecast
Health contributions	14,249,095	16,059,347	18,483,635

14.10 This includes our Continuing Healthcare (CHC), Joint Funding income as well as pooled budget contributions. It is important to note that, although some Health funding streams have reduced such as CHC and Joint Funding, demand within pooled budgets, including Section 117, Valuing People Now and Moving on from Hospital Living, has increased. As a result, shared contributions from both the Council and Health partners have increased.

14.11 The table below summarises the Continuing Healthcare (CHC) and Jointly Funded packages that have been handed back to the Council and associated costs. Costs like this passed from the NHS to the Council represent a significant cost pressure and are difficult to predict.

	2024/25		**2025/26**		**2026/27 YTD actuals**	
	No. Packages	**Cost in year**	**No. Packages**	**Cost in year**	**No. Packages**	**Cost in year**
CHC Handbacks	26	1,178,443	18	520,902	6	593,519
Joint Funded packages no longer eligible	0	-	30	568,582	5	154,639
	26	**1,178,443**	**48**	**1,089,484**	**11**	**748,158**

15. Housing, Communities and Prevention

15.1 Housing, Communities and Prevention is currently forecasting a net expenditure of £20.868m against a budget of £20.876m, resulting in a projected underspend of £0.08m (0.0%).

Housing, Communities and Prevention	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Regulatory Services	4,324	4,424	(101)	(2.3%)
Housing & Community	9,244	9,162	82	0.9%
ASC Commissioning	7,271	7,244	27	0.4%
PH Joint Partnership	0	0	0	0.0%
LiveWell Dorset	1,108	1,008	101	9.1%
Public Health	17,060	17,161	(101)	(0.6%)
Public Health Grant	(18,130)	(18,130)	0	0.0%
Total Directorate Budget	**20,876**	**20,868**	**8**	**0.0%**

15.2 The July forecast indicates that the Directorate is currently projected to achieve a balanced outturn position. However, an adverse variance of £0.101m is forecast within Regulatory Services, relating to a staffing saving target. Delivery of this saving is unlikely to achieved, and the position will continue to be monitored as part of the Directorate's budget management arrangements.

16. Economy and Environment directorate

16.1 The overall forecast for the Directorate as at the end of July is a projected adverse position (an overspend) of £0.383m (0.4%), with a projection of £105.9m net spend against a net budget of £105.5m.

Economy and Environment	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Highways	4,418	4,385	33	0.8%
Dorset Travel	44,129	43,133	995	2.3%
Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM)	1,100	1,150	(50)	(4.5%)
Greenspace	3,171	3,246	(75)	(2.4%)
Health & Activity	125	119	6	4.7%
Commercial Waste & Strategy	17,879	18,177	(299)	(1.7%)
Waste - Operations	18,214	18,394	(180)	(1.0%)
Fleet	182	95	87	48.0%
Weymouth 2040 Ancilliaries	841	841	0	0.0%
Economic Development	738	828	(90)	(12.2%)
Harbours	16	20	(4)	(28.0%)
Leisure, Arts & Cultural Services	3,408	3,349	59	1.7%
Directors Office	438	473	(35)	(8.0%)
Assets & Property	6,901	6,901	(0)	(0.0%)
Planning	3,969	4,799	(829)	(20.9%)
Total Directorate Budget	**105,528**	**105,910**	**(383)**	**(0.4%)**

16.2 The Economy & Environment directorate budget includes a built-in saving target in relation to staff turnover broadly equivalent to a 3% vacancy factor, although some services are exempt (notably waste operations). It is currently assumed that this will be found in full. This is subject to ongoing monthly monitoring.

16.3 Commentary on the specific services where the variance is over £0.100m is provided as follows.

Highways

16.4 The Highways budget is forecast to be underspent by £0.033m, made up as follows:

- Network Operations are expecting to be £0.375m favourable, as a result of higher than budgeted FPN income.

- Parking Services are expecting to be £0.309m overspent, of which £0.125m is a shortfall in income and the remainder is pressure on expenditure budgets, in particular rates which have seen some revaluations. It should be noted that income is 5% up on last year, but overall volume is down for the first four months in comparison to the previous 12 months (i.e. fewer car park spaces occupied, but they are occupied for longer and therefore pay more).

Dorset Travel

16.5 Overall, Dorset Travel is projecting a £0.995m underspend on a net budget of circa £44m. There are two main aspects to this:

16.6 Public transport is projecting an adverse variance of circa £1m, in respect of concessionary fares. This assumption is based on actual usage (and therefore expenditure) incurred last year. This will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis.

16.7 SEND transport has seen increases in expenditure in recent years. The table below is a reminder of that volatility.

Financial Year	Expenditure £'000	Increase £'000	Increase £'000
2020/21	10,179		
2021/22	11,270	1,091	10.72%
2022/23	16,281	5,011	44.47%
2023/24	19,031	2,750	16.89%
2024/25	19,731	699	3.68%
2025/26	20,224	494	2.50%
2026/27 Forecast	22,489	2,265	11.19%

16.8 The volatility in SEND transport is caused by a mixture of increases in numbers of children being transported (and mitigated, where possible, through actions such as sharing transport) and the costs of the market at any particular point in time (notably, issues such as driver shortages and fuel costs).

16.9 It can be seen that 2025/26 had the lowest increase in expenditure in recent history. This is considered to be partly due to the stability of the market place, and partly due to efforts by Dorset Travel to maximise efficiency opportunites.

16.10 The costs for SEND transport remain fluid until each September, when a significant volume of contracts come up for renewal in line with the start of the new academic year. This makes forecasting difficult prior to this point.

16.11 Nonetheless, at this stage, the forecast assumes an underspend of circa £2m. This reflects the success seen in the last financial year, and the stable market conditions, and assumes that any uplift in costs can be contained. This will be revisited after the 26/27 academic year has commenced.

Commercial Waste and Strategy

16.12 An overspend of £299k is predicted. This is a combination of three headline items:

i. Recyclate price is lower than budgeted (details not given here due to commercial sensitivity)
ii. Overall tonnages being lower than budgeted.
iii. Absorbing the cost of the new HRC contract which comes into place from 28th August 2026.

16.13 This budget line is volatile and needs to be kept under constant review.

Waste Operations and Fleet

16.14 There are projected variances of £0.180m adverse in Waste Operations and £0.087m favourable in Fleet. The main cause of the overspend was the higher prices around vehicle fuel seen earlier in the year. Diesel prices have fluctuated dramatically in response to global events and so price remains volatile. However, approximately 75% of the DC fleet uses HVO fuel, and whilst this provides some buffer, demand for this fuel source has seen price rise higher than budgeted. Again, this budget line is volatile and needs to be kept under constant review.

Planning

16.15 Overall, a £0.829m adverse variance is projected. The biggest issue is poor planning income received in the year to date in the Development Management area, being approximately £0.300m below budget for the first four months. The forecast of £0.829m assumes an improving position over the remaining eight months, however income is very difficult to accurately predict.

16.16 The government have just announced a new charging policy which includes increases to some fees set nationally to take effect from early December 2026.

The implications of the new policy have yet to worked through.

17. Chief Executive's Office

17.1 The Chief Executive's Office forecast is £12.387m compared with a net budget of £12.739m, showing a £352k underspend.

Chief Executives Office	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
People & Workforce	2,551	2,432	119	4.7%
Strategy, Performance and Sustainability	3,987	3,915	72	1.8%
Business Support	5,563	5,403	160	2.9%
Chief Executive's Office	637	637	0	0.0%
Total Directorate Budget	**12,739**	**12,387**	**352**	**2.8%**

17.2 **People & Workforce** is forecasting an underspend of £119k. The position is primarily driven by pay savings from vacancies, vacant hours, scale point changes and holiday purchase arrangements, which are offsetting income shortfalls and service savings requirements. Risks remain around income generation and Occupational Health staffing costs, but these are currently expected to be managed within existing budget provisions.

17.3 **Strategy, Performance and Sustainability** is forecasting a net underspend of £72k. This comprises a £54k underspend within Communications, driven by pay savings partly offset by increased printing, software, subscription and equipment costs.

17.4 **Business Support** is forecasting an underspend of £160k, driven primarily by pay underspends. The position reflects savings arising from Year 1 of the Our Future Council (OFC) programme. Central finance has £600k of OFC year 1 related savings, a proportion of which will be attributed to Business Support where the associated savings have been realised.

18. Resources

18.1 The forecast for Resources is £7.829m compared with a net budget of £8.061m, showing a £0.232m underspend. The forecast underspend of £232k is primarily driven by pay underspends within Accountancy and Operational Finance.

Resources	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Finance & Commercial	8,061	7,829	232	2.9%
Total Directorate Budget	**8,061**	**7,829**	**232**	**2.9%**

19. Modernisation and Customer Delivery

19.1 Modernisation and Customer Delivery is currently forecasting a £1.143m underspend against a net budget of £26.999m

Modernisation and Customer Delivery	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
ICT Operations	9,084	8,934	151	1.7%
Customer Hub	5,870	5,748	123	2.1%
Library Services	4,404	4,410	(6)	(0.1%)
Revenues & Benefits	3,837	3,208	628	16.4%
Transformation, Innovation & Design	3,566	3,319	247	6.9%
Directors Office	237	237	0	0.0%
Total Directorate Budget	**26,999**	**25,856**	**1,143**	**4.2%**

19.2 **ICT Operations** is forecasting an underspend of £151k. The forecast position is primarily driven by underspends in infrastructure and software. These are partially offset by lower income levels and additional licensing and implementation costs. Pay expenditure is forecast to be on budget overall, and the position assumes delivery of the £85k applications rationalisation saving.

19.3 **Customer Hub** is forecasting an underspend of £123k, primarily driven by pay savings. The position reflects savings arising from Year 1 of the Our Future Council (OFC) programme. Central finance has £600k of OFC year 1 related savings, a proportion of which will be attributed to Customer Hub where the associated savings have been realised.

19.4 **Revenues and Benefits** is forecasting an underspend of £628k primarily due to underspends in pay and the net effect of a reduction in rent allowances and rent rebates paid against the amount of subsidy income received.

19.5 **Transformation, Innovation & Design** is forecasting an underspend of £247k which is related to underspend in pay. The position reflects savings arising from Year 1 of the Our Future Council (OFC) programme.

20 Assurance and Governance

20.1 The Assurance and Governance forecast is £8.818m compared with a net budget of £8.964m, an underspend of £145k (1.6%). This is primarily due to an increase in income in the Land Charges service, offset by small pay related overspends.

Assurance & Governance	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Assurance	1,825	1,831	(5)	(0.3%)
Democratic & Elections Services	3,155	3,201	(46)	(1.4%)
Land Charges	(332)	(489)	157	47.3%
Legal Services	3,310	3,270	39	1.2%
Archives	1,006	1,006	0	0.0%
Total Directorate Budget	**8,964**	**8, 818**	**145**	**1.6%**

21 Central Finance and Contingency

21.1 The forecast for central finance budgets is £462.664m compared with a net income budget of £466.227m, is a forecast overspend of £3.563m (0.8%).

Central Finance	Net Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast (Overspend)/ Underspend £'000	
Our Future Council Savings	(7,291)	(3,291)	(4,000)	(54.9%)
General Funding	(2,827)	(2,827)	0	0.0%
Capital Financing	18,992	17,992	1,000	5.3%
Contingency	5,054	5,054	0	0.0%
Precepts/Levy	23,607	23,620	(13)	(0.1%)
Central Finance	(503,763)	(503,213)	(550)	(0.1%)
Total Central Budgets	**(466,227)**	**(462,664)**	**(3,563)**	**(0.8%)**

21.2 **Our Future Council programme** – see section 22.

21.3 **Capital Financing** – The current forecast includes an estimated £1.0m increase in interest income arising from the anticipated receipt of approximately £130m of additional SEND deficit grant funding expected from the autumn. The final amount and timing of the funding remain subject to confirmation and will impact the level of interest income ultimately achieved.

21.4 **Contingency** - The Council's base budget included a contingency budget of £8.554m, consisting of £5.047m for general contingencies, £2.491m to cover inflationary pressures, £0.515m to support delivery of the Council Plan, and £0.500m for Cost-of-Living support initiatives.

21.5 To help meet the costs associated with a higher-than-expected number of Adult Social Care placements, £3.5m has been transferred from the contingency budget to Adult Social Care.

21.6 **Central Finance** - These budgets include income from Council Tax and Business Rates. The current forecast shows a £0.543m shortfall in Business Rates income. This is because the budget was set before the NNDR1 return was completed, when it was expected that more Business Rates income would be collected. The completed NNDR1 has since shown that the amount of income likely to be received is lower than originally estimated. As a result, there is a gap between the budgeted income and the income now expected to be achieved, which has contributed to the forecast overspend.

22 Transformation and savings plans

22.1 **Our Future Council – Whole Council Transformation** The 2026/27 Dorset Council budget includes a portfolio of savings plans across each directorate, alongside the Our Future Council (OFC) whole council transformation programme. OFC is designed to modernise shared functions across the organisation and underpin them with appropriate, enabling technology.

22.2 The approved business case for OFC included a savings requirement of £9.4m for 2026/27.

Progress to Date – July 2026

22.3 Expectations of the savings delivery are shown in the table below

Savings area	Budget	Forecast at P4	P4 confidence	Remainder to deliver	Remainder confidence
Workforce redesign	£2.5m	£1.1m	High	£1.4m	Medium
Third-party spend	£4.0m	£2.0m	Medium	£2.0m	Low
ICT rationalisation	£0.3m	£0m	Low	£0.3m	Low
Full-year effect delivered in 2025/26	£2.6m	£2.0m	High	£0.6m	High
Total	**£9.4m**	**£5.1m**	**High**	**£4.3m**	**Mixed**

Cumulative workforce reduction:

22.4 The Our Future Council programme has identified delivery plans for £1.1m of workforce-related benefits through leadership redesign, the implementation of the Customer Hub and Business Support Hub, workforce reshaping and vacancy management. Of this, £0.1m has already been delivered. There is high confidence that the remaining £0.6m of the full-year effect of the 2025/26 savings programme will be achieved. These savings are reflected in the forecast for the Customer Hub, Business Support Hub and the Transformation Management Office.

Third-Party spend Reduction:

22.5 Current forecasts indicate £2.0m of third-party savings and cost avoidance will be achieved through commercial management, procurement activity and measures to mitigate inflationary and demand-led cost pressures. Delivery plans continue to be developed and refined, and forecasts will be updated as delivery confidence increases.

Savings – Adults

22.6 The Directorate has a savings target of £4.125m for 2026/27. Savings achieved to date total £0.952m, representing (23%) of the annual target. See earlier Adults section for detail

Savings Children's

22.7 The Children's Services directorate has a savings target of £6.582m for 2026/27. Savings achieved to date total £2.411m, representing 36% of the annual target. See earlier Children's section for detail.

Savings – Economy & Environment

22.8 The Directorate budget for 2026/27 includes £2.867m of in-built specific savings targets. This is in addition to in-built vacancy factor targets.

22.9 Using the definition that Green savings are achieved, and that Amber savings will not be clear until later in the year, the position for savings is as follows:

E&E Directorate 2026/27 budgeted savings status		
	£m	R/A/G
Permanent removal of posts already taken place	£0.864	Green
SEND transport reviews	£0.500	Amber
Further permanent removal of posts	£0.450	Amber
Reduction in Streetlighting energy costs	£0.412	Amber
Reduction in temporary staff	£0.240	Green
Increased Commercial Waste income	£0.175	Amber
Increased Garden Waste income	£0.091	Green
Reduction in Arts/Culture/Sports expenditure	£0.075	Green
Reduction in waste budget re cross border waste costs	£0.060	Amber
	£2.867	

Savings – Core Services

22.10 The Core Services savings target for 2026/27 is £1.17m. To date £0.209m have been achieved, representing (18%) of the annual target. Of the remainder; £0.75m (64%) are amber and require further monitoring and £0.21m (18%) are deemed high risk and are unlikely to be achieved this year

22.11 The high-risk saving is Council Tax Automation within Revenues & Benefits, although this project is progressing the savings are likely to be seen within collection fund through increased collection rates, rather than the Revenues & Benefits Service. However, there are sufficient pay underspends within the service which are covering the savings.

22.12 The vacancy factor of £1.32m has been achieved in full.

23 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

23.1 As of 31 March 2026, cumulative DSG deficit is £148.7m. Any deficit associated with the DSG is kept off council's balance sheets because of the statutory override set out in The Local Authorities Capital Finance and Accounting (England) Regulations. This was extended from March 2026 to March 2028 in June 2025.

23.2 Whilst the deficit is therefore held separately from the General Fund, there is a cashflow pressure resulting from carrying a £148.7m deficit meaning that the Council has access to £148.7m less cash than it would otherwise.

23.3 As a result, interest foregone on the deficit equates to £4.9m of pressure met by the General Fund. This is £4.9m which could otherwise be spent on local service delivery.

23.4 Dorset submitted their Local SEND Reform Plans in June 2026 with outcomes expected to be announced in the Autumn 2026.

23.5 The historical DSG deficit experienced by most upper tier local authorities is a long and well-documented risk stemming from a change in government legislation in 2014. The number of children who require an Education Health and Care Place (EHCP) continues to rise and coupled with Dorset Special Schools reaching capacity, has seen an increase in the use of generally more expensive independent special school places.

23.6 Any reforms will take time to implement and materials from the DfE so far suggest staged implementation of the changes.

DSG - Accounting treatment

23.7 Dorset Council accounts have been produced in accordance with the Schools and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020, which required local authorities to carry forward overspends of Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

DSG – Current position

23.8 The Dedicated Schools Grant is forecast to overspend by £73.7m, reflecting continuing national pressures within the High Needs Block and ongoing growth in demand for specialist SEND provision. This means in the absence of receiving the HNSG the deficit could rise to £223.7m.

23.9 Continued High Needs Block overspends could mean that despite a 90% write off the deficit could reach around £150 million by March 2028. Government support would significantly reduce the current historic deficit (at 31 March 2026), however there is no guarantee that future deficits will receive the same level of support, with Government stating that assistance in 2026/27 and 2027/28 will be provided only on an “appropriate and proportionate” basis and “will not be unlimited”.

23.10 As in previous years, the principal drivers of the deficit remain increasing Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) demand, growth in specialist placements, and continued pressures across independent and non-maintained special school provision. These pressures mirror those being experienced by many local authorities nationally. Currently Dorset has ~5,000 children and young people with an EHCP, in 2013, this number was 1,407.

23.11 Further analysis and detail is available in the Dorset Schools Forum monitoring reports: Browse meetings - Schools' Forum - Dorset Council

24 Local Authority Trading Companies (LATC)

24.1 The council has involvement with four LATC’s that support the work of the council. This report focuses on the financial performance of the LATC’s and highlights any material financial matters which could impact the Council’s finances.

Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

24.2 As reported previously, the new Company is now set up. The Board and Executive team are in place, and operational responsibility for the Innovation Park is now transferred to the company. The business plan has been approved by Shareholders, and finances are in accordance with the Business Plan, Shareholder Agreement and previous Cabinet decisions.

Care Dorset

24.3 As of 31 March 2026, the company recorded a net surplus of £40,592 for the 18-month period, compared with a surplus of £10,247 in the previous financial year. The outturn remains subject to independent audit, which is expected to be completed by the end of August 2026.

24.4 For Quarter 1, the company is reporting a net deficit of £86,000. This is primarily due to an expected accrual for estimated pay awards in line with the latest NJC negotiations, which are not yet fully funded, together with increased renewal and replacement costs across services.

Dorset Centre of Excellence Ltd

24.5 Coombe House School provides education for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Dorset Centre of Excellence Ltd is a wholly owned company of Dorset Council.

24.6 The Company's purpose is to provide high-quality special school places for Dorset children at a fee significantly below the wider independent market.

24.7 Capacity has deviated from the pupil and staffing growth assumptions set out in the revised five-year Business Plan (March 2024). The plan assumed additional classroom capacity would be available from September 2025 following Dorset Council investment to bring further buildings into school use. This work has not yet progressed and as a result, the school will remain at a maximum capacity of 154 pupil places for the foreseeable future.

24.8 Draft accounts for the year ending 31 March 2026 report a pre-tax surplus for the year of £1.5m. Trading losses brought forward will be fully utilised to offset the corporation tax liability, which is expected to be approximately £100k.

24.9 Audit fieldwork was completed in June 2026 and the statutory financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2026 will be shared with the Board in September 2026 for signing. These will be made available to the Shareholder at the earliest opportunity.

24.10 Reported turnover for 2025/26 was £8.3m, of which £8.1m relates to placement fees paid by Dorset Council. Budgeted turnover for 2026/27 is £8.2m, with £8m expected from Dorset Council placement fees. The placement fee for 2026/27 remains unchanged from 2025/26.

24.11 The Company has budgeted a pre-tax surplus of £512k for 2026/27; the management accounts at 30 June 2026 show no significant variances from budget.

Connect2Dorset

24.12 Connect2Dorset is a joint venture with Commercial Services Group (a company wholly owned by Kent County Council). The new service came into effect at the beginning of April 2024 and provides the Council with contingent agency, contract and interim employees.

24.13 The long-term aim of Connect2Dorset is to improve the quality of our agency workers, and where suitable convert agency workers to permanent employees.

25 General fund position and other earmarked reserves at year-end

25.1 Any overspend at year-end will require funding from reserves. Based on the current revenue forecast, it is anticipated that £8.1m will need to be drawn from reserves to meet the projected overspend.

25.2 The General Fund Balance stood at £35.9m at the end of 2025/26 and is forecast to increase to £40.7m by the end of the current financial year.

25.3 Earmarked reserves totalled £127m at the end of 2025/26. Current planned utilisation indicates that a similar balance will be maintained at the end of 2026/27. Consequently, total reserves are forecast to be approximately £168m as at 31 March 2027.

26 Capital programme and financing

26.1 The capital programme has undergone a comprehensive review to ensure it is appropriately sized to reflect organisational capacity and that all capital investment proposals are supported by robust business cases and clear strategic objectives. The revised programme was approved by Cabinet in June 2026.

26.2 As at 31 July 2026, expenditure and commitments against the approved capital programme of £105.042m totalled £29.278m (28%). The programme remains under continuous review to monitor the progress of approved projects and identify any issues that could affect overall delivery. Where project slippage is identified, budgets will be reprofiled within the overall programme to reflect revised delivery timescales.

26.3 The approved project budgets for the current year are outlined below.

Directorate	No. of projects	Project Budget £,000	Spend / Commitments £,000	Variance £,000	% Spent
Adult Social Care	2	2,148	1,001	1,147	47%
Children's Services	13	11,440	3,073	8,367	27%
Economy & Environment	50	86,560	24,555	62,005	28%
Housing & Prevention	3	694	161	533	23%
Core Services	5	4,200	489	3,711	12%
Total	**73**	**105,042**	**29,278**	**75,764**	**28%**

26.4 The delivery of the capital programme is reviewed monthly by Capital Strategy & Asset Management Group (CSAMG).

27 Additions to the capital programme

27.1 **The Wimborne Community Sports Hub** is a significant community sports development being delivered as part of the Quarter Jack Park housing development in Wimborne. The scheme will provide a new sports hub incorporating 3.5 grass pitches and a full-size artificial pitch, alongside a pavilion, car parking and associated landscaping.

27.2 The facility will enable Wimborne Rugby Club and Allendale Football Club to relocate from their existing sites to modern, fit-for-purpose facilities, creating opportunities for increased participation, growth in youth sport, and wider community use. The project also supports the objectives of Dorset Council's Playing Pitch Strategy by addressing identified demand for improved sports provision in the East Dorset area.

27.3 The total cost of the pitch element of the project is estimated at £2.289m. Funding has been secured through a Section 106 agreement with Barratt Homes, which provides £1.689m towards the delivery of the pitches, together with a £600k contribution from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund approved by Cabinet. The development will therefore be delivered primarily through external funding sources, with the CIL allocation providing additional funding and contingency to help manage construction cost pressures. Any funding not required for delivery of the project will be returned to the CIL programme. Full details of the project are shown in Appendix C.

27.4 The **Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5** is the strengthening and improvement project for The Cobb structure. The scheme involves the stabilisation of The Cobb harbour arm, an improved working environment on the fish landing quay, improved utility services to the businesses upon the Cobb and resurfacing at key locations.

27.5 This project was originally brought to Cabinet in April 2022 at a cost of £3.0m, the funding of which was from external grants and S106 contributions. Since that time the scale and cost of the overall project has grown significantly, so this update is to provide an explanation for the changes and ask for approval of the total scheme budget of £8.365m.

27.6 The Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5 is a critical coastal protection and infrastructure project focused on the long-term stabilisation and repair of The Cobb, a Grade I Listed harbour structure that serves as Lyme Regis' principal breakwater, protects the town from coastal erosion and flooding, supports harbour operations and businesses, and provides significant heritage and tourism value. The scheme was originally developed to address progressive structural deterioration, seabed scour and movement within the harbour walls, while also delivering improvements to key operational areas of the harbour estate.

27.7 When the Outline Business Case was approved in 2022, the estimated project cost was approximately £3.0m. Since that time, detailed investigations, design development and ongoing monitoring have identified a substantially greater level of structural deterioration than was previously understood. In particular, rapid undermining of the wall toe at the interface between the Roundabout and Southern Arm has significantly increased the risk to the integrity of the structure and necessitated the development of much more substantial stabilisation and toe protection measures on the seaward side of The Cobb. As a consequence, the scope, complexity and cost of both the design and construction elements have increased considerably beyond the assumptions made in the original estimate.

27.8 The scheme has also evolved in response to the technical and heritage challenges associated with preserving a nationally important historic structure. As design work has progressed in consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency, the Marine Management Organisation and other statutory bodies, additional engineering, environmental and conservation requirements have been incorporated to ensure that the long-term structural resilience of The Cobb can be achieved while safeguarding its historic and cultural significance.

27.9 In addition to the increased construction scope, the project has been affected by substantial industry-wide construction inflation since 2022, particularly within the marine and coastal engineering sector where specialist materials, plant and contractor resources are required. The project programme has also been extended as a result of statutory consenting and licensing processes. While essential, the involvement of multiple regulatory authorities has increased the duration of the pre-construction phase, resulting in further escalation of design, supervision and construction costs.

27.10 The extended delivery programme has also brought the project within the scope of new legislative and policy requirements, including Biodiversity Net Gain obligations. These requirements were not included within the original 2022 estimate and now require additional assessment, mitigation and funding provision.

27.11 Collectively, the increased extent of structural stabilisation works, enhanced toe protection requirements, heritage and environmental considerations, construction inflation, statutory consenting delays and the incorporation of new Biodiversity Net Gain requirements have increased the total estimated project cost from approximately £3.0m in 2022 to £8.365m. The revised estimate reflects the current understanding of the condition of The Cobb and the level of intervention necessary to secure the long-term future of this nationally significant coastal defence, harbour and heritage asset.

27.12 The timeline and funding is outlined in the table below.

Funding	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
Grant in Aid			£2,090,000	£2,090,000
DEFRA / EA grant		£375,000		£375,000
Local Levy	£300,000	£200,000		£500,000
CIL / S106		£1,125,315	£4,275,000	£5,400,315
Total	**£300,000**	**£1,700,315**	**£6,365,000**	**£8,365,315**

28 Sundry debt management

New invoices for 2026/27

28.1 The total value of debts (invoices) raised between 1 April and 31 July 2026 is £102.4m, a breakdown by directorate is shown below:

Total debt raised	2026/27
	£'000
Adult Social Care	£22,706
Children's Services	£21,120
Housing & Prevention	£1,114
Economy & Environment	£12,797
Core Services	£44,699
Total	**£102,436**

Overall amounts owed

28.2 Looking at debt across all years, the balance of sundry debt outstanding at 31 July 2026 was £39.7m, the breakdown is as follows:

Total Debt					
Directorate	Total due £'000	Less than 30 days £'000	30-90 days £'000	90-365 days £'000	Over 365 days £'000
Adult Social Care	28,904	3,014	2,246	8,949	14,694
Children's Services	1,512	1,398	160	-144	98
Housing & Prevention	4,522	216	80	692	3,534
Economy & Environment	3,911	877	1,036	817	1,181
Core Services	888	378	358	56	96
Grand Total	**39,737**	**5,883**	**3,880**	**10,371**	**19,603**

28.3 Of the £39.7m outstanding debt, £28.9m relates to Adults & Housing. This includes debt arising from deferred payment agreements and care services provided under gross without prejudice arrangements. A more detailed breakdown of these debts is provided later in this section.

28.4 After excluding these amounts, the remaining balance represents collectable debt, which is currently subject to recovery action.

Collectable Debt					
Directorate	**Total due £'000**	**Less than 30 days £'000**	**30-90 days £'000**	**90-365 days £'000**	**Over 365 days £'000**
Adult Social Care	16,107	2,841	1,519	4,361	7,386
Children's Services	1,512	1,398	160	-144	98
Housing & Prevention	4,522	216	80	692	3,534
Economy & Environment	3,911	877	1,036	817	1,181
Core Services	347	192	4	55	96
Total	**26,399**	**5,524**	**2,799**	**5,781**	**12,295**

Prior year performance

28.5 At the end of 2025/26, collectable debt arrears totalled £44.32m. To date, £27.9m (63%) has been recovered.

28.6 The table below provides a breakdown of collection performance against prior-year debt.

Prior year arrears	**Amount owed 31/03/2026 £,000**	**Collected in year £,000**	**Amount outstanding 31/07/2026 £,000**	**% collected**
Pre 1 April 2019	467	46	421	10%
2019/20	805	40	764	5%
2020/21	1,176	24	1,152	2%
2021/22	1,191	74	1,117	6%
2022/23	1,766	151	1,615	9%
2023/24	2,696	334	2,362	12%
2024/25	4,042	847	3,195	21%
2025/26	32,175	26,386	5,789	82%
Total	**44,318**	**27,902**	**16,416**	**63%**

Deferred payments

28.7 Deferred payments are a form of adult social care debt incurred when Dorset Council provides care services to individuals who own property but may not have sufficient liquid assets to pay for their care immediately. Under the Deferred Payment Scheme, the Council agrees to defer payment for care costs, securing the debt against the individual's property through a legal agreement.

28.8 This arrangement allows the individual to delay payment until a later date—typically when the property is sold—at which point the Council recovers the full amount owed. Because the repayment is expected in the future and is secured, deferred payments are not treated as collectable debt in the same way as invoices that are due and payable now. Instead, they are classified separately as future recoverable debt.

Deferred Payments					
Directorate	Total due £'000	Less than 30 days £'000	30-90 days £'000	90-365 days £'000	Over 365 days £'000
Adult Social Care	4,248	-205	90	1,667	2,697

Gross without prejudice

28.9 Gross without prejudice debts arise when Dorset Council provides adult social care services before a full Care Act assessment and financial assessment have been completed. These debts are recorded to reflect the potential liability but are not actively pursued until it is determined whether the individual receiving care is financially responsible for contributing to the cost of their support.

28.10 This approach ensures that individuals are not prematurely chased for payment before their eligibility and financial capacity have been properly assessed. As such, these debts are held on record but sit outside the category of collectable debt, which refers to amounts that are confirmed as due and actively recoverable.

Gross Without Prejudice					
Directorate	Total due £'000	Less than 30 days £'000	30-90 days £'000	90-365 days £'000	Over 365 days £'000
Adult Social Care	8,549	378	637	2,922	4,611

29 Write-offs

29.1 The value total write-offs processed so far this year is £272k against a collectable debt total of £26.4m, see the table below. Sufficient provision has been made to cover these debts, which represent a relatively minor portion of the total outstanding balance (1.03%).

Debts written off	**2026/27 £'000**
Adult Social Care	159
Children's Services	1
Housing & Prevention	14
Economy & Environment	98
Core Services	0
Total	**272**

30 Council tax and business rates debt management

Council tax

30.1 The value of council tax debt raised in 2026/27 is £455.7m and £172.3m has been collected to date. The collection rate at 31 July 2026 is 37.81%, which is slightly more than the corresponding position from the previous year, which was 37.73%.

Council Tax collection rates (%)	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**
July	38.05	37.63	38.07	38.14	37.73	37.81

Business rates (non-domestic rates – NDR)

30.2 The value of business rates debt raised in 2026/27 is £123.3m and £53.2m has been collected to date. The collection rate at 31 July 2026 is 43.19%, which is slightly more than the corresponding position from the previous year, which was 42.88%.

NNDR collection rates (%)	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**
July	30.56	38.59	43.88	45.27	42.88	43.19

Write offs

30.3 The write-offs processed by the Revenues & Benefits Service during the year are shown in the table below.

Debts written off	**2025/26 £'000**
Council tax	456
Business rates	6
Housing Benefit overpayments	23
Total	**75**

31 Financial planning, strategy and the MTFP

31.1 The Council has already started the process of refreshing the MTFP and developing the budget strategy for 2027/28 and 2028/29, in line with the Local Government funding settlement which, as well as meeting new pressures, will also need to deal with any ongoing pressures from 2026/27.

32 Number and extent of contract exemptions

32.1 Appendix B includes the number and extent of contract exemptions, and the narrative is included in the appendix.

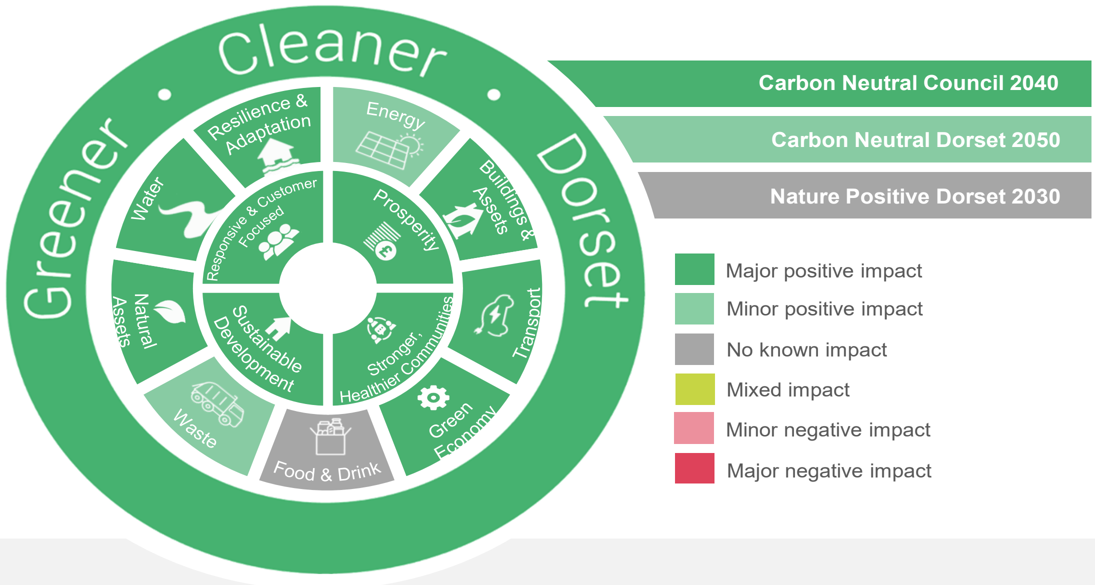
32.2 Contract breaches may occur when suppliers or the council fail to meet agreed terms, such as deadlines or service standards, posing financial, reputational, and legal risks. These breaches are typically operational contract management matters and remain confidential and excluded from standard reporting until they published in accordance with legislation.

33 Summary, conclusions and next steps

33.1 At the end of July 2026, the Council is forecasting a net revenue overspend of £8.136m, equivalent to 1.7% of the approved net budget of £466m. The forecast remains manageable in the context of the Council’s overall budget and reserve position, but it is not without risk

33.2 The next steps are to maintain monthly budget monitoring through Directorate and SLT review arrangements; strengthen mitigating actions in areas forecasting overspends; continue to review discretionary and controllable spend; progress delivery of agreed savings and transformation plans; and ensure that emerging pressures are reflected in the next MTFP update and future budget strategy. Further reports will continue to provide Cabinet with an updated view of the forecast outturn, delivery of savings, capital programme changes and the financial risks facing the Council

Appendix A – Climate wheel



Quantitative Impact on CEE targets (if known)

	Unit	Number of units (+/-)
2030 - Natural asset extent & condition	Ha	0
2040 - Operational Emissions	CO_2 (tonnes)	0

ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS

Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Strategy Commitments	**Impact**
Energy	minor positive impact
Buildings & Assets	major positive impact
Transport	major positive impact
Green Economy	major positive impact
Food & Drink	No known impact
Waste	minor positive impact
Natural Assets & Ecology	major positive impact
Water	major positive impact
Resilience and Adaptation	major positive impact

Corporate Plan Aims	**Impact**
Prosperity	strongly supports it
Stronger healthier communities	strongly supports it
Sustainable Development & Housing	strongly supports it
Responsive & Customer Focused	strongly supports it

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Responses -will this be incorporated into your proposal? How? And if not, why not?
Energy	
Find out energy use of buildings that are being brought into the Dorset Council carbon footprint, as this will affect our ability to hit our carbon reduction targets	
Find out energy use of any new build buildings that are being added to the Dorset Council carbon footprint, as this will affect our ability to hit our carbon reduction targets	
Support the acceleration of heating and energy and water efficiency through cavity and solid wall insulation, draught proofing, improved glazing and shading, and high energy and water efficient smart appliances	
Buildings & Assets	
No recommendations found for this category	
Transport	
No recommendations found for this category	
Green Economy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Food & Drink	
No recommendations found for this category	
Waste	
Look at ways to reduce the amount of waste produced	
Natural Assets & Ecology	
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	
No recommendations found for this category	

Appendix B – Commercial Exemptions

Contract exemptions, meanwhile, are permitted in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules ("CPR" which apply to the procurement award and management of contracts for goods, services and works). The council's CPR provide for advance approval to depart from the standard rules, where certain criteria are met; for example, to allow a contract to be awarded directly to one supplier, after investigating the market and identifying the only that supplier could perform the contract. Each exemption request and approval or rejection is documented.
A Section 5 (Local Government and Housing Act 1989) report is a formal legal report issued by the council's Monitoring Officer where it appears that any proposal, decision or omission of the council (by committee or officer) has or is likely to be unlawful or amount to maladministration or injustice. Section 5 reports, follow a separate public process and are not included in the paper. The Monitoring Officer has not issued any such reports in 2026/27.

Commercial Exemptions April to July 2026

The table below sets out details of the exemptions granted during the current year, including the number of exemptions by directorate and their associated value.

Exemptions	Number of exemptions*	Total value of exemptions (£)*
Adult Social Care	0	0
Children's Services	5	112,630
Economy & Environment	1	110,660
Housing & Prevention	0	0
Core Services	0	0
Total	**6**	**£223,290**

*Data is correct as submitted by internal stakeholders.

There were five exemptions for Children's Services during this period three relating to Alternative Provision, one relating to Families First Partnership Evaluation and the other is for a children's subscription which provides specialist social work learning resources, legal updates, practice guidance and direct work tools.

There was one exemption for Economy and Environment during this period relating to extended access at Sherborne Library.

Mosaic extension
Mosaic Software is a platform designed for social care professionals, offering case management and finance services. It records and monitors of pathways and provides a single view of an individual's needs and environment.

Ahead of the 4th September 2026 deadline urgent approval was required to trigger two +1 year extensions to the Mosaic contract, totalling £761,155.19, as the amount previously approved by Cabinet in 2023 (£510k) does not match the contract extension amount.

Procurement advised that internal approval is needed for the correct amount, since the original Cabinet approval was a placeholder and only covered the first 18 months, not the full contract period.

Legal compliance has been confirmed as the extensions are included in the original contract, but urgent approval is needed due to time constraints (contract runs to 4th September and Cabinet meets on 8th September).

Dorset Council

Business Case

Wimborne Community Sports Hub

19/08/2026

1

Contents

Document Control

Document Title	Wimborne Community Sports Hub
Version	1
Author	Rhiannon Jones/ Darren Spreadbury
Date	19/08/2026
Further copies from	

1. Executive Summary

As part of the Quarter Jack Park Barratt Homes housing development in Leigh Road, Wimborne, a 106 agreement was drawn up (pre LGR) stating that a Community Sports Hub would be delivered. The agreement is a legally binding contract between Barratt Homes and Dorset Council as a Local Planning Authority. The Community Sports Hub consists of a pavilion, car park, landscaping and pitches.

Barrat Homes will be responsible for delivering the pavilion, car park and landscaping. Overall, the total project cost is circa £5million. The 106 agreement states that Barratt Homes will contribute £1.6 million (indexed linked) towards the pitches and Dorset Council would deliver them - Dorset Council have received the monies. The cost of the pitches is £2,288,523.56 and Dorset Council have secured £600k from the Community Infrastructure Levy to make up the shortfall.

These funds will be used to procure 3.5 x grass sports pitches and 1 x artificial sports pitch, again as specifically stated in the 106 agreement with Barratt Homes building the pavilion, carpark and landscaping works.

The intension is to relocate two sporting teams from their current homes in Wimborne, Wimborne Rugby Club and Allendale Football Club. They have outgrown their current home with numbers increasing within their Junior Colts teams and a requirement for more pitch provision. The current facility lacks adequate amenities and parking, which leads to health and safety issues such as emergency vehicles not being able to gain access in and around Gordon Road and the associated housing estate where the rugby club currently resides.

Wimborne Town Council are the freeholder of the current Rugby facility on Gordon Road. The eventual freeholder is yet to be established; however, Dorset Council (DC) would like Wimborne TC to have the freehold. The lead tenant is intended to be Wimborne Rugby Club for the new sports Community Sports Hub on a long lease.

Recent increases in inflation, procurement costs and materials led to a distinct risk this project cannot be completed without extra funding. As such, £600K CIL funding that has been secured and will provide contingency as it caters to the top estimate of what potentially is required. If procured prices are more favourable, any remaining funding will be returned to the CIL.

2. Business Case details

Project Name	Wimborne Community Sports Hub
Project Sponsor	Paul Rutter
Project Manager	Darren Spreadbury
Service description	Leisure Arts and Culture is part of the Economy and Environment directorate and serves our communities in managing leisure centres, sports development, arts and culture through contracts grants and advice. This project is key in sports development and for the community of Wimborne to move two sporting clubs to a modern new home as part of a 106 agreement.
Partner organisation(s)	Barratt Homes

3. Strategic Case

3.1 The proposal

The new Community Sports Hub will mean Wimborne Rugby Club can move from their ageing facility, where they have outgrown and currently causes many traffic issues for residents and emergency vehicles on training evenings and match days. The new Hub will mean the club can grow their Colts and Junior sections as well as future proofing the club with modern facilities both on and off the pitch.

For Allendale Football Club this will be similar as they currently play at Redcotts in the middle of Wimborne where facilities are limited including carparking, this will allow them to grow as a club in the community.

It will increase leisure provision in East Dorset allowing many sports clubs and groups to book time on the 3G pitches and take advantage of the new indoor social settings.

3.2 The case for change

Dorset Council's Play Pitch Strategy assessed the supply and demand of playing pitches across Dorset. The East Dorset assessment concluded that there needs to be investment in quality facilities and that support should be given to other developments via planning and developers contributions to increase the offer for sports and physical activity in the community. It also states that work needs to be done to maintain and increase participation in sports and physical activity. The Community Sports Hub contributes towards these strategic recommendations by providing quality facilities and enabling growth of key sports in the area. The 106 agreement states DC will procure the pitches including the 3G and the developer will build the pavilion, car park and landscaping. As part of the 106 contributions the developer has given DC £1,688,523.56, with currently the pitch project looking to cost in the region of £2.288,523.56. This is an opportunity to capitalise on developer contributions for a capital scheme that benefits the community without relying on Dorset Council Capital Funding.

3.2.1 Alignment with commissioner objectives/priorities

A key priority for Dorset Council is "Communities For All" is where prevention and partnership most strongly paly into. The council's aims are to support communities to be active, to increase people's healthy life expectancy and reduce differences between areas. Leisure facilities will play a significant role in providing opportunities for all ages to lead a more physically active lifestyle

The Dorset Council Play Pitch Strategy and the Playing Pitch Strategy, and Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessments - Dorset Council also highlighted a need for an artificial pitch in the East Dorset area.

3.2.2 Fit with national policy

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990

A Section 106 (S106) agreement is a legally binding agreement between a developer and a local planning authority that helps make a development acceptable in planning terms. It is used to mitigate the impact of new development by securing affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, community facilities, or financial contributions towards local services. Any obligation must be necessary, directly related to the development, and proportionate to its impact.

- Sport England – Uniting the movement 2021-2031

Uniting the Movement is Sport England's 10-year strategy to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity, with a focus on equality, inclusion, and tackling barriers to participation.

- Dept Culture Media & Sport – Get Active 2023

Building a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity and making sure that the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations.

3.2.3 Customer user needs – current and future

The current facilities are not adequate for the Rugby and Football club and this new hub will meet the needs of these clubs while allowing other sports clubs to use the facilities. This meets the needs of the current Play Pitch Strategy as in section 3.2.

3.2.4 Improvement of current service delivery arrangements

No direct impact on Dorset council service delivery.

Potential scope for further development/scalability

No economies of scale to be achieved as is a standalone project. Not scalable.

3.2.5 Benefits and risks

Benefits:

Both clubs will grow due to moving to bigger sites. The pavilion comes with a large entertainment and social area, and this could be hired out to local groups, parties and events. The new additional sports facilities will be available to clubs and groups across a wide range of sports.

The Section106 agreement states DC will procure the pitches including the 3G and the developer will build the pavilion. As part of the Section 106 contributions the developer will give DC 1,688,523.56, with all the pitches estimated to cost in the region of 1.8-2.1m, this is a legal document and failure to delivery could result in claims from the developer and reputation in our east communities

Risks:

Operational risks during delivery have been identified such as aligning timescales of construction of the different elements. This can be mitigated by working in partnership with Barratt Homes.

A financial risk could be the increase of cost of construction and materials, but the mitigation is contingency built within the budget and identified potential sources of funding should the contingency be insufficient.

A slight reputational risk has been identified should Dorset Council be unable to deliver but the mitigation is through governance, contingency in funding. It is deemed a small risk as it is unlikely to be substantial increase in cost, should the contingency be insufficient.

3.2.6 Constraints and dependencies

- Dependency on material and construction costs remaining stable. Mitigation is to keep up to date on any factors that might increase costs. Also contingency of £180k is built into the budget.
- Dependency on available materials. This will be scoped in the tender exercise.

4. Economic Case

This section of the Business Case assesses the economic costs and benefits of the proposal to society as a whole, and spans the entire period covered by the proposal. These are not the same as the financial costs to the decision-maker. You should present the key findings of your financial analysis and the overall conclusions.

3.3 Appraisals of costs and benefits

Significant funding £1,688,523.56 has been secured through developer contributions. CIL funding of £600,000 has also been secured to give a total of £2,288,523.56 which should full fund this project. Both clubs and local companies are keen to invest in the site through daily operational use, sponsorship and potentially developing more of the site once the Sports Hub is complete.

Ongoing R&M costs will be the responsibility of the tenant or freehold owner as set out in the lease terms once completed.

3.4 Critical success factors to achieving the Economic Case

CIL has been agreed by cabinet to complete the finances for the grass and artificial pitches.

Cabinet endorsement and approval of the project to go on the Capital Programme for Delivery. The business case will go for approval in the Q1 report.

Commissioning of experienced contractor for delivery of pitches which are compliant with regulations and work on a practical level for the community

Transfer of pitches to appropriate third party. This is already in progress with the end owner of the freehold being identified and options for transfer being discussed at early stages so that all parties are prepared.

3.5 Risk assessment

Financial risk: As mentioned above the funds for the project will be secured through developer contributions and CIL funding however should material costs rise the project could come up short financially. The CIL provides some contingency though as it was based on the higher end of costs.

Mitigation: There is a contingency of £180k in the budget. Should costs increase, the project manager will look at where savings could be made Should more be required, an application for capital budget would be made.

Delivery risk: There is a risk that the pavilion will be built before the pitches are ready.

Mitigation: The developer timeline for the build of the pavilion and carpark needs to be agreed and then delivered in association with the pitches timeline so the project completes in line with each other.

5. Commercial Case

The Commercial Case demonstrates that the project will result in a viable and well-structured procurement solution. This section should include details relating to the planning and management of the procurement. It requires the buyer to see how the service will be procured competitively and in accordance with procurement requirements.

3.6 Procurement strategy

The procurement strategy would be to use Alliance Leisure Framework to be able to procure a known sports pitch contractor as there is not the expertise inhouse. Procurement colleagues have met with Alliance Leisure and see no issues to utilise that framework. Associated risks again come down to the market at that time and whether funds are enough to cover the procurement of the pitches

3.7 Contractual arrangements

Alliance Leisure will procure the contractor on behalf of DC and manage the contract delivery, then DC will manage the overall project. Alliance Leisure are on the Dorset Council procurement framework.

3.8 Charging mechanism

Alliance Leisure will manage the procurement and stages of payment will be clear within the programme for DC to make staged payments. Developer contributions of £1,688,523.56 have been secured with £600k CIL monies.

6. Financial Case

The Financial Case demonstrates that the project will result in a fundable and affordable arrangement for the decision-maker. You need to summarise the overall capital and revenue affordability of the project, including any additional funding requirements. There are different ways to present this information that will be appropriate for different projects; some template tables are included below as examples. For further information, please see HM Treasury's guidance by clicking here.

3.9 Capital and revenue requirements

Description	Value	Start date	End date
Capital	£2,288,523.56		
Revenue	£0		

3.10 Resource requirements

Total funding required				
What is it for? (equipment, facilities, external expertise etc)	When is the cost incurred?			
	Year 1 2026/27	Year 2 2027/28	Year 3 2028/29	Year 4 2029/30
3.5 X grass sports pitches and 1 x 4G pitch	£1,144,261.50	£1,144,261.50		
1 x 4G pitch				
Total	£1,144,261.50	£1,144,261.50		

Funding currently secured (if any)				
Where is it from? (Grant, revenue budget, capital budget – include cost centres if known)	When will the money be available?			
	Year 1 2026/27	Year 2 2027/28	Year 3 2028/29	Year 4 2029/30
Barratt Homes	£1,688,523.56			
CIL	£600,000			

Total	£2,288,523			

3.11 Impact on income and expenditure account

No impact.

3.12 Financial benefits

3.12.1 Financial benefits table

No financial benefits.

3.12.2 Requirements in order to realise savings

No cash savings.

3.13 Non-financial benefits

This development will provide community benefits:

- Growth and development opportunity to the resident clubs. They have outgrown their current premises and having new premises and pitches will allow the clubs to expand and have increased capacity.
- The pavilion includes a large entertainment and social area, and this could be hired out to local groups, parties and events, creating a community space.
- The new additional sports facilities will be available to clubs and groups across a wide range of sports.
- Future proofing of the sports pitches for the community by creating pitches that meet modern requirements and standards, attracting more people to the sport and enabling pitches to last longer.

7. Management case

The management case demonstrates that the project is capable of being delivered successfully, in accordance with recognised best practice.

This section requires the project to demonstrate that there are robust arrangements in place for project management, change management and contract management, the delivery of benefits and the management and mitigation of risk (you could include a risk and benefits register as appendices.

It also requires the project team to specify the arrangements for monitoring during implementation and for post implementation evaluation, and the contingency plans for risk management.

3.14 Programme and project management plans

The project manager will be the manager for leisure cultural and commissioning who sits in the Leisure Services Team. The project will be delivered by an external contractor appoint through the Alliance Leisure Framework to ensure they have suitable experience and necessary qualifications. The project manager will also act as contract manager.

The project will have oversight from the Service Manager for Leisure, Arts and Culture, and can help with relevant advice and decision making on a day to day basis. The Service Manager reports directly into the Executive Director for Economy and Environment. This is the Scheme of Delegation for escalation of any issues.

The project will be monitored through Capital Strategic Asset Management Group and will be on the Capital Programme. The project has also been through the Property Asset Management Group board for comment.

3.15 Change management arrangements/requirements

This project does not involve change management.

3.16 Approach to management and delivery of benefits

The main activity of the project is outsourced to a contractor and there will be a project manager to oversee the project through its lifecycle. The project manager will also carry out the project management.

3.17 Approach to risk management

A risk register will be created the project and will be monitored and adjusted according to any changes in the factors affecting the project and mitigation sought in the most affordable and satisfactory manner. Escalations of risks will done where appropriate though the governance structure.

3.18 Monitoring during implementation

Each stage of the project will be monitored by the project manager against key milestones, with any intervention needed done as early as possible.

3.19 Post implementation evaluation arrangements

The project will be measured against the delivery milestone of meeting the Section 106 agreement. There are no further evaluation measures required by Dorset Council.

3.20 Contingency arrangements/exit strategy

The project has been designed to ensure that significant contingency is built into the delivery of the project and that unforeseen variations in cost or other circumstance can be managed within the total cost and timeframe of the project.

The likelihood of the pitches failing is small due to the nature of the project. The intent is that the pitches are transferred to the Rugby club once completed. If at some point in the future, the rugby club ceases to exist, arrangements could be made for it be transferred to another party such as Wimborne Town Council or alternative arrangements depending on the circumstances and most appropriate pathway.

8. Conclusions and salient issues for further consideration

3.21 Conclusions

The key points regarding the proposal is:

- Barratt Homes have entered into a section 106 agreement with the Dorset Council Planning Authority to deliver a pavilion and pitches for community benefit.
- As part of the agreement, Dorset Council are delivering the pitches element, the tenant will be Wimborne Rugby Club once complete, and the end owner of the freehold is to be decided but is likely to be Wimborne Town Council.
- Majority of the funding for the capital works will come from Barratt Homes under the section 106 agreement who have contributed £1,688,523.56 , with an additional £600,000 from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund. Any excess funding will be given back to the CIL.
- The capital work delivery is being outsourced through approved procurement routes, and the project is being managed by the manager for cultural commissioning and leisure.

9. Appendices

You could include your implementation plan, risk register, benefits register in an appendix. You could also include comments from project team leads and partners to support your case.

- 20201222 Agreement (section 106 agreement) (attached)
- Evidence of cabinet approval for CIL- https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/g6239/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Apr-2026%2018.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10
- 04082026 Wimborne 3G & Grass Pitches Fee Proposal V1 (attached)

Cabinet

8 September 2026

Additional Procurement Pipeline Report – more than £500k (2026-27) and Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025-2026

For Decision

Cabinet Member:
Cllr S Clifford, Resourses & Finance

Local Councillor(s): All

Senior Leadership Team:
S Cremer - Director, Resources

Report author and job title: Richard Freed, Service Manager for Commercial and Procurement

Email: richard.freed@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Key Decisions

Report status: Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

1. **Executive summary (maximum of 500)**

The Dorset Council budget for 2026/27 was approved by Full Council on 10 February 2026. A Procurement Pipeline Report for activity more than £500k for 2026–27 was approved by Cabinet on 19 May 2026. This paper follows on from those approvals and seeks Cabinet approval to launch additional procurement activity not covered in the May 2026 report, and to approve the Council's Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for 2025–2026. It also supports transparency by identifying expected tender activity where these are known in advance. This paper has historically proceeded to Cabinet twice a year and its purpose is as follows.

For procurement activity, a Key Decision, which requires Cabinet prior approval is a proposed procurement with financial cost or saving to the council of more than £500k. This report provides notice of the additional planned / known procurement activities that will need Cabinet prior Key Decision approval for 2026-27 and onwards. The Commercial & Procurement Service has worked with colleagues across the Directorates and reviewed the contract management system to establish an additional procurement programme for 2026-27 and onwards. Procurement activities, within that programme, that are known / likely to exceed the £500k Key Decision threshold are set out in Appendix 1 for Cabinet's consideration.

Under Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA), the Transparency in Supply Chains (TISC) provision requires all commercial organisations with an annual turnover of £36 million or more to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement each year. This report provides the annual update of the Council's Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for the financial year 2025–2026. The Council publishes an annual Modern Slavery Transparency Statement, consistent with the principles of section 54 of the MSA and its commitment to transparent and ethical supply chains.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of this report in respect of proposed additional more than £500k procurement activity for 2026-27 that are listed in Appendix 1 and the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and to approve and agree:

2.1.1 the commencement of each of the procurement procedures (or variation) listed in Appendix 1 (subject to an approved and available budget, business case) to the Report.

2.1.2 to delegate authority to the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder, after consultation with the relevant Director to make the following decisions:

2.1.2.1 To agree final procurement documentation developed and refined within the broad scope of the procurement briefing notes (available on request)

2.1.2.2 To agree contract award subject to an approved and available budget (through a recommendation to award report provided the tender outcome is within + 5% of the budget agreed with Finance)

2.1.2.3 To note that approval of procurement activity within Appendix 1 includes authority to establish, join or utilise framework agreements, dynamic markets, and similar procurement arrangements where identified in the supporting procurement briefing note, together with the subsequent award of call-off contracts and associated agreements in accordance with the Council's rules.

2.1.2.4 Approve the draft Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025-2026 for publication at Appendix 2.

3. **Reason for the recommendation(s)**

3.1 Additional Procurement Pipeline: Cabinet is required to approve all Key Decisions with financial consequences of more than £500k. It is good governance therefore to provide Cabinet with a summary of all proposed procurements, that individually are estimated to be a total value of more than £500k, prior to procurement procedures formally commencing.

3.2 Cabinet is asked to delegate authority to the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder (in consultation with the relevant Executive Director) to agree final procurement documentation to be used for each of the procurements listed in Appendix 1. Those procurement documents will be developed and refined, based on the information and scope set out within each of the procurement briefing notes (prepared by service officer leads in advance of this report, reviewed by the Director of Resources and Portfolio Holder and available on request). The final procurement documents may include refinements to the scope and description, term or value of the contract to be procured, or the route to market, to take account of up-to-date information including relating to the Council's transformation programme.

3.3 Cabinet is asked to note that while delegation of authority is granted, it is not mandatory to exercise it, and there are circumstances where it might be prudent to bring a Key Decision outlined in this paper back to Cabinet; for example, sensitive decisions, high value decisions, or decisions which would be outside of the scope of the delegation or beyond the scope of the original briefing note informing this report.

3.4 For the avoidance of doubt, whoever holds the delegation has authority to make the final decision; whether to decide or refer a matter back to Cabinet.

3.5 Whoever holds the delegation must exercise it in consultation with named consultees. They may also consult with other members such as informal cabinet or professional and service officers. The report enables Cabinet to identify whether any reports for procurement activities should be brought to Cabinet for specific executive decision, otherwise they will be dealt with under the delegation outlined.

3.6 Modern Slavery Transparency Statement: Publishing a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement on an annual basis demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to reducing the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking in its supply chains.

4. The report

4.1 Additional Procurement Pipeline: This report provides for Cabinet consideration, in Appendix 1, additional procurement activity within the 2026-2027 procurement programme (and onwards), which are known/likely to secure contracts exceeding the £500k threshold (or variations). The Council maintains a pipeline of planned procurement activity to support good governance, market engagement, budget planning and delivery of value for money. The Council is nevertheless not obliged to launch the procurements listed or award a contract. The list at Appendix 1 should be read as an indicative pipeline: individual procurements will still be subject to the appropriate business case, budget confirmation, service approval, legal advice where required, and compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Procurement law and best practice place a greater emphasis on transparency, planning and early visibility of contracting activity. The pipeline supports market preparation by giving suppliers a forward view of likely opportunities. Where appropriate, services will be expected to consider early market engagement, suitable public sector frameworks, internal collaborative opportunities, social value, modern slavery risk, climate and environmental considerations, and proportionate contract management arrangements.

4.2 Where Cabinet approves the establishment of a framework agreement, dynamic market or similar contracting arrangement, that approval is intended to cover the creation of the arrangement up to the maximum value and scope. Subject to compliance with the Council's rules, individual call-off contracts, mini-competitions, direct awards, statements of work and task orders awarded under such approved arrangements do not normally require a separate Cabinet decision where they remain within the approved scope, value and governance framework.

4.3 Dorset Council continues its wider organisational transformation and modernisation programme to support the development of a modern, sustainable unitary authority. As services evolve, procurements will where appropriate consider future operating models and seek to build in proportionate commercial flexibility, including suitable break clauses, extension options, mechanisms to scale services up or down, collaboration opportunities, and contract provisions that support organisational change. This approach helps ensure that contracts remain fit for purpose throughout their term while supporting value for money and reducing avoidable future procurement activity. Alongside this transition, the Council will continue to review and update supporting commercial documentation, including administrative changes to the Contract Procedure Rules, Commercial Strategy and associated guidance, to ensure alignment with legislative changes, organisational priorities and lessons learned through implementation.

4.4 Modern Slavery Transparency Statement: The MSA was introduced in 2015 to provide victims of modern slavery with greater protections and police with greater powers. Section 54, The Transparency in Supply Chains Provision (TISC) of the MSA requires commercial entities with an annual turnover of £36m or more to publish annually a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement. Appendix 2 provides the proposed Statement for financial year 2025-2026 for Cabinet's consideration, as produced by a cross-directorate grouping, as a revision to the previous published

Statement. The statement summarises the Council's approach to identifying and managing modern slavery risks

5. **Alternative options considered**

5.1 Procurement Forward Plan: An alternative approach is for Services to continue submitting separate and standalone Key Decision procurement reports to Cabinet for approval. Services can do so, outside of the twice-yearly cycle and for decisions that they deem require additional scrutiny. It is not recommended to delay approving the additional pipeline as it could delay service delivery, reduce transparency over planned procurement activity, and limit the Council's ability to undertake early market engagement or secure value for money. Individual procurement options, including framework call-off, open competition, collaboration, contract extension or modification where lawful, will be considered as part of each procurement strategy.

5.2 Modern Slavery: Relating to modern slavery risks and actions, Cabinet may wish to consider whether the issue of a modern slavery statement warrants a dedicated, standalone report, given its significance and cross-cutting implications. Combining the matters represents a proportionate approach and reflects the relationship between procurement governance and ethical supply chains.

5.3 No other alternative options have been identified at this stage. The proposed approach is considered the most appropriate to meet the Council's objectives, ensure compliance with legal and procurement requirements, and manage associated risks effectively. The decision reflects current operational needs and strategic priorities.

6. **Legal considerations**

6.1 The Council acknowledges its responsibilities under the MSA 2015 and other relevant legislation, and procurement laws e.g. Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (for pre 2025 contracts) and Procurement Act 2023. Dorset Council's Legal Services have been consulted to ensure that procurement practices, supplier engagement, and policy commitments are aligned with statutory duties and evolving case law. It is recognised that some legislative areas remain untested, and the potential for legal challenge cannot be fully eliminated. The Council will continue to monitor legal developments and seek advice to mitigate risk and uphold compliance across its operations and supply chains.

7. Financial implications

7.1 Procurement Pipeline: Inclusion within the pipeline does not in itself approve expenditure. Funding and affordability will be confirmed through the relevant business case, budget approval and governance processes prior to commencement or variation. The following will be considered by the relevant accountable service project team as part of the business case / procurement project initiation and sourcing report and rationale for each procurement: how the contract and supplier(s) will be effectively managed to deliver saving targets that are incorporated into the financial plan; governance; whether full funding is available in the budget provision, after savings have been accounted for (and incorporating break points and scale up / down provisions due to budget changes in future years); and the intended best approach to assess the contract performance and supplier relationship to manage expectations in respect of annual price increase amid a higher level of financial pressures that has not been experienced for many years.

7.2 Modern Slavery: No additional financial implications. This is a report in respect of a Statement which reflects on the Council’s current position and outputs for financial year 2025-2026 regarding modern slavery.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

8.1 Procurement Pipeline: To be considered by the relevant project team as part of the business case / procurement project initiation and sourcing report and rationale for each procurement if applicable. There are no direct environmental, climate or ecology implications arising from approval of the pipeline itself.

8.2 Modern Slavery: Not applicable. This is a report in respect of a Statement which reflects on the Council’s current position and outputs for financial year 2025-2026 regarding modern slavery.

9. Well-being and health implications

9.1 Procurement Pipeline: to be considered by the relevant project team as part of the business case / procurement project initiation and sourcing report and rationale for each procurement if applicable. Approval of the pipeline does not create direct well-being or health implications.

9.2 Modern Slavery: Publishing annually a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement supports well-being and health implications within the Council’s supply chains and wider communities, by ensuring transparency of the Council’s policy and approach to responding to and mitigating the risk of modern slavery.

10. Other implications

10.1 None, although wider implications will be considered by the relevant project teams for each relevant procurement and for modern slavery by the relevant leads.

11. Risk implications

11.1 Procurement Pipeline: The level of risk is to be considered by the relevant project team as part of the business case / procurement project initiation and sourcing report and rationale for each procurement. The purpose is to ensure that any potential issues are anticipated and mitigated to minimise their impact on the Council's objectives and operations. Effective risk management supports the Council in achieving its goals while ensuring compliance with regulations and maintaining financial stability. Financial pressures to the Council's budgets remain. All decisions and recommendations must therefore be mindful of the actual and potential impact of financial pressures, especially when committing future funding. Additionally, it is recognised that where legislation is untested and there will be legal challenges across the public sector. The Council has dedicated legal advice to minimise the risk although the risk cannot be eliminated. The possibility of facing such challenges can never be completely removed. Risks will be mitigated through procurement planning, Cabinet approval where required, legal and finance input, suitable route-to-market analysis, and contract management arrangements for individual procurements. The current risk is assessed as Medium because the pipeline includes high-value and potentially complex procurements subject to market, affordability, legal and delivery risks. The residual risk is assessed as Low on the basis that each procurement will be subject to confirmed funding, proportionate procurement planning, legal and financial input, and appropriate contract-management arrangements.

11.2 Modern Slavery: Dorset Council is committed to preventing modern slavery and human trafficking in all aspects of its operations and supply chains. We recognise our responsibility to uphold ethical standards and safeguard vulnerable individuals through robust procurement practices, staff training, and partnership working. This statement outlines our approach to identifying risks, promoting transparency, and ensuring compliance with the MSA.

11.3 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Low

12. Equalities

12.1 Procurement Pipeline: To be considered by the relevant project team as part of the business case / procurement project initiation and sourcing report and rationale for each procurement if applicable. Approval of the pipeline does not in itself change any policy, service or eligibility criteria.

12.2 Modern Slavery: Publishing an annual Modern Slavery Transparency Statement is a positive policy in that it is setting out the Council's commitment to opposing Modern Slavery and acting ethically with integrity and transparency.

13. Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1: 2026-27 Additional Procurement Pipeline where the contract value is expected to exceed £500k.

13.2 Appendix 2: Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025-2026.

14. Background papers

14.1 Decision - Procurement Pipeline Report - over £500k (2026-27) - Dorset Council

15. Report sign-off

15.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

Appendix 1a - New Procurement Activity (£500,000 or more)

This appendix provides visibility of planned procurement and commercial activity where the estimated contract value, framework value, dynamic market value or income-generating arrangement is expected to exceed £500,000. The pipeline supports transparency, forward planning, market engagement and good governance. The information reflects the best available data at the time of reporting and should be regarded as indicative (including route to market). Procurement timescales, estimated values, contract terms, scope and service requirements may change over time to reflect budget decisions, service demand, organisational change, market conditions and evolving Council priorities. Inclusion within the pipeline does not in itself approve expenditure, contract award, contract modification or future funding commitments. All procurement activity remains subject to appropriate business cases, confirmed funding, compliance with the Council's Constitution, Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules and applicable procurement legislation. Where Cabinet approves the establishment or use of a framework agreement, dynamic market or similar commercial arrangement, subsequent call-offs, mini-competitions, direct awards, task orders and statements of work will normally be undertaken through the Council's Scheme of Delegation, provided they remain within the approved scope, value and governance framework.

Ref.	Contract Name	Contract Description	Cabinet Member	Executive Director/Director	Contract Term (Initial)	Estimated spend over Initial Contract Term	Term Extensions beyond initial (Recommended)	Estimated spend over Term Extensions (Recommended)	Estimated Total Spend	Anticipated Route to Market
1	Application and Removal of Road Studs and Road Markings	Provision of road marking and road stud installation and removal services, including associated traffic management to support Dorset Council's highway maintenance and capital works programmes.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	5 years	£ 18,500,000	2 x 2 year + 1 x 1 year extensions	£ 18,500,000	£ 37,000,000	Tender - Open
2	Insurance for Dorset Council	Appointment of one or more insurers to provide the various insurance policies required by Dorset Council.	Cllr Simon Clifford	Sean Cremer	4 years	£ 4,000,000	1 x 2 years extension	£ 2,000,000	£ 6,000,000	Tender - Open
3	Printing of Election and Electoral Registration Materials	All external printing requirements for the delivery of the electoral registration and election function.	Cllr Nick Ireland	Jonathan Mair	4 years	£ 1,825,000	2 x 1 year extensions	£ 1,070,000	£ 2,895,000	Tender - Open
4	Sexual and Reproductive Health Services	Integrated sexual and reproductive health services for residents, including contraception, testing, treatment and prevention across BCP Council and Dorset Council areas. The contract supports accessible, high-quality care, reduces health inequalities, and provides a single coordinated service across both council areas. Estimated Total Spend: £42,170,911, broken down: BCP Council: £23,194,001, Dorset Council: £18,976,910.	Cllr Matt Bell	Sam Crowe	5 years	£ 13,283,944	1 x 2 years extensions	£ 5,692,966	£ 18,976,910	Most Suitable Provider Process (Health Regulations)
5	New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) Inspection Service	A self-financing contract to provide Dorset Council with a team of qualified New Roads and Streetworks inspectors to deliver statutory Streetwork inspection services.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ 1,320,000	1 x 2 year extension	£ 880,000	£ 2,200,000	Tender - Open
6	Highways & Engineering Maintenance Services Framework	Provision of specialist highway and structural maintenance services including sheet piling, soil nailing, scaffolding, diving services, specialist treatments and water control solutions to support Dorset Highways' maintenance and construction programmes.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ 36,000,000	1 x 3 years + 1 x 2 year extensions	£ 60,000,000	£ 96,000,000	Open Framework
7	Supply of Electricity and Gas	Supply of electricity and gas to Dorset Council through a compliant public sector arrangement, including energy purchasing and account management services. Resulting in two separate contracts, one for the supply of mains electricity and the other for the supply of mains gas. Electricity £19,000,000; Gas £2,300,000.	Cllr Nick Ireland	Steven Ford	4 years	£ 21,300,000	N/A	N/A	£ 21,300,000	Call off from Framework/DPS
8	Road Surface Treatments Dynamic Market	Procurement of a range of surface treatments to support essential local highway maintenance including premium surface dressing, micro-asphalt, carriageway retexturing, joint sealing, asphalt preservation, in-situ road recycling and spray injection patching. (spend is dependent on future funding and schemes)	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	10 years	£ 300,000,000	N/A	N/A	£ 300,000,000	Dynamic Market
9	Vehicle Parts Managed Service Contract	Supply of vehicle parts and associated services for the Council's vehicle fleet.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	5 years	£ 6,000,000	2 x 1 year extensions	£ 2,400,000	£ 8,400,000	Tender - Open
10	Purchase of Replacement Buses for Dorset Travel	Purchase of replacement buses for Dorset Travel.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	12 months	£ 1,654,735	N/A	N/A	£ 1,654,735	Call off from Framework/DPS
11	Purchase of Refuse Collection Vehicles	Supply of twenty-one Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) for Waste Services as part of the approved fleet programme.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	12 months	£ 5,152,000	N/A	N/A	£ 5,152,000	Call off from Framework/DPS
12	Weymouth Town Bridge - Mechanical and Electrical Bridge Operation and Maintenance	Provision of specialist mechanical and electrical maintenance, inspection and operational support services for Weymouth Town Bridge, including emergency response and out-of-hours support.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	10 years	£ 2,000,000	1 x 5 year extension	£ 1,000,000	£ 3,000,000	Tender - Open
13	Planning, Building Control, Land Charges, and Highways Road Adoption Back Office and Customer Services system	A contract for a software system that helps deliver technical, administrative and customer services for Planning, Building Control, Road Adoption and Land Charges.	Cllr Shane Bartlett	Jan Britton	3 years	£ 650,000	2 x 2 year extensions	£ 800,000	£ 1,450,000	Call off from Framework/DPS
14	Highways Construction Materials Framework	Supply of highway and structural maintenance products and materials including stone, coated asphalt surfacing and ready mixed concrete. Materials are required for collection or delivery mainly to highways depots and work sites in Dorset.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ 10,125,000	1 x 3 years + 1 x 2 years extensions	£ 16,875,000	£ 27,000,000	Open Framework
15	Accessible Translation, Interpretation and Communication Support Services	Accessible translation, interpretation and communication support services to help residents, service users and employees access council information and services when they have language, hearing, visual, literacy or other communication needs. Services include interpretation, translation, British Sign Language (BSL), accessible formats and related communication support.	Cllr Ben Wilson	Lisa Cotton	4 years	£ 2,000,000	1 x 2 years extensions	£ 1,000,000	£ 3,000,000	Call off from Framework/DPS

16	Laboratory and Remote Testing for DNA, Drugs and Alcohol	DNA, drug and alcohol testing used across Dorset Council to: Support safety requirements within the Economy and Environment directorate for drivers of Council vehicles and for frontline staff. Inform work and decisions with children and their families within the Children's Services directorate, particularly where the courts may be involved.	Cllr Clare Sutton	Paul Dempsey	3 years	£ 825,000	4 x 1 years extensions	£ 1,100,000	£ 1,925,000	Tender - Open
17	Passenger Transport – Supported Public Bus Services	Provision of a core network of supported bus services across Dorset, helping residents and visitors travel between rural communities, market towns and key destinations such as schools, healthcare facilities, employment centres and shopping areas. The procurement will support the future development of Dorset's supported public transport network.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ 15,600,000	2 x 2 years extensions	£ 23,100,000	£ 38,700,000	Call off from Framework/DPS

Appendix 1b - Changes to previously approved Procurement Activity

This appendix provides visibility of material changes to procurement and commercial activity previously approved through the Council's governance processes, including changes to contract value, duration, scope, delivery model or other significant commercial arrangements. The purpose of this appendix is to support transparency and ensure Cabinet awareness of proposed changes before implementation. The information reflects the best available data at the time of reporting and should be regarded as indicative. Contract values, durations and service requirements may continue to evolve in response to service demand, budget decisions, organisational change, market conditions and Council priorities. Any material change remains subject to the Council's Constitution, Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules and applicable procurement legislation. The Council maintains a no-retrospective-approval approach and expects significant procurement and contractual changes to be considered through the appropriate governance route before implementation.

Updates - forward looking additional spend/time/scope beyond the original approval

Ref.	Contract Name	Contract Description	Cabinet Member	Executive Director/Director	Contract Term (Initial)	Actual Total Contract spend to date	What is changing & why?	Changing from - original contract spend value	Changing to - new contract spend value	Changing from - original contract duration	Changing to - new contract duration
A	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Service 2-Shaftesbury to Gillingham (subsequently renamed as Core Route 2 (CR2)) – South West Coaches	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	2 years	£ 933,585	The proposed modifications will extend the existing contracts for up to 12 months to ensure continuity of service pending future procurement decisions, while introducing targeted service improvements, including minor timetable revisions to improve reliability, punctuality and connectivity, and new Saturday services on selected routes to enhance access to employment, education, healthcare, shopping and leisure opportunities. The changes do not alter the overall nature of the contracts and are expected to deliver improved accessibility, greater social inclusion and enhanced public transport provision.	£ 1,829,360	£ 2,992,311	4 years	5 years
B	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Service 3-Sturminster Newton to Gillingham (subsequently renamed as Core Route 3 (CR3)) – South West Coaches	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	2 years						
C	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Service 4-Yeovil to Blandford (subsequently renamed as Core Route 4 (CR4)) - First Buses of Somerset (First South West Limited)	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	2 years	£ 929,801		£ 1,956,041	£ 2,984,237	4 years	5 years
D	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Service 5-Dorchester to Yeovil (subsequently renamed as Core Route 5 (CR5)) – South West Coaches	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	2 years	£ 669,376		£ 1,295,000	£ 1,864,943	4 years	5 years
E	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Service Core Route 6 (CR6)-Bridport-Beaminster-Crewkerne-Yeovil - First Bus Wessex, Dorset and South Somerset (First Hampshire & Dorset Limited)	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	2 years	£ 689,183		£ 1,367,256	£ 2,127,933	4 years	5 years
F	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Service 1-Blandford to Shaftesbury (subsequently renamed as Core Route 7 (CR7)) - Damory (Go South Coast)	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	2 years	£ 334,114		£ 703,890	£ 1,019,310	4 years	5 years
G	Public Bus Services – Core Routes	Public Bus Services 8 & 9-Blandford to Dorchester & Weymouth (subsequently renamed as Core Route 8 (CR8) and Core Route 9 (CR9) respectively) - Damory (Go South Coast)	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ 1,600,159		£ 2,070,800	£ 2,260,159	5 years	6 years
H	All-age Appropriate Adults Service	Supports vulnerable adults, children and young people during police interviews when they are suspected of an offence. Appropriate Adults help people understand what is happening, protect their rights and welfare, and ensure they can take part fairly. The service is jointly funded by local partners	Cllr Steve Robinson	Julia Ingram	3 years	£ 32,480	£500k estimate previously approved has not been exceeded. Seeking further Cabinet approval for the actual contract value, plus an additional spend limit to provide capacity and flexibility to respond to potential future growth in demand over the lifetime of the contract, including the optional extension periods.	£ 500,000	£ 950,000	4 years	7 years
I	Highways Waste and Recycling Framework	The provision of suitably permitted facilities for the disposal and recycling of various highway maintenance wastes including mixed construction wastes, asphalt, concrete, sand and stone. Facilities will need to be in or near Dorset and will serve the requirements of Dorset Council/ BCP (Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council).	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ -	Seeking revised Cabinet approval requested to increase the Framework value from the previously approved £2.2m to £30m over the maximum eight-year term following updated forecasting, market engagement and changes in disposal infrastructure and market conditions. The value has increased as Department for Transport funding has significantly risen, meaning a far greater quantity of existing tar bound roads will need to be replaced.	£ 2,200,000	£ 30,000,000	No change the original approval covered an 8 year term	N/A
J	Framework for the Supply of Operated and Self-Operated Plant Hire	The hire of a range of plant, equipment and vehicles (operated and non-operated / hand-held and driven) to supplement Dorset Council's own resources in a flexible manner to cover periods of peak demand.	Cllr Jack Jeanes	Jan Britton	3 years	£ -	The proposed procurement remains consistent with the approach approved by Cabinet in March 2025. The only change requiring further approval is the increase in the estimated contract value in advance of the tender opportunity being published.	£ 13,500,000	£ 47,250,000	No change the original approval covered an 8 year term	N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025-2026

This statement sets out Dorset Council's approach to identifying and addressing the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in its operations and supply chains This statement is made pursuant to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Dorset Council's Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for the financial year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Introduction

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. There is no typical victim of slavery. Victims can be men, women, or children of all ages and nationalities. The following definitions are encompassed within the term 'modern slavery' for the purposes of the Modern Slavery Act 2015:

- 'slavery' is where the ownership is exercised over a person
- 'servitude' involves the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion
- 'forced or compulsory labour' involves work or service extracted from any person under menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily
- 'human trafficking' concerns arranging or facilitating the travel of another with a view to exploiting them. It is irrelevant whether the person consents to the travel. Both modern slavery and human trafficking are crimes. Trafficking is not limited to people coming from abroad; it can happen within the UK too (from one region to another).

Our Organisation

Dorset Council Plan 2024-2029 was approved by Full Council on 5 December 2024 and is founded on a vision of working together to create a fairer, more prosperous and more sustainable Dorset for current and future generations. This ambitious and bold Council Plan sets out four key priorities to be delivered by 2029 to help us tackle some significant and complex challenges:

- provide high-quality and affordable housing
- grow our economy
- communities for all
- respond to the climate and nature crisis

These priorities are underpinned by our principles of partnership and prevention.

Inclusiveness is the heartbeat of our organisation, and our values are:

- Respect
- Openness
- Together
- Curiosity
- Accountability

We are committed to opposing Modern Slavery in all its forms and recognise the important role we can play as a public sector organisation in its identification and disruption.

Modern slavery is a complex and often hidden crime, requiring a proactive confident response in our efforts to identify and support victims and those vulnerable to exploitation by others.

We do not tolerate any form of Modern Slavery, and we are committed to acting ethically with integrity and transparency in all that we do, whether alongside our internal workforce or externally with partners and suppliers. The council has Safeguarding Slavery Leads (SSLs) located within each Directorate. These roles provide important support, guidance, and signposting when concerns about modern slavery arise.

We have also developed internal guidance and a proportionate risk assessment approach to support the Dorset Council implementation of the National Health Service (Procurement, Slavery and Human Trafficking) Regulations 2025 (which came into force on 17 May 2026). This applies only to procurements for the purposes of health services and goods in England that fall within the scope of the Regulations, including relevant Dorset Council procurements, and does not apply to all Council procurement. We will keep under review the implications of the National Health Service (Procurement, Slavery and Human Trafficking) Regulations 2025, which strengthen risk-based due diligence expectations for goods and services and how this is implemented in the public sector.

We are committed to thoroughly investigating all alerts to potential modern slavery within our provider networks and supply chains, with learning being used to further develop and strengthen practice. This includes questions arising internally or from the public.
A cuckooing protocol developed by housing staff alongside third sector and provider partners continue to be developed as it becomes embedded.

The Council is a lead partner of the Pan-Dorset Anti-Slavery Partnership that works collaboratively across both Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Councils in all matters relating to modern slavery and exploitation. New local self-assessment and performance frameworks have been developed and adopted by all partners. This work is crucial in enabling a coordinated multi-agency response to this complex and multi-faceted crime.

Our Supply Chain

Over half of the Council's annual budget is spent on buying external goods, services and works. Given the scale of our external spend, we recognise the importance of effective procurement processes and contract management that takes measures to identify and mitigate modern slavery within our supply chains.

It is a requirement, within our internal project initiation process (pre-procurement) for project teams to evidence their assessment of modern slavery risk in respect of the requirements to be procured. This includes what would be their approach within the procurement process to address any identified risk, and how it is proposed this will be managed with the eventual supplier in contract.

We will however continue to review and assess our internal commercial activities to ensure we take into consideration the different risks associated in our supply chains, including modern slavery and human trafficking, and that we seek to mitigate these risks. We continue to review our policies and procedures, to ensure that they are effective and appropriate, and we will update these as necessary. However, we recognise such policies and procedures must be proportionate to the size of the commissioning, procurement, contract, or supplier. This includes consideration of the impact of any process on SMEs and VCSEs. In practice this means:

- being proportionate in the overall approach
- ensuring barriers to participating in new commissioning or procurements are not created
- ensuring unnecessary burdens are not placed on SMEs and VCSEs

The use of data and intelligence gathered as part of commercial activity, including early market engagement, will help to assess whether the modern slavery risk is relevant to the subject matter of the contract and shape specification requirements. Knowing the risk of modern slavery guides the approach to contract management and how to work alongside our suppliers to identify and mitigate risk.

Our Policies and Procedures

The current key policies and procedures which contribute to minimising the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking in our organisation and our supply chain include the following:

- **Protocol and Guidance for Modern Slavery**
  The Council has worked with partners across Dorset to develop the local Modern Slavery Protocol, which sets out how to deal with any potential cases of modern slavery and links to the mandatory responsibilities to notify cases through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).
  Protocol and Guidance for Modern Slavery - Dorset Council

- **Commercial Strategy – Commissioning and Procurement**
  This strategy is the mechanism to ensure that the commercial approach to commissioning and procurement takes place in accordance with the Council's strategic aims, that it is effective and delivers best value to residents of the Council's local authority area. It is subordinate to the Council's Constitution and is complemented by the Council's Contract Management guidance. The Strategy sets the importance of effective contract management that includes taking measures to identify and mitigate modern day slavery risks in contracts.
  Commercial strategy - commissioning and procurement - Dorset Council

- **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**
  This describes the Council's commitment to support and protect whistleblowers, and the steps to be taken to blow the whistle on serious wrong-doing (known as making a 'protected disclosure') and how the Council will respond. It applies to all council employees and other workers; including freelance staff; temporary and agency staff; trainers; volunteers; consultants; and contractors.
  Document Whistleblowing Policy - Dorset Council

- **Safeguarding**
  Modern Slavery is included and categorised as a type of harm in the local Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board Procedures.
  Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board - Dorset Council

  Tackling child exploitation underpins the councils work on addressing extra familial risk and harm, as part of the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership.

- **Dorset Council's Equality Scheme**
  The Council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion in both employment and the delivery of services. The Equality Scheme sets out the Council's key quality objectives and demonstrates the work that the Council is doing to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.
  Equality scheme - Dorset Council

Training

We have in place for our staff a Safeguarding Learning Pathway that provides understanding on how to protect the rights of others to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect. This pathway gives staff a basic overview of what safeguarding is and how we can all work together to protect the rights of others. This pathway includes Modern Slavery training. Completion of the training is monitored by the Council's Learning and Development Team(s). Staff involved in people related service delivery may well be subject to more high-level training that is more specific to their roles.

A further learning pathway is available to our staff that focuses on "Modern Slavery and Commissioning, Procurement and Contract Management". This provides some background on the Modern Slavery Act and the considerations of the Act in terms of engaging with suppliers and their supply chains, whether through commissioning, or procurement, or contract management. It includes an assessment tool to review level of modern slavery risk against:

- industry type
- nature of workforce
- supplier location
- context (in which the supplier operates)
- commodity type
- business / supply chain model

In addition to updating and improving our Dorset Council website content for modern slavery, work has been undertaken to raise the profile of the work internally including making it easier for staff to access support and information via the intranet.

Approval for this Statement

This statement is presented to Dorset Council's Cabinet for approval on 8 September 2026. [if approved] [This statement was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 8 September 2026, Agenda Item [X] Additional Procurement Pipeline 2026-27 and incorporating the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025-2026.]

ADD HERE LINK OF CABINET MINUTES

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 11

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted