



CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2026

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

Apologies: Cllrs Steve Robinson

Also present: Cllr Jon Andrews and Cllr Derek Beer

Also present remotely: Cllr Belinda Bawden, Cllr Alex Brenton, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Beryl Ezzard, Cllr Margaret Goringe, Cllr Jill Haynes, Cllr Sally Holland, Cllr Ryan Hope, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Sherry Jespersen, Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Stella Jones, Cllr Paul Kimber, Cllr Chris Kippax, Cllr Cathy Lugg, Cllr David Morgan, Cllr Val Potheary and Cllr Andy Skeats

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Jan Britton (Executive Director - Economy and Environment), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer), Lisa Cotton (Corporate Director for Transformation and Customer Experience), Paul Dempsey (Executive Director - Children's Services), Steven Ford (Assistant Chief Executive), Julia Ingram (Director - Adult Social Care), Iain Sim (Interim Corporate Director for Housing), Jonathan Mair (Director - Assurance (Monitoring Officer)), Graham Duggan (Head of Regulatory Services), Andy Frost (Service Manager for Community Safety), Katie Hale (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Lee House (Service Manager for Finance), Lucie Laker (Executive Director for Modernisation & Customer Delivery), Jennifer Lowis (Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement), Jack Wiltshire (Corporate Director for Highways and Engineering) and Andrew Galpin (Infrastructure & Delivery Planning Manager)

Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):

Sunita Khattra-Hall (Corporate Director for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Families) and Michael Westwood (Service Manager for Parking Services)

63. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

64. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to report.

65. Public Participation

There was one question from the public. A copy of the full question and the detailed response are set out in Appendix 1 these minutes.

66. Questions from Councillors

There were no Cllr questions to report.

67. Forward Plan

The Cabinet Forward Plan and the changes made to it since it was published with the agenda, were received and noted.

68. Dorset Community Safety Plan 2026 - 2029

The Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention and Communities presented the Dorset Community Safety Plan for 2026- 2029.

He explained that, while responsibility for the plan rests with the Dorset Community Safety Partnership, Dorset Council was required by law to formally adopt it.

The Cabinet Member further advised that the plan had been scrutinised in detail at the People and Health Overview Committee on 21 September 2026, which supported its adoption and recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation to Council

That the Dorset Community Safety Plan 2026 – 2029 be adopted.

Reason for the recommendation

To ensure Dorset Council meets its statutory duties as set out in relevant legislation.

69. Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report

Before presenting the report, the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education advised that the SEND Reform Plan had been submitted to the Department for Education for approval over the summer. Members were informed that, subject to approval, Dorset Council would receive £145 million in funding, which would address approximately 90% of the Council's current High Needs deficit. Members welcomed this as very positive news, reflecting the Department for Education's confidence in Dorset Council's SEND reform strategy and its approach to improving services and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education introduced the report and highlighted the important work of safeguarding partners across Dorset in protecting children and improving outcomes for families.

In doing so, concern was noted regarding the increasing impact of social media and the online environment on children and young people. Whilst recognising the opportunities presented by the digital world, it was acknowledged that it also presented significant safeguarding challenges, including exploitation and exposure to harmful content, reinforcing the importance of effective partnership working.

Members were informed that the partnership's priorities for 2026/27 included further strengthening governance and quality assurance arrangements, enhancing the voice of the child, and improving the use of data to support better outcomes for Dorset's children and families.

The Cabinet Member thanked safeguarding partners, practitioners, volunteers and community organisations for their continued commitment to keeping children safe and invited Cabinet to note the report and endorse the priorities for 2026/27.

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

Decision

That the Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) annual report be received and its future priorities be endorsed.

Reason for the decision

To receive assurance regarding the effectiveness of local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, note the progress made by the Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership during 2025-2026, and endorse the Partnership's priorities for 2026-2027 in support of improved outcomes for children and families in Dorset.

70. **Mampitts Community Hub Progress Update**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement introduced the report, which provided an update on the delivery of the Mampitts Green Community Hub in Shaftesbury. The Cabinet Member explained that the report sought approval to regularise the use of Chief Officer urgency powers, which had been exercised to allow the project to proceed to the delivery stage and avoid potential financial risks and delays to the scheme.

It was proposed by Cllr S Bartlett and seconded by Cllr S Clifford

Decision

That Cabinet adopts as its own decision action taken under the Council's urgency powers to enable the project to proceed to the delivery stage.

Reason for the decision

To regularise a decision made under delegated powers to progress the delivery of this important community infrastructure project.

71. **Temporary Accommodation Policies**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness presented a report that sought approval of a suite of Temporary Accommodation policies for the Housing Solutions Service. The policies had been developed following recommendations from the Southwest Audit Partnership (SWAP) to ensure the Council's arrangements for sourcing, allocating and managing temporary accommodation reflected current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice.

The policies provided a clear and consistent framework for decision-making, support the Council in meeting its statutory homelessness duties, improve transparency for service users, and contribute to wider objectives to reduce reliance on unsuitable accommodation and create a more sustainable temporary accommodation portfolio.

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor and seconded by Cllr S Clifford

Decision

That the following policies be approved for implementation by the Housing Solutions Service:

1. Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy
2. Void Policy (management of unoccupied properties that are not generating income)
3. Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy.

Reason for the decision

To provide safe, suitable and affordable accommodation for homeless applicants while ensuring value for money and compliance with statutory requirements.

72. **Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre Rollback Scheme (Hensleigh House Acquisition)**

The Cabinet Member for Place Services presented a report that sought approval to transfer Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme funding to Charmouth Parish Council to support the acquisition of a property for the future relocation of the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre.

Members noted that the funding involved was not Dorset Council funding nor was it funding that could be spent on day-to-day council services. This was external government funding ringfenced to help communities to prepare for the impact of coastal erosion and the impact of climate change.

The Chair advised Cabinet that the local ward member, Cllr B Bawden had indicated her support for the report and its recommendations.

It was proposed by Cllr J Jeanes and seconded by Cllr N Ireland.

Decision

- (a) That the transfer of Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme funding (as set out in exempt Appendix A) to Charmouth Parish Council for the acquisition of Hensleigh House (or a suitable alternative), be approved;
- (b) That Cabinet approves Dorset Council acting as facilitator and enabling authority for the acquisition in support of the Future Coast Dorset programme;
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Economy & Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Services, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, to finalise and enter into all necessary funding agreements, legal agreements and associated documentation and take all incidental decisions relating to the matter;
- (d) That the Executive Director for Economy & Environment be delegated to sign the requisite PMG1 and Sealing Form; and officers be authorised to proceed with the transfer, subject to satisfactory valuation, survey, planning, legal and funding compliance outcomes.

Reason for the decision

To deliver a key coastal adaptation project, strengthen the long-term resilience of Charmouth, protect an important community asset, and maximise the benefits of external funding while supporting Dorset Council's priorities and ensuring timely use of programme funding.

73. Urgent items

The following items of business were considered by the Chairman as urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The item was urgent because a decision was needed to align decision-making with the procurement timetable for the supported bus network, enabling implementation of the enhanced Core Route Network for Summer 2027. Delay would have impacted programme mobilisation, procurement activity and the delivery timescales.

TRANSFORMING PUBLIC BUSES AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT FULL BUSINESS CASE

The Cabinet Member for Place Services presented a report outlining a business case to transform public buses and community transport across Dorset. The proposals sought to improve connectivity, accessibility and independence through enhanced bus services, strengthened community transport provision and flexible transport solutions, particularly in rural areas.

He further highlighted that the programme would support access to employment, education, healthcare and local services, while also contributing to wider transformation across adult social care and SEND services. The Cabinet Member

highlighted that the proposals represented a significant investment in Dorset's transport network and would help create a more connected, resilient and sustainable county.

In seconding the report recommendations, the Chair advised that the business case directly supported Dorset Council's Plan priorities on economy communities and climate. He further confirmed that the programme would represent significant investment over a seven-year period to deliver wider social, economic and health outcomes.

In response to a question regarding engagement with town and parish councils, the Cabinet Member for Place Services advised that a written response would be provided to the councillor concerned. Responding to a question regarding partnership working with the NHS and Package C in the report, the Corporate Director for Highways and Engineering advised that the Council would continue to engage with NHS colleagues as the programme developed to explore potential opportunities for collaboration. Whilst there were clear areas in which the Council could support the NHS, the nature and extent of any such support had not yet been determined. It was noted that further discussions with partners would be required before any associated budget provision could be quantified.

The Chair of the Place and Resources Overview Committee confirmed that the overview committee were in full support of the approach and reports recommendations.

That Cabinet:

- (a) Approves the Full Business Case and endorses the integrated transport programme.
- (b) Approves the phased implementation of the six intervention packages set out in the Full Business Case.
- (c) Approves the programme investment profile, recognising that delivery of individual interventions would remain subject to available funding, budget setting processes and any future business case approvals where required.
- (d) Authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Services, to oversee implementation of the approved programme.

Reason for the decision

To approve the Full Business Case and associated investment programme, providing a clear framework for the long-term transformation of public, community and specialist transport, enabling implementation to proceed and supporting the delivery of a more integrated, accessible and financially sustainable transport system.

74. Exempt Business

It was proposed by Cllr S Clifford seconded by Cllr S Bartlett

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

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).

The live streaming was concluded at this juncture.

75. Re-procurement - Enforcement Agent Provision

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance presented the exempt report and its recommendations.

It was proposed by Cllr S Clifford and seconded by Cllr B Wilson

Decision

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report to Cabinet of 6 October 2026, be approved.

Reason for the decision

Existing contracts had reached the end of their original term and required replacement through a compliant procurement exercise.

76. Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre Rollback Scheme (Hensleigh House Acquisition)

The exempt appendix associated with the agenda item 15 “Charmouth Heritage Cost Centre Rollback Scheme (Hensleigh House Acquisition)” was not discussed at the meeting. The report was considered in open business as set out in minute no xx to these minutes.

Appendix 1 - Public Participation

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 7.42 pm

Chair

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Cabinet – 6 October 2026

Public Question

Question from David Redgewell Dorset catch the bus campaign

With the bus service improvement plan for Dorset unitary Council

With need to provide social necessary bus services to ser work places Hospital, schools, colleges universities court facilities, shopping centres, public transport interchange with coach ,Rail Air and Ferry links as part of a full accessible network under the Buses Act 2025 .

What progress is now being made?

To provide 6 days bus service on Dorset core bus Network.

With only CR6 Bridport bus and coach station to Broadwindor Crewkerne and Yeovil bus and coach station,

CR2 Gillingham Railway station to Shaftsbury,

CR3 Sturminster Newton to Gillingham Railway station,

Blandford Forum to Weymouth

Have Saturday services

But service have no Saturday service

CR4 Yeovil bus and coach station to Blandford Forum

CR5 Dorchester to Yeovil Bus and coach station via Sherborne,

CR7 Blandford Forum to Shaftsbury

CR9 Blandford Forum to Dorchester

20 Salisbury City centre to Blandford Forum which is still not serving Salisbury Rail station.

When will Dorset Council using local funding Government bus grant to provide Saturday service on all Dorset core bus Network and look to provide a Sunday bus network.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Place Services

Thank you for your question.

I agree that a strong and reliable bus network is important for connecting people to jobs, education, healthcare and linking communities across Dorset.

We have already reintroduced Saturday services on parts of the council supported bus network, and the cabinet report in front of us today if approved includes plans to move towards a consistent six-day Core Route Network from Summer 2027.

Our immediate priority is to deliver that stronger six-day network, together with more frequent services and new strategic routes. Sunday services are not included in the first phase of the programme, but they will be considered as part of future network development opportunities, subject to available funding.

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