



Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 6 October 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.critchell@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.

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Agenda

Page No

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

5 - 10

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 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.Critchell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Thursday 1 October 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.critchell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 8.30am on Thursday 1 October 2026.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) – Procedure Rule 13

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|------------|---|-----------|
| 6. | FORWARD PLAN | 11 - 20 |
| | To consider the Cabinet Forward Plan for November 2026. | |
| 7. | DORSET COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2026 - 2029 | 21 - 36 |
| | To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention & Communities. | |
| 8. | DORSET SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT | 37 - 78 |
| | To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education. | |
| 9. | MAMPITTS COMMUNITY HUB PROGRESS UPDATE | 79 - 86 |
| | To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement. | |
| 10. | TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION POLICIES | 87 - 184 |
| | To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Housing. | |
| 11. | CHARMOUTH HERITAGE COAST CENTRE ROLLBACK SCHEME (HENSLEIGH HOUSE ACQUISITION) | 185 - 280 |
| | To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Places Services. | |
| | Appendix A of the report is an exempt document (paragraph 3) and is set out at item 15 below. | |
| 12. | URGENT ITEMS | |
| | 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. | |
| 13. | EXEMPT BUSINESS | |
| | 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 the following item(s) below 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).

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 14. | RE-PROCUREMENT - ENFORCEMENT AGENT PROVISION
<i>Para 3</i>
To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance. | 281 - 288 |
| 15. | CHARMOUTH HERITAGE COAST CENTRE ROLLBACK SCHEME (HENSLEIGH HOUSE ACQUISITION)
<i>Para 3</i>
Exempt appendix associated with item 11 above. | 289 - 290 |



CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2026

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

Also present: Cllr Neil Eysenck and Cllr Carole Jones

Also present remotely: Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Margaret Goringe, Cllr Cathy Lugg, Cllr Craig Monks and Cllr Andy Todd

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), Lisa Cotton (Interim Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery), Sam Crowe (Executive Director - Housing, Prevention and Communities), Steven Ford (Assistant Chief Executive), Jen Furnell (Corporate Director for Education and Learning), Julia Ingram (Director - Adult Social Care), Jonathan Mair (Director - Assurance (Monitoring Officer)), Catherine Howe (Chief Executive), Richard Freed (Service Manager for Commercial and Procurement), Jessica Maskrey (Head of Service – Assets & Property) and Lyn Cooch (Senior Nutrient Project Officer)

STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader of the Council took the opportunity to make a short statement, reflecting on the year so far and highlighting the challenges posed by extreme weather, as well as the resilience shown by communities and services across Dorset.

The statement noted that the county had experienced sharp contrasts within a short period of time, from flooding that affected communities and infrastructure to periods of intense heat and increased wildfire risk. This served as a reminder that extreme weather events were becoming less exceptional and were increasingly something for which we must be prepared.

The Leader went on to thank councillors, employees across all services, and the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service for their professionalism, adaptability and commitment. He acknowledged that, whatever the challenge, they had continued to deliver services and support residents.

The Leader also thanked Litter Free Dorset for its long-running campaign against disposable barbecues, which had ultimately helped to achieve meaningful change by reducing a significant risk to the countryside and coastline.

In conclusion, the Leader reaffirmed the Council's commitment to investing in climate adaptation, flood resilience and nature recovery.

51. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

52. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to report.

53. Public Participation

There were no public questions for this meeting.

54. Questions from Councillors

There were no questions from councillors for this meeting.

55. Forward Plan

The draft Cabinet Forward Plan for October 2026 was received and noted.

56. July 2026 (period 4) financial management report 26/27

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance provided an update on the current financial position, noting the pressures that were affecting all councils, including inflation, rising fuel costs, increased demand for support and the wider cost-of-living impact. He further highlighted the predicted budget pressures in areas such as adult and children's social care, emphasising that increased spending reflected the council's commitment to supporting vulnerable people and families.

At this stage, the Council was forecasting a net revenue overspend of £8.136m, representing 1.7% of the approved net budget of £466m. The Cabinet Member further advised that the reserves remained strong and debt levels remained stable.

At 6.42pm the fire alarm sounded and the meeting was adjourned to allow the evacuation of the building. The meeting reconvened at 7.14pm following confirmation that it was safe to re-enter the premises.

Responding to a question regarding the escalating Dedicated Schools Grant deficit, with costs rising sharply and the rate of increased acceleration, the Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance acknowledged the seriousness of the trend,

noting government advice that funding would be proportionate but not unlimited. He confirmed that further clarification on repayment timing would need to be provided.

In response to comments made regarding opportunities to increase income or reduce expenditure through improved utilisation of Coombe House, the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education outlined current projections, the wider reform context and the forthcoming developments such as Osprey Quay opening in 2028. She advised that she would discuss the more detailed questions raised with the councillor concerned outside of the meeting.

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

Decision

- (a) That the SLT's forecast as of July 2026 including progress in addressing demand for services and on the transformational and efficiency savings incorporated into the budget, be noted.
- (b) That the addition of the Wimborne Community Sports Hub capital budget (£2.289m) to the Capital Programme (Business case in Appendix C), be approved.
- (c) That the addition of the Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5 (The Cobb) capital budget (£8.365m) to the Capital Programme, be approved.
- (d) That the decision to extend the Mosaic contract which required a retrospective update to a September 2023 Cabinet record of decision (Appendix B), be noted.
- (e) That the number and extent of contract exemptions, be noted. (Appendix B)

Reason for the decision

To enable Cabinet to consider the Council's current and projected financial position, approve the necessary amendments to the Capital Programme, and ensure that financial resources, reserves and future investment priorities were aligned with the Council Plan, supported sustainable service delivery, and informed the development of the Medium-Term Financial Plan and future budget strategy.

57. **Additional Procurement Pipeline Report - over £500k (2026 - 27) and Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025 - 2026**

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance introduced the procurement pipeline report, noting the significant programme of planned investment across highways, transport, energy, and key in-house services. He highlighted that the report demonstrated the scale of commercial activity, supporting long-term planning, transparency and value for money across services.

The Cabinet Member also invited members to approve the council's Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and asked all councillors to familiarise themselves with its contents.

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

Decision

(a) Cabinet considered the contents of the report (of 8 September 2026) in respect of proposed additional more than £500k procurement activity for 2026-27 that was listed in Appendix 1 of the report and the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and approve and agree:

- (i) That the commencement of each of the procurement procedures (or variation) as listed (subject to an approved and available budget, business case) in the report.
- (ii) That authority be delegated to the relevant Cabinet member, after consultation with the relevant Director to make the following decisions:

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

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

To note that approval of procurement activity within Appendix 1 of the report included 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.

(b) That the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2025-2026, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved for publication.

Reason for the decision

To approve the proposed procurement pipeline and associated delegations for contracts exceeding £500k, ensuring appropriate governance, oversight and flexibility in the procurement process, while also reaffirming the Council's commitment to ethical procurement practices through the publication of the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement.

58. Urgent items

There were no urgent items considered at the meeting.

59. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by Cllr S Robinson and seconded by Cllr R Biggs

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item(s) 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.

60. **Modification of Public Health Contracts over £500k: 0-19 Public Health Nursing and Sexual Health Services**

The Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention and Communities presented a report seeking approval to modify two Public Health Contracts of over the key decision threshold of £500k.

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

Decision

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of 8 September 2026 be approved.

Reason for the decision

To modify two Public Health Contracts over £500k: Sexual Health and 0-19 Public Health Nursing Services.

61. **Commercial Property Disposal**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets presented at report that proposed the sale of the Council's freehold interest in a commercial property. In introducing the report, he also proposed an amendment to recommendation 2.2 of the exempt report of 8 September 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr R Biggs and seconded by Cllr G Talyor

Decision

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of 8 September 2026 and as amended, be approved.

Reason for the decision

To approve the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the commercial property and to agree the arrangements necessary to complete the sale in accordance with the Council's asset management and financial objectives.

62. **Grant funding from LNMF for nitrogen mitigation, Poole Harbour Catchment**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement set out the exempt report regarding grant funding from the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund for nitrogen mitigation in the Poole Catchment area.

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

Decision

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of 8 September 2026 be approved.

Reason for the decision

Dorset Council had a legal duty, as the competent authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), to ensure that new development did not adversely affect the integrity of protected habitats within Poole Harbour.

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 7.25 pm

Chair

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The Cabinet Forward Plan - November 2026 to February 2027 (Publication date – 6 OCTOBER 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					
November 2026					
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	<i>Sean Cremer, Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</i> sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, <i>Sian Hedger, Deputy s151 Officer</i> sian.hedger@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk <i>Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</i>
Parking Review and Strategy Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open To consider the Parking Strategy for Dorset Council.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 10 Nov 2026	Place and Resources Overview Committee 9 Jul 2026	Cabinet Member for Place Services	<i>David Rosselli, Transport & Parking Strategy Lead</i> david.rosselli@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, <i>Jack Wiltshire, Corporate Director for Highways and Engineering</i> jack.wiltshire@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
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 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	<i>Janet Moore, Service Manager for Environmental Protection</i> <i>Janet.Moore@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Housing, Prevention and Communities (Sam Crowe)</i>
Transformation Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Open Update on transformation portfolio delivery, benefits realisation, portfolio performance and investment position.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 10 Nov 2026		Cabinet Member for Transformation, Customer & Workforce	<i>Nina Coakley, Head of Transformation and Design</i> <i>nina.coakley@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery (Lisa Cotton)</i>
Shillingstone Parish Neighbourhood Plan Review Key Decision - No Public Access - Open Item relating to “making (adoption) of the neighbourhood plan review following receipt of the examiner’s report.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 10 Nov 2026		Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Enforcement	<i>Ed Gerry, Community Planning Manager</i> <i>ed.gerry@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Care Dorset Annual Performance Report Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open To receive and note the Care Dorset Annual Performance Report.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 10 Nov 2026		Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Lindsey Watson, Senior Democratic and Governance Officer</i> <i>lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Proposed Procurement of Dredging Services for Bridport (West Bay) Harbour Report Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open Annual maintenance dredging is required at Bridport (West Bay) Harbour to maintain safe navigable depths and support the continued operation of the harbour. It is proposed to procure a five-year contract for annual dredging from 2027 to 2031, with an estimated total value of between £800,000 and £1 million. Due to the anticipated total contract value, Cabinet approval is required before the procurement process can commence. The five-year contract is the preferred approach. However, if it is not practicable to complete that procurement in time for the March 2027 dredging campaign, approval will also be sought to procure a single-year contract for 2027 as an interim measure.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 10 Nov 2026	Harbours Advisory Committee 2 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Place Services	<i>Ed Carter, Harbours Manager & Weymouth Harbour Master</i> <i>ed.carter@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Dorset Council - Procurement of Hotel and Guest House Managing Agents Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt Report seeking approval to award the contract for the management of Dorset Council Hotel and Guest Houses following the recent procurement.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 10 Nov 2026		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Julian Wain, Strategic Property Advisor</i> <i>Julian.wain@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
Asset Disposals and Transfers Update Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Part exempt An progress update on asset disposals and transfers.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Carly Field, Service Manager - Strategic Asset Management</i> <i>carly.galloway@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Jay Ridsdale, Transfers and Disposals Manager</i> <i>jay.ridsdale@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
December 2026					

Review of Financial Assessment and Care Contributions Policy Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 8 Dec 2026	People and Health Overview Committee 2 Nov 2026	Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health, Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate,	<i>Nicola Fowler, Financial Assessments Team Manager</i> <i>nicola.fowler@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</i>
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Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
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.				Communications, Performance & Safeguarding	
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	<i>Russell Goff, Senior Ranger russell.goff@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
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	<i>Liz Crocker, Head of Strategy liz.crocker@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Chris Heighway, Performance and Analytics Team Manager chris.heighway@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Chief Executive</i>
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	<i>Amy-Jane White, Quality Assurance and Programme Lead amy-jane.white@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Rough Sleeper grant agreements Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt To approve the award of grant agreements to organisations providing support to rough sleepers.	Decision Maker Cabinet	Decision Date 8 Dec 2026		Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness	<i>Paul Derrien, Housing Enabling and Delivery Manager</i> <i>paul.derrien@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Melissa Johnson, Programme Manager</i> <i>melissa.johnson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Housing, Prevention and Communities (Sam Crowe)</i>
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	<i>Laura Cornette, Business Partner - Communities and Partnerships</i> <i>Laura.cornette@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery (Lisa Cotton)</i>
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	<i>Sean Cremer, Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</i> <i>sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Sian Hedger, Deputy s151 Officer</i> <i>sian.hedger@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
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	<i>Sean Cremer, Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</i> <i>sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Sian Hedger, Deputy s151 Officer</i> <i>sian.hedger@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer</i>

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.

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Recommendation to Cabinet 6 October 2026

From People and Health Overview Committee on 21
September 2026

Dorset Community Safety Plan 2026 - 2029

For Recommendation to Council

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr M Bell, Public Health, Prevention & Communities

Local Councillor(s):

All

Executive Director:

S Crowe - Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities

Report author and job title: Andy Frost, Service Manager for Community Safety

Email: andy.frost@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

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

Appendices

Report to the People and Health Overview Committee on 21 September 2026,
which included the following appendix:

Appendix 1 – Community Safety Plan 2026 – 2027

Background papers

[Agenda for People and Health Overview Committee on Monday, 21st September 2026, 6.30 pm - Dorset Council](#)

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People & Health Overview Committee

21 September 2026

Dorset Community Safety Plan 2026-29

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Cabinet Member:

Cllr M Bell, Public Health, Prevention & Communities

Local Councillor(s): All

Senior Leadership Team:

S Crowe - Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities

Report author and job title: Andy Frost, Service Manager for Community Safety

Email: andy.frost@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Crime and Disorder Act 1998

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

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Dorset Council is under a legal duty to work with specific partners through the Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to identify and tackle community safety issues in its area.
- 1.2 CSPs are required to produce three-year community safety plans that are refreshed annually. It is a legal requirement for the plans to be formally adopted by the local authority for the area.
- 1.3 This report presents the latest Community Safety Plan covering the period 2026-2029 for adoption by Dorset Council.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the People & Health Overview Committee recommend to Cabinet that the Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 be recommended to Dorset Council for adoption.

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

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

4. Community Safety Plan 2026-2029

4.1 Dorset Council is under a legal duty to work with the following partners (responsible authorities) to identify and tackle community safety issues in its area:

- Dorset Police
- NHS Dorset
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority
- Probation Service

4.2 It does this through the Dorset CSP, a statutory partnership under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

4.3 CSPs are required to produce three-year community safety plans that are refreshed annually. Community safety plans should be formally adopted by the local authority for the area. Adoption must be by Full Council.

4.4 The Dorset CSP and its community safety plan are co-terminous with the Dorset Council area (there is a separate CSP and plan for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole local authority area).

4.5 The Partnership's latest community safety plan is appended. It was agreed by partners at their CSP meeting on 18th June 2026.

4.6 The Plan sets out partners' priorities and how they will be tackled in broad terms based on an assessment of community safety issues in the area. The priorities included in the plan are:

- Domestic Abuse and Stalking
- Sexual Offences
- Serious Violence
- Anti-social Behaviour
- Rural Crime

4.7 They are complemented by the following cross cutting issues:

- Mental health
- Substance misuse
- Complex cases / multiple need
- Violence against women and girls
- Hate related crime

- 4.8 Including hate related crime as a cross cutting issue in the latest plan ensures partners respond to the prevalence and impact of issues and link with related areas of work including community cohesion and Preventing Violent Extremism.
- 4.9 The broad range of activity to address priorities set out in the Plan is complemented by more detailed delivery plans.
- 4.10 The CSP and Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) are legally required to have regard to each other's priorities when setting their plans. The PCC's current Police & Crime Plan has been considered when writing the latest community safety plan.
- 4.11 The CSP is responsible for developing and delivering the community safety plan. The CSP is held to account for delivery of its statutory duties by Dorset Council's formal Crime & Disorder Committee (People & Health Scrutiny Committee).

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Not applicable. It is a legal requirement for the statutory three year community safety plan to be formally adopted by the local authority.

6. Legal considerations

- 6.1 It is a legal requirement for CSPs to have three year community safety plans and for them to be formally adopted by the local authority.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The Dorset CSP does not receive funding directly, however partners' plans and strategies clarify where they will focus their time and effort and their broad activity to meet priorities.
- 7.2 Central government funding has been made available to partners to help deliver their duties relating to serious violence, which links to the Community Safety Plan.
- 7.3 Funding has also been made available to local authorities to deliver their duties relating to domestic abuse, which links to the Community Safety Plan.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

- 8.1 None.

9. Well-being and health implications

- 9.1 Tackling crime and the fear of crime has a significant impact on health and wellbeing.

10. Other implications

- 10.1 Community safety as set out in the report.

11. Risk implications

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

12. Equalities

- 12.1 An EqIA has been completed in relation to the new Community Safety Plan. The EqIA helped identify several positive impacts on those with protected characteristics.

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Dorset Community Safety Plan 2026-2029

14. Background papers

- 14.1 None.

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 Assurance & Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

Community Safety Plan 2026-2029

Dorset Community Safety Partnership



Introduction

The Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) aims to:

- Reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- Address risk, threat and harm to victims and local communities; and
- Facilitate the strengthening of Dorset's communities in the delivery of local initiatives.

It also acts as Dorset's Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board required under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and leads partners' response to meeting their duties relating to serious violence under the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act 2022.

Find out more about the CSP here: [Dorset Community Safety Partnership](#)

CSPs are required to have three-year Community Safety Plans that are refreshed annually. This latest Plan for 2026-2029 sets out partners' priorities based on the most recent assessment of community safety issues. The Plan is complemented by the [Domestic Abuse Strategy 2025 to 2028](#) and [Dorset Serious Violence Strategy](#).

The Plan sets out activity to address priorities in broad terms. Further details regarding delivery and performance are contained in partners' various work plans which are developed, assessed and revised over the course of each year.

Crime in the Dorset Community Safety Partnership Area

Since 2018 the volume of crime reported in the Dorset CSP area has tended to decrease annually. The number of crimes recorded during 2025 was 12.8% lower than the equivalent figure for 2018. Crime volumes were artificially depressed during the two years affected by Covid and its associated lockdowns (2020 and 2021) and, consequently, a rise in the annual count was seen in the year that followed.

Crime volumes in Dorset follow an annual cycle, which peaks each year in July/August and reaches its lowest in January/February.

When compared to the equivalent figures for England and Wales, Dorset is seen to be a relatively low crime area. During the six years from 2018, the crime rate for Dorset, when expressed as the number of crimes per 1,000 population, was a little over half that seen nationally.

Consultation and Engagement

Partners use the findings of consultation and engagement exercises to help inform their understanding and work to tackle community safety issues.

A public consultation was undertaken with residents specifically for the CSP in 2023. This included members of the Council's People Panel (a group of residents who volunteered to give responses on a range of questions relating to living in Dorset) who were asked a series of questions on what they thought about crime in their local community.

Respondents were asked whether they thought that crime and antisocial behaviour were issues where they lived. In addition, they were asked to state whether, in the past twelve months, they had been victims of either. These questions had been asked regularly in previous years, enabling any changes in public perception and experience to be identified.

Most respondents (79%) believed that crime had little or no impact on their daily lives. However, the proportion of residents who felt that crime was a problem in their neighbourhood had increased, having doubled in the four years since 2020. This was reflected by a comparable increase in the number of respondents stating that they had been victims of crime in the past year.

Consultees were asked which crime categories they thought were a problem where they live. The four categories that registered the highest concern were:

1. **Anti-social Behaviour** (46% of respondents)
2. **Rural Crime** (39% of respondents)
3. **Vehicle Crime** (38% of respondents)
4. **Drug Dealing** (37% of respondents)

The 3 categories of least concern were Slavery/Human Trafficking, Hate Crime and Knife Crime.

Dorset Council's most recent Residents Survey was undertaken in 2024. As in previous editions of the survey, respondents were asked how safe they felt in their local area, both during daylight hours and after dark.

A clear majority of survey respondents reported feeling safe where they lived during the daytime. The proportion who felt safe has remained consistent over recent surveys. However, there was a noticeable increase, although still a minority, of respondents who felt unsafe locally after dark.

Another survey conducted by Dorset's Police and Crime Commissioner in October 2025 asked residents how safe they believed Dorset to be compared to other English and Welsh counties. Their replies, with corresponding results from 2024, are summarised below:

<i>Compared to the rest of England and Wales, Dorset is...</i>	2024	2025	% Point Change
<i>...The safest county</i>	1.9%	0.6%	-1.3%
<i>...One of the safest counties</i>	54.2%	49.0%	-5.2%
<i>...Neither one of the safest or less safe counties</i>	36.2%	43.0%	+6.8%
<i>...One of the less safe counties</i>	6.8%	6.7%	-0.1%
<i>...The least safe county</i>	0.9%	0.8%	-0.1%

Almost half of the respondents believed that Dorset was among one of the safest counties in England and Wales, although this proportion had fallen 5.2 percentage points during the previous year.

The survey also asked residents to state which of a list of crimes they felt affected them in their local areas. Their responses, again with comparative data from 2024, are shown on the table below.

Crime	2024	2025	Diff
Antisocial behaviour	63.2%	69.8%	6.6%
Dangerous driving	52.5%	54.7%	2.2%
Burglary and theft	53.9%	50.2%	-3.7%
Drug crimes	42.8%	49.2%	6.4%
Fly tipping	45.3%	47.6%	2.3%
Shoplifting	41.0%	39.9%	-1.1%
Criminal damage	34.9%	38.2%	3.3%
Vehicle theft	31.2%	29.0%	-2.2%
Illegal E-scooter use	25.7%	29.0%	3.3%
Cyber crime	31.3%	26.3%	-5.0%
Machine theft	26.7%	22.7%	-4.0%
Poaching, etc	18.7%	19.8%	1.1%
Unauthorised encampments	14.4%	18.4%	4.0%
Domestic abuse	17.3%	16.8%	-0.5%

Violence and assault	15.4%	16.3%	0.9%
Knife crime	11.3%	11.4%	0.1%
Robbery	10.2%	10.1%	-0.1%
Pet theft	13.0%	9.2%	-3.8%
Sexual offences	8.8%	7.6%	-1.2%
Hate crime	6.5%	7.6%	1.1%
Drink spiking	5.7%	4.3%	-1.4%
Stalking	6.0%	4.1%	-1.9%
Murder	3.4%	2.8%	-0.6%

Antisocial behaviour was, again, highlighted as the issue which caused the greatest concern to residents, with over two-thirds of respondents regarding it as a problem locally. This figure showed the greatest increase (+6.6% points) of all crimes compared to the results gathered in 2024.

The crimes where greatest increase in the amount of concern expressed was seen when compared to 2024 were antisocial behaviour, drug crimes and unauthorised encampments. There was a drop in the level of concern in relation to cyber crimes.

In 2025, a Young People's Safety Survey was conducted by the Pineapple Project based in Dorset. Findings from the survey included:

- 68% of respondents (where sex was female) reported feeling safe or very safe in their communities in the summer months.
- 6% of respondents (where sex was female) reported feeling unsafe or very unsafe in their communities in the summer months.
- In the past year, 68% of girls and young women aged 11-21 had changed their everyday behaviour to avoid sexual harassment.
- 1 in 10 girls aged 11-16 had missed school to avoid sexual harassment.
- More than half of girls and young women aged 11-21 didn't feel safe on public transport on their own.
- 48% said they avoid going out when it's dark to keep themselves safe.

CSP partners also work with the victims of crime and people who use services to help inform and develop their response to issues. A report into domestic abuse services across the pan-Dorset area by the organisation SafeLives conducted in 2024:

- Estimated that 45% of victims in Dorset did not tell anyone about their abuse.
- The principal barrier to seeking help was the fear of provoking an unwelcome response from the perpetrator of their abuse.
- Other barriers included concerns about the financial problems victims might face by reporting their situation and uncertainty about what processes would result from seeking advice.
- Rurality and disability were both identified as barriers to accessing domestic abuse services.
- Victims felt local services could be improved by increasing awareness of domestic abuse and its related issues.

CSP partners intend to further develop their approach to engaging communities to help understand community safety issues and what they should prioritise. This will include building on individual partners' consultation and engagement mechanisms, conducting surveys and working with the users of services.

Partners will look to hold at least one public meeting each year and engage with a wide range of people, including those who are likely to be particularly affected by the Community Safety Plan.

In addition, partners will continue to promote ways in which members of the public can help reduce crime and disorder including through specific initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch and Dorset Alert.

Community Safety Priorities

Partners carry out an annual Partnership Strategic Assessment (PSA) using information and data from a variety of sources to assess crime and disorder issues in the area. The assessment is used to set and review partners' priorities. When setting and reviewing priorities consideration is also given to the local Policing objectives in the area. Priorities are reviewed regularly.

Partners' priorities for 2026-2029 are:

- Domestic Abuse and Stalking
- Sexual Offences
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Rural Crime
- Serious Violence

They are complemented by the following cross cutting issues:

- Mental health
- Substance misuse
- Complex cases / multiple need
- Violence against women and girls
- Hate related crime

A hate crime is when a criminal offence, for example, an assault or harassment, is perceived to be motivated by hostility or prejudice. Although reports of hate crime in the Dorset CSP area are low, they have a devastating impact on victims and communities.

Partners undertake work to address hate related crime including raising awareness and signposting victims to support services. Including hate related crime as a cross cutting issue for the CSP ensures partners respond to the prevalence and impact of issues and link with related areas of work including community cohesion and Preventing Violent Extremism.

There is a strong correlation between the CSP's priorities and those set out in the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) Police and Crime Plan 2021/29 which commits to tackling, amongst other issues, rural crime, violent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Reducing re-offending remains a cross cutting area of work for partners. Details are set out in the [Pan-Dorset Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2024 to 2027](#).

In accordance with recent legislation, there are separate partnership arrangements, plans and strategies for dealing with substance misuse through the pan-Dorset Combating Drugs Partnership.

Although CSPs are legally required to undertake annual needs assessments to set their priorities, in recent years legislation has been placed on specific partners directing them to tackle domestic abuse and serious violence. In Dorset, partners have chosen to use the CSP as their partnership mechanism to meet these duties and ensured their [Domestic Abuse](#) and [Serious Violence](#) Strategies complement this Plan.

Partnership work to tackle community safety issues takes many forms. Some partnership activities and service arrangements have been in place for years and have become business as usual. Well established multi-agency partnership arrangements are in place to tackle shorter term, area specific issues.

The CSP also works closely with other partnerships on shared issues including the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board and Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.

Below is a description of broad partnership activity against priorities. This is supported by partners' various work plans which are developed, assessed and revised over the course of each year.

Domestic Abuse and Stalking	
Activities	Performance Measures
• Implement the Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy (2025–2028) recommendations. • Enhance the whole-systems approach to ensure services work effectively together and are accessible to all communities. • Develop prevention-focused initiatives, including early help and education for children and young people (e.g. healthy relationships). • Introduce and strengthen perpetrator interventions to reduce offending and prevent further harm. • Regularly assess and enhance the High Risk Domestic Abuse (HRDA) process to maintain effectiveness and fitness for purpose. • Strengthen responses to stalking, improving protection for those affected, and multi-agency arrangements. • Conduct targeted research into underreporting of domestic abuse in rural areas, wealthier communities, and among young people, older people and men. • Deliver communication campaigns to raise awareness of issues and available support. • Embed learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews to inform continuous improvement.	• A reduction in the annual proportion of all domestic abuse victims which are identifiable 'repeat' victims. • A reduction in the number of domestic abuse related stalking crimes reported annually. • A reduction in the annual percentage of domestic abuse perpetrators identified as 'repeat' perpetrators.

Sexual Offences	
Activities	Performance Measure
• Strengthen the response to sexual abuse against children and young people. • Deliver targeted interventions focused on male perpetrators of sexual abuse, reducing offending and challenging harmful behaviours. • Ensure information and advice for children and young people is accessible, relevant, and meets their needs. • Support initiatives that address sexual offences linked to the night-time economy, enhancing safety and prevention. • Run regular, targeted communications campaigns to increase awareness of available support, including within schools and other educational settings.	• An annual reduction in the number of sexual offence crimes recorded by the Police.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	
Activities	Performance Measures
• Provide a high visibility presence using Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) in priority locations to deter ASB and disorder. • Develop effective working arrangements with housing associations to help understand and tackle ASB issues. • Work closely and share data / information with youth outreach services to help direct provision. • Work with local businesses to address shoplifting that impacts directly on ASB including 'designing out crime'. • Work with Trading Standards to help direct test purchasing work in areas where ASB is an issue. • Develop close working relationships with partners in the Voluntary and Community Sector including youth centres, to develop joint approaches to tackle ASB. • Work with young people's forums and groups to better understand issues and inform effective interventions, including the Dorset Youth Association and 0-19 Youth Forum. • Support the work of the Dorset Combating Drugs Partnership's Prevention sub-group including around education in schools.	• An annual reduction in the number of antisocial behaviour crimes recorded by the police, countywide. • An annual reduction in the number of antisocial behaviour crimes recorded by the police in hotspot areas.

Rural Crime	
Activities	Performance Measures
• Take a strong collaborative partnership approach to promote opportunities for effective crime prevention initiatives. • Develop different ways of engaging and reporting issues including online platforms. • Maximise the use of social media platforms to provide crime prevention advice and ensure the community is kept informed of emerging issues. • Support the Country Watch initiative focused on increasing connectivity with our rural community. • Work in partnership with neighbouring police forces to target cross border criminality and organised crime. • Continue to develop an effective regional response to information sharing and joint working to tackle cross border rural organised criminality.	• A reduction each year in the total number of rural crimes, as defined by Dorset's Rural Crime Unit. • An annual reduction in the volume of reported incidents of fly tipping.

• Protect our environment, wildlife and heritage from organised crime and reckless or criminal individuals. • Help educate communities on the importance of addressing wildlife and heritage crime.	
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Serious Violence	
Activities	Performance Measures
• Develop and deliver interventions that meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty. • Establish interventions in response to locally identified need, reviewing annually. • Deliver programmes that enable young people to safely challenge and change inappropriate and harmful behaviours in themselves and others. • Deliver programmes that target those most vulnerable to becoming involved in serious violent crime, both as perpetrators and victims. • Establish interventions that respond to young people carrying and using knives and other sharp implements. • Support education and awareness raising activity addressing issues of serious violence • Undertake work to further develop our understanding of serious violence.	• An annual reduction in recorded violent crimes throughout the Dorset Council area. • An annual reduction in recorded violence in hot spot areas. • A reduction in the proportion of victims of serious violence that are identified as 'repeat' victims. • A reduction in the proportion of perpetrators of serious violence that are identified as 'repeat' offenders. • Number of recorded knife crimes* • Number of homicides* *Home Office requirement

Performance Management

Partners use performance information and data coupled with an assessment of progress against their agreed actions at each meeting, to determine whether they are delivering against their priorities. Current performance measures are listed in the above tables.

Partners intend to gather a wide range of information and data to complement Police statistics and develop a comprehensive understanding of community safety issues.

Governance

The Dorset CSP is the statutory Community Safety Partnership for the local area. In addition, the CSP fulfils the functions of the Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board as required under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and coordinates partners' response to meeting their statutory duties relating to serious violence under the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act 2022. It brings together senior officers and elected members from:

- Dorset Police
- Dorset Council
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority
- Probation Service (Dorset)
- NHS Dorset

Many other partners such as the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, the Dorset Domestic Abuse Forum and the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service are also members of the CSP.

There is a multi-agency Strategic Delivery Group that reports to the CSP and co-ordinates partners' work to tackle strategic issues and priorities.

Locality based Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) groups report into a Partnership Co-ordinating Group (PCG) which reports to the CSP. The MAPs and PCG are responsible for identifying solutions to locality based issues.

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Cabinet

6 October 2026

Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) Annual Report April 2025 – March 2026

For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr C Sutton, Children, Families & Education

Local Councillor(s):

Senior Leadership Team:

P Dempsey - Executive Director, Children's Services

Report author and job title:

Megan Cameron-Brown, Head of Quality Assurance & Partnerships

Email: megan.cameron-brown@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

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

1. Executive summary

The 2025-2026 reporting year has seen the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) further embed its arrangements as a standalone safeguarding partnership. The Partnership has continued to strengthen multi-agency safeguarding practice across Dorset through robust governance, effective quality assurance activity, strong partnership working, and a commitment to improving outcomes for children and families. The work delivered throughout the year demonstrates the positive impact of collaborative safeguarding arrangements and ongoing implementation of national reforms, including Families First for Children and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026. Strategic Leadership and Governance

2. Recommendation(s)

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

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The recommendation enables Cabinet to receive assurance regarding the effectiveness of local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, note the progress made by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership during 2025-

2026, and endorse the Partnership's priorities for 2026-2027 in support of improved outcomes for children and families in Dorset.

4. The report

4.1 Strategic Leadership and Governance

The Partnership has maintained effective governance arrangements through the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Board, the Pan-Dorset Lead Safeguarding Partner Meetings, and a range of multi-agency delivery groups. An independent scrutiny review completed during the year concluded that the partnership is strong and well-functioning, with committed leadership, positive multi-agency relationships and no systemic safeguarding concerns identified. Recommendations from the review have been incorporated into future planning to further strengthen accountability, partnership oversight and impact.

4.2 Key Achievements

Key achievements during 2025-2026 include:

- Completion of multi-agency quality assurance audits focused on children under two and extra-familial risk and harm, identifying strong collaborative practice and informing partnership improvement plans.
- Delivery of a successful annual safeguarding conference, Wellbeing First: Building Resilience in Young Lives, attended by 167 delegates from across the partnership.
- Continued strengthening of education's role within safeguarding arrangements through the Education Safeguarding Board and associated quality assurance and engagement activities.
- Delivery of a comprehensive multi-agency safeguarding training programme reaching over 1,800 practitioners, with satisfaction rates consistently between 98% and 100% and strong evidence of improved confidence and practice.
- Enhanced focus on the voice of children, young people and families through engagement activities, co-production of conferences, use of Mind of My Own, and embedding lived experience into reviews and audits.
- Strengthened multi-agency responses to extra-familial harm, violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, and the impact of mental health on children and families.

4.3 Future Planning

During 2026-2027, the Partnership will focus on:

- Further strengthening and evidencing the voice of children, young people and families throughout partnership activity.

- Embedding quarterly multi-agency audits through a forward quality assurance programme.
- Undertaking scrutiny activity relating to child sexual abuse, neglect, domestic abuse and unborn babies to under one-year olds.
- Continuing to embed and respond to national safeguarding reforms and Families First developments.
- Implementing recommendations arising from the independent scrutiny review of governance arrangements.

4.4 Conclusion

The Partnership has continued to demonstrate strong leadership, effective partnership working and a shared commitment to safeguarding children and young people. Through robust quality assurance, workforce development, independent scrutiny and a continued focus on children's lived experiences, DSCP has strengthened its arrangements and improved multi-agency practice. The dedication and collaboration of all safeguarding partners continue to support positive outcomes for children and families across Dorset.

The Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) Annual Report for April 2025 to March 2026 is set out at Appendix 1

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Legal considerations

6.1 Not applicable. The publication of an annual report is a statutory requirement of local safeguarding partnerships under the Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

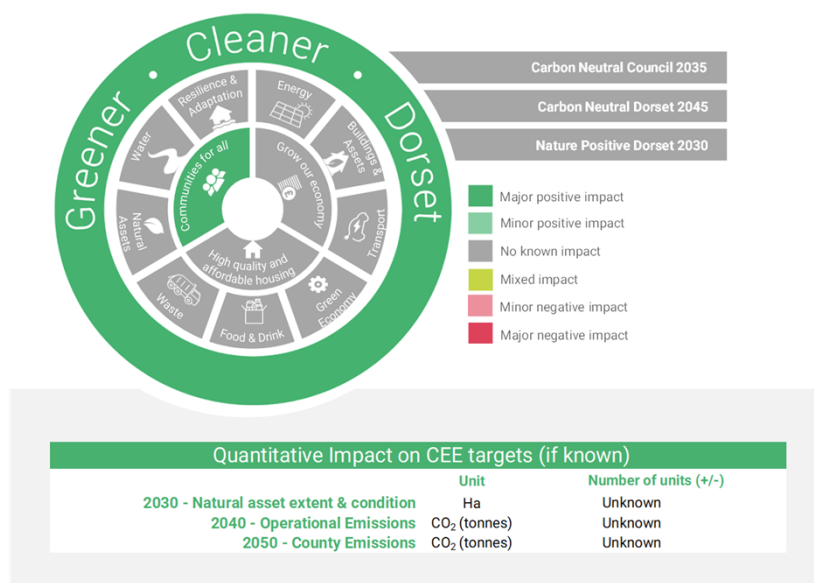
7. Financial implications

7.1 Effective safeguarding arrangements deliver significant financial benefits through early intervention, coordinated multi-agency responses and reduced demand for high-cost statutory services. These arrangements help prevent escalation of need and reduce long-term costs associated with crisis services, social care, health, education and criminal justice services.

The Partnership operates a shared funding model across statutory partners, supporting delivery of statutory safeguarding functions, independent scrutiny, quality assurance activity, safeguarding reviews and workforce development. Robust governance and accountability mechanisms support transparent budget planning and equitable funding contributions from statutory partners.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

8.1 There are no direct natural environment, climate or ecological implications arising from this report.



9. Well-being and health implications

- 9.1 The work of the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership contributes significantly to improving the wellbeing, safety and health outcomes of children and young people. Through effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, trauma-informed practice and coordinated support, children are protected from harm and provided with opportunities to thrive. The Partnership's focus on mental health, domestic abuse, violence prevention and early intervention supports improved long-term outcomes and reduces health inequalities.

10. Other implications

- 10.1 None

11. Risk implications

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

This report is presented for information only and does not require a formal decision by Cabinet. No specific risks arise from the report itself.

12. Equalities

- 12.1 The Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership is committed to promoting equality and ensuring that all children, young people and families, regardless of their background, identity, circumstances or protected characteristics, receive equitable protection, support and opportunities to achieve positive outcomes. Through robust quality assurance, scrutiny activities, performance analysis and engagement with children, families and practitioners, the Partnership seeks to identify and address disparities in access to services, experiences and outcomes, particularly for children from minority ethnic

communities, those with disabilities, vulnerable groups and families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. By embedding inclusive practices, diverse representation and culturally competent approaches across all aspects of its work, the Partnership aims to ensure that the rights, voices and individual needs of every child and family are recognised and responded to effectively. The Partnership will continue to strengthen its use of data and intelligence to understand whether any groups are disproportionately represented within safeguarding systems and to ensure services remain responsive, accessible and effective for all communities across Dorset.

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix 1 – the Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) Annual Report April 2025 – March 2026

14. Background papers

- 14.1 None

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 Assurance and Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Director for Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s).

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Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

Annual Report 2025/2026



DORSET
Safeguarding
Children Partnership



Dorset
Council

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Independent Scrutineer Commentary

“I was delighted to join the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) as its Independent Scrutineer midway through the reporting year, in December 2025. My first involvement was supporting the partnership with a recently commissioned Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. This provided an excellent opportunity to observe how agencies worked together and how they responded when things went wrong. I was particularly encouraged to observe a culture of openness, transparency and honesty throughout the process. There was a clear commitment from all partners to learn from mistakes and to use that learning to improve future service delivery. This was both positive and reassuring to see.

In the New Year, I undertook a review of the partnership's governance arrangements. I was impressed by the partnership's genuine focus on improving outcomes for children and the willingness of partners to work collaboratively in pursuit of this shared objective. Working Together 2026 is clear that the police, health services and local authority share equal responsibility and accountability for the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements. My review identified a risk that this balance could, at times, become weighted towards one partner. It also highlighted opportunities to streamline aspects of the governance structure, with the aim of reducing duplication and ensuring that professionals can spend more time on activity that directly improves outcomes for children and families, rather than attending meetings. My report was welcomed and I know that steps are now being taken to implement the recommendations that I made.

Working Together 2026 also makes clear that the Independent Scrutineer should review and comment on the partnership's annual report. I was therefore given access to an early draft of this report and I am pleased to say that I believe it provides a balanced and informative overview of the partnership's work, its achievements and the challenges it continues to face. I have also encouraged the partnership to consider how this report can be made more accessible and engaging for the children and young people of Dorset, as well as their families, so that they can better understand the work being undertaken on their behalf.

I am particularly encouraged by the partnership's commitment to embed national reforms, including the Families First programme, and by the thoughtful way in which partners are preparing for wider system changes. This includes considering the implications of ongoing reform within health services as the Integrated Care Board embeds its own transformation programme. These developments will present both opportunities and challenges, and I am confident that the partnership is well placed to respond to them through its commitment to collaboration, learning and continuous improvement.”

Section 1

Outlining the requirements set out in statutory guidance

The Safeguarding Children Partnership has a statutory responsibility, as set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2026\)](#) for leadership and multi-agency co-ordination of “arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.” In other words, the Partnership is a strategic arrangement between the statutory safeguarding partners (Dorset Council Children’s Services, Dorset Police, NHS Dorset, and Education) to ensure that there are effective child safeguarding arrangements in place in the local area.

Each Safeguarding Children Partnership has a statutory responsibility as set out in the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance (2026) for leadership and multi-agency co-ordination of “arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.” The structure of the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership is set out in its multi-agency safeguarding arrangements document.

The Safeguarding Children Partnership [Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) website has continued to operate as a joint platform for both the DSCP and BCP SCP. Over the past 12 months, the site has been further developed and clearly structured to provide distinct sections for each Partnership, alongside a shared Pan-Dorset area which hosts jointly delivered functions. This has supported improved accessibility and clarity for users. BCP have recently developed their own partnership website, so their section will be now coming down, and we will have two separate websites.

Over the same period, the DSCP has strengthened its focus on ensuring that children and families receive coordinated, targeted support that meets their needs. There is a shared and equal commitment across agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, with safeguarding partners continuing to take collective responsibility for joining up services and working collaboratively to improve outcomes for children across Dorset.

1. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Working Together 2026 defined the head of each statutory safeguarding partner agency (Dorset Council, NHS Dorset and Dorset Police) as the Lead Safeguarding Partner (LSP) who are as follows for the Dorset

area:

- Catherine Howe, Chief Executive Officer, Dorset Council
- Amanda Pearson, Chief Constable, Dorset Police
- Jonathan Higman, Chief Executive Officer, NHS Dorset

As set out in Working Together 2026, the delivery of the multi-agency safeguarding functions and processes should be delegated to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) to allow the LSPs to focus on their joint functions and maintain strategic oversight.

In the Dorset area, the LSPs have identified the following senior officers in their respective agencies who have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements:

- Paul Dempsey, Executive Director for People – Children, Dorset Council
- Mark Callaghan, Assistant Chief Constable, Dorset Police
- Shelagh Meldrum, Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Dorset

These representatives or delegates:

- Speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent.
- Take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing, and practice matters.
- Hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements.

2. Pan-Dorset Lead Safeguarding Partner Meeting

In the new structures for each Safeguarding Children Partnership, there is a Pan-Dorset Lead Safeguarding Partner meeting which sits across both. During the 2025-2026 reporting period this group met 3 times a year, there has been a recent decision that going forward they will only meet twice a year. This is to ensure the Lead Safeguarding Partners have strategic oversight of the multi-agency safeguarding functions. This meeting is structured into three sections: a Pan-Dorset section, a Dorset SCP section and a BCP SCP section. Some of the key Safeguarding Children Partnership items are presented to these meetings, including reviewing progress against the strategic priorities and agreeing the budget for each financial year. The Pan-Dorset section of the meeting allows for discussion and highlighting of any joint strategic issues across both Local Authority areas.

3. Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Board

The Dorset Safeguarding Children Board (previously called the Strengthening Services Board up to the 1 April 2025) is where the Delegated Safeguarding Partners deliver their joint functions, as set out in Working Together (2026). This is chaired by the Chief Executive of Dorset Council with representatives at executive level across the Partnership. The Board meets quarterly, and key updates are shared with the Lead Safeguarding Partner meeting.

Sitting underneath the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Board are several partnership groups and subgroups (see Appendix 1 for structure). Each of these groups and sub-groups have a focus on delivering on a certain area of the multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements. For example, the Education Safeguarding Board has been established following the work Dorset Council have been completing as a Pathfinder for the Stable Homes Built on Love Review. This board specifically considers how education is driving forward the partnership priorities and has its own delivery plan against the priority areas.

4. Partnership Training and Development

The Safeguarding Children training offer continues to be offered as a Pan-Dorset function. This includes a core safeguarding training provision with this being open to attendance from a wide range of agencies, to ensure that there is a multi-agency attendance at the courses. The administration and co-ordination of the training is paid by income generation. The Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Training is a trusted and dependable provider, ensuring that organisations meet their safeguarding training requirements. Courses are commissioned through the Learning and Development Framework and meet the specific quality control and contract compliance measures. The offer is regularly updated with both local and national changes in policy and procedure, as well as in relation to any specific learning that emerges from the completion of local rapid reviews, Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs) and any other quality assurance or scrutiny activity delivered by both the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership.

5. Child Death Overview Panel

Statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 defines child death review partners as “local authorities and any Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) for the local area as set out in the Children Act 2004 (the Act), and as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017”.

When a child dies, in any circumstances, it is important for parents and families to understand what has happened and whether there are any lessons to be learned. The responsibility for ensuring child death reviews is carried out is held by ‘child death review partners,’ as defined within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and set out in current legislation. Child death review partners must make arrangements to review all deaths of children normally resident in the local area and, if they consider it appropriate, for any non-resident child who has died in their area. Child death review partners, for two or more local authority areas, may combine and agree that their areas be treated as a single area for the purpose of undertaking child death reviews. Child death review partners in Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole, Dorset, and Somerset have agreed to treat Pan

Dorset and Somerset as a single area, resulting in a joint Pan Dorset and Somerset Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) undertaking child death reviews for Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole, Dorset, and Somerset children.

The CDOP panel met 7 times in 2025/26 and reviewed 49 deaths, some of which occurred prior to this annual reporting period of April 2025-March 2026: 24 Pan-Dorset deaths (8 Dorset and 16 BCP) and 25 Somerset deaths. There is a delay in child deaths being reviewed at a full CDOP, due to the information gathering process that needs to take place with involved agencies, including the deaths first being reviewed at local child death review meetings, before a review takes place at CDOP.

In addition, CDOP has been notified of a total of 22 deaths of Pan Dorset residents and 20 deaths of Somerset residents which have occurred during this annual reporting period of April 2025-March 2026. These deaths will be reviewed by CDOP within the next annual reporting period. In addition, there was 1 notification of an Out of County child, resident elsewhere who died within our areas (0 Dorset Out of County / 1 Somerset Out of County) –these deaths will be reviewed and recorded by their home Local Authority. The annual CDOP report April 2025-March 2026 is due to be published in November 2026.

Section 2: Dorset Area Profile

The population of the Dorset Council area is approximately 389,950 (2024 estimate), with projected growth of around 5.1% between 2025 and 2035. There are approximately 67,150 children and young people aged 0–17, representing around 17% of the total population, which is lower than the national average of 21%. In contrast, 31% of the population are aged 65 and over, the highest proportion of any unitary authority in England and the working-age population aged 16 to 64 has remained relatively static, with 44% aged 50 and over.



Birth rates in Dorset are projected to fall from 6.6 per 1,000 population in 2025 to 6.1 over the next ten years. In 2024/25 there were 2,660 births compared to 4,877 deaths, meaning population growth is driven primarily by migration rather than natural change. Net migration into Dorset was estimated at 5,100 in 2023–2024, predominantly from within the UK.

English is the main language spoken in Dorset, and although over 80 languages are represented across the area, residents for whom English is not their main language make up a small proportion of the population. The top 5 languages spoken in Dorset are English with Polish, Romanian, Nepalese and Bulgarian spoken by 0.7% of the population. Dorset remains predominantly White British, with relatively low ethnic diversity compared to national figures, although diversity is gradually increasing, particularly among younger age groups. According to the 2021 Census 93.9% of the population are white British, a decrease of 1.7% from the 2011 Census with the remaining 6.1% of residents from Black and Minority Ethnic groups (national 25.6%), this rises to 7.8% for children and young people (aged 24 years and under). Just over half of our residents, who are from an ethnic minority, report as being 'White Other.' This is mainly made up of White European residents.

The natural environment, coastal setting and rural landscapes of Dorset contribute to high levels of wellbeing, with an above-average proportion of residents reporting high life satisfaction and feeling that their lives are worthwhile. However, these strengths can mask hidden challenges. There are significant areas of deprivation, primarily in urban areas such as Weymouth and Portland, alongside rural deprivation linked to isolation, limited transport, and difficulty accessing housing and essential services. A significant proportion of Dorset residents also experience geographic barriers to accessing services. There are nine areas in Dorset within the top 20% most deprived nationally for multiple deprivation, seven of these are within Weymouth and Portland, one is in Bridport and one in Ferndown. The Children's Society estimates that approximately 23% of Dorset Children are living in poverty, with up to 45% in some wards (2021).

There are just over 46,300 pupils attending schools in Dorset across 158 education settings, including maintained, academy and free schools. Dorset operates a mix of two-tier and three-tier education systems, with a wide variation in school size. Around 63% of pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan are educated in mainstream schools. The proportion of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) has continued to increase, rising from 17.8% in 2021 to 21.3% in 2025. The percentage of children with either a statement or an EHC Plan has more than doubled over the past ten years, from 2.4% to 6.0%.

Overall, Ofsted findings indicate that safeguarding arrangements in Dorset schools continue to be effective, providing strong assurance regarding the quality of leadership, management and safeguarding practice across education settings. In relation to Ofsted

under the new framework, early inspection outcomes were largely focused on schools previously judged as requiring improvement and therefore reflect ongoing improvement journeys; however, more recent inspections are beginning to show an increase in expected and stronger standard outcomes.

Educational outcomes remain an area of focus. While early years attainment is broadly in line with national averages, with 67% of children achieving a Good Level of Development in 2024, challenges remain across later key stages, particularly in narrowing the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils. Attendance and persistent absence continue to impact outcomes. Dorset is within the bottom 20% of local authorities for combined attainment at KS2, with performance in writing and mathematics continuing to present challenge.

Crime levels in Dorset remain relatively low compared to national averages, with the area consistently regarded as one of the safest places to live in England. However, overall recorded crime has slightly increased by 2 %, alongside a rise in domestic abuse and hate crime incidents. In 2024/25 there were 4,771 recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour, with Weymouth experiencing the highest rates. First-time entrants of young people into the criminal justice system remain comparatively low. Total recorded crime has risen by 2% this year.

Section 3: Progress against statutory guidance

Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

1. Activities achieved and impact

Voice of children and young people

The Safeguarding in Education Board enlisted the Dorset Youth Voice team to undertake a county-wide engagement activity to gather the views of children and young people on the use of mobile phones in schools, reaching approximately 254 young people over a two-month period through assemblies, workshops and youth council discussions across a range of Dorset schools and settings. This activity ensured a broad and representative voice, with young people contributing balanced insights into the impact of mobile phone use on safety, wellbeing, learning and social interaction. The findings demonstrated that while most young people did not support a full ban, they were highly aware of both the risks such as distraction, bullying and reduced social interaction, and the benefits, particularly in supporting feelings of safety, emotional wellbeing and contact with trusted adults. The engagement has had a positive impact in amplifying the voice of the child within safeguarding and education discussions, directly informing the Education Safeguarding Board and supporting schools to consider proportionate approaches, such

as clear and consistent expectations around mobile phone use. Overall, this work has strengthened partnership understanding of young people lived experiences, contributing to more informed, balanced decision-making that promotes both safety and wellbeing in school environments.



Multi-agency audits

The partnership's quality assurance activity during 2025/26 builds directly on priorities and actions identified in the 2024/25 annual report. This includes strengthening multi-agency practice, improving consistency in safeguarding responses, and testing the effectiveness of strategic approaches such as extra-familial risk and harm. The following audits demonstrate both ongoing delivery and emerging impact against these areas.

Two multi-agency quality assurance activities took place with partners across the partnership.

- **Quality Assurance Activity – Children Under Two**

As identified in the 2024/25 annual report, the partnership committed to undertaking targeted quality assurance activity in relation to pre-birth to two-year-olds, in response to

learning from rapid reviews and emerging safeguarding concerns. This commitment has been progressed through the following multi-agency audit, which reviewed safeguarding practice for children under two. This audit involved the detailed review of 25 cases, incorporating multi-agency input and feedback from over 30 practitioners through structured focus groups. The activity identified strong collaboration between agencies, evidenced by coordinated planning, timely information sharing in many cases, and effective use of joint decision-making to reduce risk and improve oversight.

Practice was characterised by increasingly trauma-aware and child-centred approaches, particularly within Children's Services and health. This was complemented by consistent and trusted engagement from health visitors and maternity services, supporting both early identification of vulnerability and continuity of care for infants and their families. Police and housing partners also contributed to effective safeguarding through timely interventions, particularly in response to domestic abuse. In addition, relationship-based practice with parents and wider family networks was evident, strengthening engagement, trust, and resilience.

Overall, the audit demonstrates that where agencies work cohesively and maintain a strong focus on the lived experience of infants and their families, this leads to earlier intervention, reduced risk, and improved outcomes at a critical stage of development. The findings also highlight clear priorities for further development, particularly in strengthening consistency in trauma-informed practice, inclusion, and multi-agency coordination.

These findings demonstrate progress against areas for development identified in 2024/25, particularly in strengthening multi-agency collaboration, embedding trauma-informed practice, and improving early identification and intervention.

- **Quality Assurance Activity – Extra-Familial Risk and Harm (EFRH)**

Building on the partnership's 2024/25 priority to strengthen its response to extra-familial harm, and to test the effectiveness of the emerging strategy and toolkit, this activity was undertaken to assess current multi-agency practice. The second quality assurance activity was a multi-agency audit of extra-familial risk and harm (EFRH). This involved a review of nine children identified as being at moderate to high risk, drawing on contributions from a wide range of partners, including Children's Services, education, police, health, adult services, and the voluntary sector. The audit was supported by multi-agency audit discussions and practitioner focus groups, providing both quantitative and qualitative insight into current practice.

The audit identified strong examples of effective multi-agency collaboration. Partners were working together to share information, implement timely disruption activity, and reduce

risk for vulnerable children. Practice was also characterised by positive trauma-informed and relational approaches, which contributed to improvements in engagement, school attendance, and emotional stability for children.

Education settings, health practitioners, and police played a key role in providing protective support, developing trusted relationships, and supporting the early identification of harm. These contributions enabled a more coordinated and responsive safeguarding approach across agencies.

Overall, the audit demonstrates that services are working effectively together and placing the child at the centre of planning, leading to improved safety and outcomes. The findings also highlight areas for further focus, which are being progressed through a multi-agency action plan.

This reflects progress in embedding the extra-familial harm framework introduced in 2024/25, while also identifying where further work is required to ensure consistent application across all agencies.

Annual Conference

The Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership held their annual conference - *Wellbeing First: Building Resilience in Young Lives* on the 10th of December 2025. The conference was widely regarded as a successful and well-attended event, bringing together 167 delegates from across the partnership, including education, local authority, NHS, police, and other agencies. Feedback indicates that the conference was positively received overall, with the majority of respondents rating both the event and its speakers as “excellent” or “good.” Attendees particularly valued contributions from Dr Helen Thomas and the involvement of young people, whose lived experiences were highlighted as a meaningful and impactful element. Overall, the conference was seen as a strong collaborative effort, with appreciation expressed for the significant planning and coordination behind its delivery and valuable insights provided for future events.

Areas of Focus

- Enhancing the visibility and influence of the voice of children and families,
- Developing a more integrated approach to performance data and further
- Evolving the MACPT Board.

2. Partnership Training and Development

Actions taken

Over the past three years, the PDSCP Training Team has delivered a comprehensive, responsive and high-quality multi-agency training programme, supporting practitioners across education, health, police, local authority, voluntary and private sectors.

Following the separation of Pan-Dorset arrangements in July 2024, the team successfully transitioned to new governance structures, ensuring continuity of delivery across both DSCP and BCPSCP without disruption.

The training offer has been continuously developed and aligned to local and national safeguarding priorities, with significant curriculum expansion to address emerging risks, including contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, digital harm, domestic abuse, exploitation and complex neglect.

Delivery has remained strong, with:

- Over 1,800 delegates trained annually in Dorset alone
- Consistent satisfaction rates of 98–100%
- Strong multi-agency engagement across all sectors

Operational improvements have significantly strengthened the service, including:

- An 85% reduction in course cancellations over three years (from 20 to 3 courses annually)
- Improved demand management through enhanced use of the Nexus system and targeted marketing
- Expansion of digital systems and user experience improvements
- Provision of infrastructure support to partnership conferences and workforce development

The service continues to operate as a self-sustaining, income-led model, reinvesting surplus into safeguarding priorities and workforce development.

Impact

This work has had a significant and measurable impact on workforce capability, safeguarding practice and outcomes for children.

- High levels of engagement and attendance demonstrate a strong and committed multi-agency workforce, with attendance consistently tracking bookings across sectors
- Exceptionally high satisfaction rates (98–100%) reflect a trusted and valued training offer, contributing to consistent workforce development across the partnership
- Impact evaluation demonstrates clear translation of learning into practice:
 - 90%+ of practitioners report increased confidence in applying learning
 - 92–95% report improved knowledge
 - 57% report changes in practice, with 75% identifying a positive impact on children and families
- Training has strengthened practitioners' ability to recognise and respond to complex safeguarding concerns, including exploitation, trauma and domestic abuse
- Improved workforce capability has contributed to earlier identification of risk, more appropriate interventions and better safeguarding decision-making
- The reduction in course cancellations has improved access to training and system efficiency, ensuring more practitioners are equipped to safeguard children effectively
- Strong alignment between training content and partnership priorities has supported more consistent multi-agency practice across the system

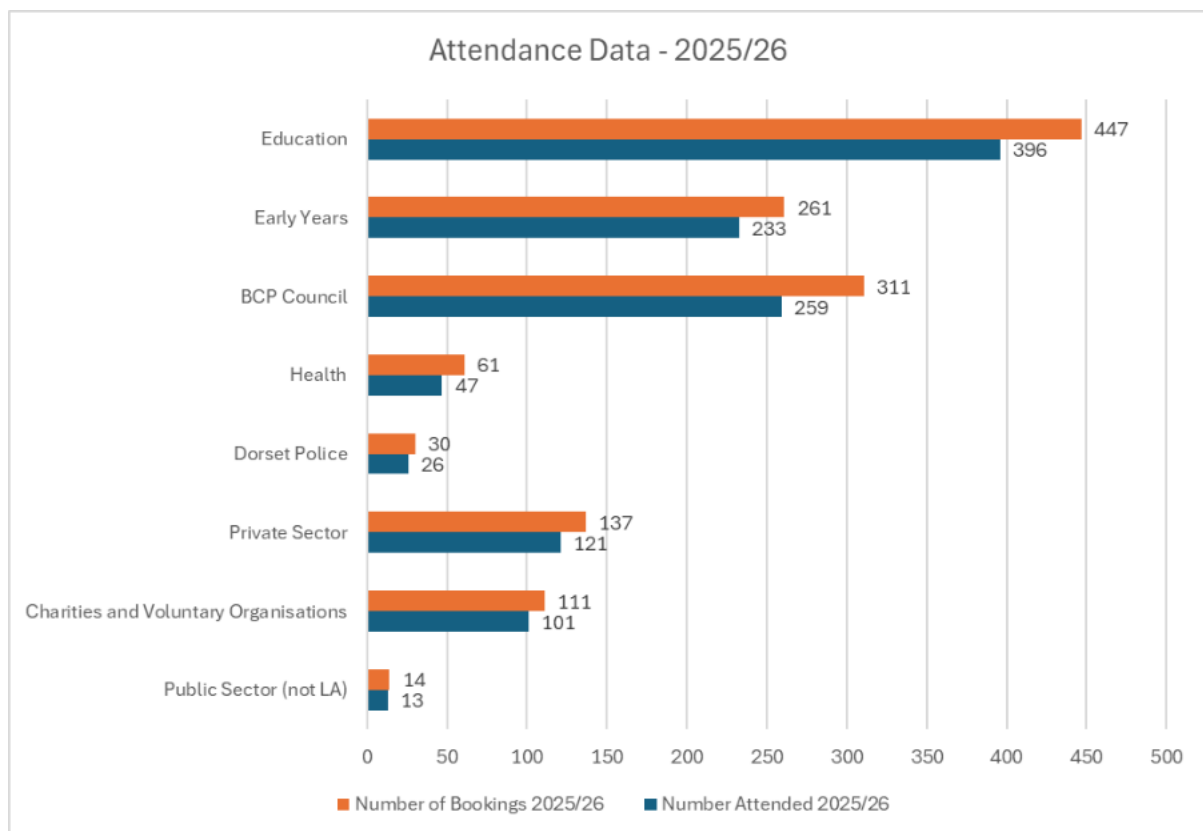
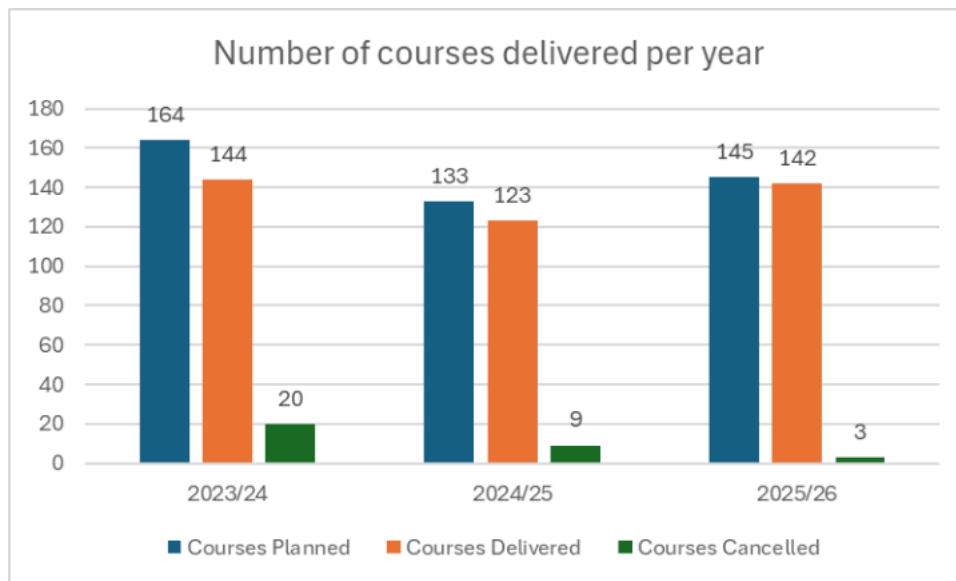
Overall, the training programme has strengthened the confidence, consistency and effectiveness of safeguarding practice, contributing to improved outcomes for children and young people.

Areas for focus

Whilst the training programme is performing strongly, continued development is required to maximise long-term impact:

- Strengthening evaluation frameworks to better understand long-term impact on practice and outcomes, beyond immediate and short-term feedback
- Ensuring consistent engagement across all partners, particularly where attendance levels vary between sectors
- Continuing to adapt the curriculum to respond to emerging risks and increasing complexity of need
- Further developing the use of data to enable better linkage between training, practice improvement and outcomes for children
- Expanding digital and multi-agency learning opportunities to increase accessibility and reach across the workforce

The Training Team will continue to build on this strong foundation, ensuring the workforce remains skilled, confident and equipped to safeguard children effectively.



Section 4:

Evidence of the impact – Contributions of each safeguarding partner

1. Dorset Council Children's Services

During 2025–26, the Families First model that was developed and tested continued to run in Dorset children services, while we worked with partners to develop the revamped model to be aligned with the national guidance. The programme board that oversaw this work concluded in April 2026 and will now be overseen by the existing partnership governance.

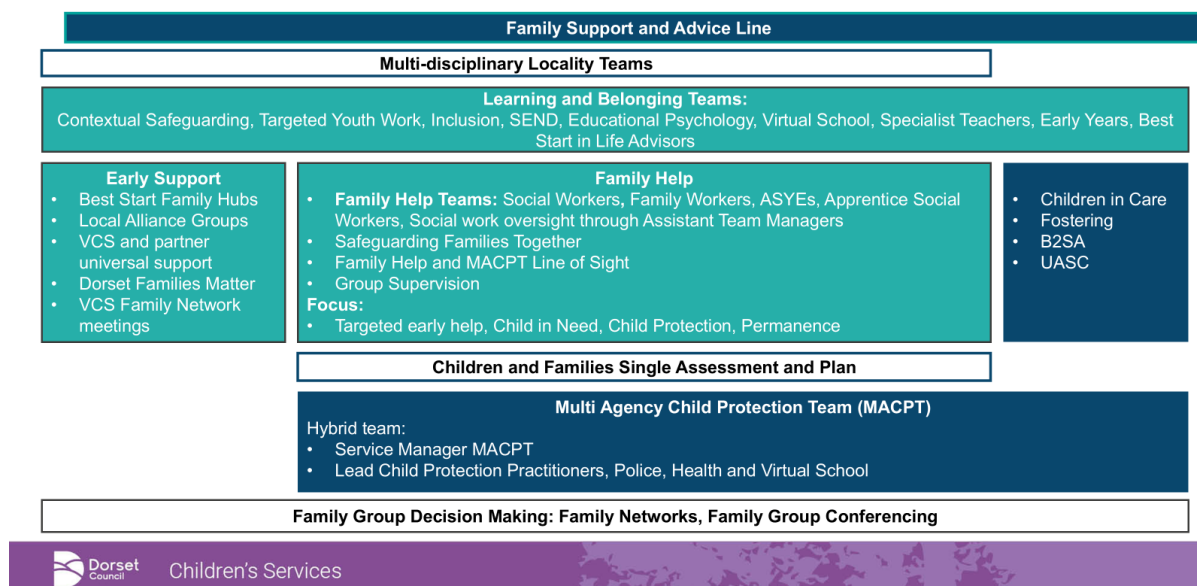
The programme has driven significant whole-system transformation, resulting in timelier coordinated and family-focused responses across services. Families are now receiving a high-quality response at the point of referral, with enhanced advice and guidance for those subject to section 47 enquiries, and increased involvement in decision-making through Family Network Meetings and Family Group Conferences. Multi-agency collaboration has strengthened, particularly through MACPT line of sight and an active Education Safeguarding Board, enabling more informed, timely decisions and reducing drift and delay.

The expansion of youth work and contextual safeguarding within localities has improved engagement with adolescents, contributing to reduced exclusions and earlier identification of risk. There is clear evidence of improved family experience, with more inclusive and respectful child protection conferences, strengthened kinship care arrangements, and increased opportunities for children to remain within their family networks.

Key system improvements include the successful implementation of the Integrated Front Door, the establishment of Family Help teams, a single assessment and plan, and strengthened workforce development pathways, alongside positive external validation, including an Outstanding ILACS judgement. Collectively, these developments have strengthened early help, improved safeguarding responses, and delivered more consistent, relationship-based support for children and families across the partnership.

From the first of June 2026 we will be moving into our reviewed model which will be compliant with the families first program guide.

Families First Partnership (FFP): Overview of our model



Birth to Settled Adulthood/Transitions

The Birth to Settled Adulthood (B2SA) programme continues to provide strong oversight and strategic coordination through its Delivery Board, with a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and young people through multi-agency collaboration. The delivery board and governance arrangements remained robust, with continued scrutiny of programme activity, financial pressures, service performance, and key delivery priorities, alongside consideration of future arrangements for Phase 2 development.

Activity across the programme demonstrates a sustained emphasis on service evaluation, data and performance reporting, and the development of key workstreams, including SEND provision and the Keyworker Service. The programme continues to embed a whole-system approach, bringing together education, health and social care partners to strengthen consistency, accountability and shared outcomes for children and young people.

Evidence of impact highlights the effectiveness of relationship-based, child-centred practice across services. In health provision, families report significantly improved experiences, with children more actively engaged in care and parents describing services as calm, accessible and clearly communicated. This reflects a shift towards more inclusive, family-focused approaches that reduce stress and improve overall engagement with services.

Preparation for adulthood remains a key area of impact, with strong examples of coordinated multi-agency support enabling smoother transitions from children to adult

services. Personalised approaches have supported increased independence, improved emotional wellbeing, and greater stability for young people, including those with complex needs or high levels of anxiety. In several cases, proactive planning and flexible support have prevented escalation, reduced crisis responses, and avoided the need for more intensive interventions, while enabling young people to access education, community opportunities and independent living pathways.

Innovative practice has also been evident, including the use of gradual, confidence-building approaches and creative tools to reduce anxiety and increase engagement. Strong transition planning, supported by regular multi-agency meetings and improved information sharing, has resulted in more coordinated and seamless experiences for young people moving into adulthood, with increased confidence, stability and continuity of support.

The Keyworker Service continues to play a pivotal role in improving the experiences of children and families, particularly those navigating complex systems. By acting as a consistent point of contact, key workers support communication across agencies, advocate for young people, and help families to better understand and access services. This has led to improved engagement, increased confidence, and greater participation for young people, particularly those who may otherwise struggle to have their voices heard.

Overall, the B2SA programme demonstrates a strong partnership approach, with clear evidence of positive impact on outcomes for children, young people and their families. The continued focus on relationship-based practice, early intervention and coordinated multi-agency working is supporting more effective transitions into adulthood and contributing to improved stability, independence and wellbeing.

2. NHS Dorset (Integrated Care Board)

The Integrated Care Board (ICB) remains a statutory safeguarding partner within the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) and continues to work collaboratively with partners to fulfil its statutory duties in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*.

Actions taken

Over the past 12 months, NHS Dorset has continued to fulfil its statutory safeguarding responsibilities, working collaboratively with partners to strengthen multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*. Safeguarding governance has been maintained through established structures, including the Safeguarding Assurance Group, with continued oversight of NHS provider arrangements and system performance.

During 2025/26, NHS Dorset transitioned into a wider Integrated Care Board cluster alongside neighbouring systems, with new executive leadership arrangements established. Throughout this period of change, safeguarding leadership and professional capacity have remained stable, ensuring continuity of delivery against safeguarding priorities. The cluster governance arrangements became operational from April 2026, with further organisational development continuing ahead of a planned full merger in April 2027.

NHS Dorset has also continued to lead and contribute to key safeguarding activities, including chairing the Child Safeguarding Practice Review sub-group, supporting Rapid Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, and progressing system-wide work in relation to violence, domestic abuse and mental health. This has included the development of new data tools, targeted health interventions for vulnerable children, and leading the transformation of children and young people's mental health services.

Impact

This work has contributed to strengthened safeguarding practice and improved system-wide responses for children and young people.

- Continued strong multi-agency governance has ensured safeguarding remains well-embedded across the health system, with clear oversight and accountability during a period of organisational change
- Learning from child safeguarding practice reviews is being consistently shared and embedded across NHS services, supporting improved practice and safer decision-making
- Development of new data tools has strengthened the system's ability to identify and understand patterns of serious violence, supporting more informed partnership responses
- The specialist nursing pilot for children in care has demonstrated positive outcomes, enabling more targeted intervention for those at increased risk of exploitation, missing episodes and serious harm
- Work with primary care has improved awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, strengthening the ability of GPs to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns within families
- Progress in transforming children and young people's mental health services has improved access to support, with a focus on early help, crisis response and removing barriers to care, supporting children to receive the right help at the right time

- Additional initiatives, including trauma-informed training, improved safer sleeping guidance and enhanced access to dental care for children in care, have contributed to a more holistic and preventative safeguarding approach

Overall, NHS Dorset has maintained a strong focus on partnership working, contributing to more coordinated and effective safeguarding responses across the system.

Areas for focus

Whilst progress has been made, significant challenges remain across the system.

- Continued implementation of children and young people's mental health transformation is required to ensure sustained improvement in access, responsiveness and outcomes
- Demand relating to mental health and domestic abuse remains high, with increasing complexity of need across services
- Further work is needed to improve joined-up data and insight, particularly in understanding repeat presentations, vulnerability patterns and long-term outcomes for children
- Embedding learning from reviews consistently across all parts of the system remains a priority to ensure practice improvements translate into improved outcomes

NHS Dorset will continue to work with partners to strengthen early intervention, improve data insight and ensure that safeguarding responses remain coordinated, responsive and centred on the needs of children and young people.

3. Dorset Police

Actions taken

Over the last 12 months, Dorset Police have continued to strengthen their multi-agency safeguarding response, with a clear focus on the partnership priorities of violence experienced by children and young people, domestic abuse, and the impact of mental health. The latest knife crime awareness (Operation Sceptre) week was held from the 19th to the 25th May 2025. Locally, extensive communications aimed at raising awareness of knife crimes were issued. During this week, a youth consultation was launched and the data collected will be instrumental in shaping the Serious Violence Needs Assessment for the Dorset Community Safety Partnership. A consultation was also issued to school

Headteachers to understand their educational needs and challenges related to prevention work. This will help tailor support and resources to better address these challenges.

Targeted activity has included:

- Strengthening responses to knife crime and serious violence, including the introduction of additional focused deterrence workers and a virtual reality prevention pilot.
- Delivery of targeted interventions such as Operation Guardian (Skills 4 Safer Streets) and preparation for Operation Sceptre, focusing on both young people and parents
- Continued implementation of Operation Soteria to improve responses to sexual offences and violence against women and girls
- Enhancing safeguarding practice through improved quality assurance and Voice of the Child processes, including mandatory capture within Public Protection Notices (PPNs)
- Ongoing development of multi-agency arrangements, including the Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panel (EFRP) and new cross-force child-centred tactical meetings

In addition, Dorset Police have continued to strengthen governance and performance oversight through regular monitoring, thematic reviews and “reality testing” of safeguarding practice.

Impact

This work has contributed to measurable and meaningful improvements in safeguarding outcomes for children and young people in Dorset.

- Dorset has achieved a positive outcome rate of 68.7% for weapons possession offences, placing it first nationally, demonstrating effective enforcement alongside targeted prevention
- A focused approach to children identified as habitual knife carriers (21 children) has resulted in very low reoffending rates, indicating successful early intervention and risk reduction
- Prevention programmes such as Operation Guardian have led to improved understanding of risk among young people and increased trust in emergency services, as evidenced through programme evaluation
- Strengthened partnership work and improved investigative approaches have enhanced responses to serious sexual offences, supporting better outcomes for victims
- The embedding of Voice of the Child processes has improved the quality and consistency of safeguarding decision-making, ensuring children’s experiences and perspectives are better reflected in assessments and interventions

- Increased use of data and quality assurance has strengthened organisational learning and practice improvement, supporting more consistent safeguarding responses across the Force

In relation to domestic abuse, improved identification and reporting have contributed to a significant increase in applications under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (57%) and rising MARAC referrals, indicating greater recognition of risk and improved multi-agency response to high-risk cases.

Joint work with partners to support children presenting in crisis has led to the introduction of youth workers in emergency departments, providing targeted intervention, particularly for children experiencing mental health difficulties, and improving access to support at the point of need.

Areas for focus

Despite these positive developments, demand across safeguarding services remains high, with increasing complexity of need. Key areas for continued focus include:

- Rising demand in domestic abuse, including high-risk cases and increasing reliance on specialist services
- The ongoing impact of mental health needs on children and families, particularly those presenting in crisis
- Ensuring that early intervention and prevention activity continues to reduce escalation to high-risk harm
- Strengthening the ability to track repeat vulnerability and long-term outcomes, to better understand whether interventions are reducing risk over time

Dorset Police will continue to work closely with partners to develop data, strengthen early intervention and ensure that safeguarding responses remain effective, timely and centred on the needs of children and young people.

4. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service

Actions taken

Over the past 12 months, the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (YJS) has continued to strengthen its safeguarding approach through the implementation of the nationally recognised Child First model, ensuring that children's needs, strengths and voices are central to all interventions. This has been supported by a strong multi-agency approach and continued investment in specialist provision, including health, speech and language therapy, and psychological support.

The YJS has enhanced its response to violence experienced by children and young people, including extra-familial harm, through the expansion of its Speech and Language Therapy provision via the *Bridges Project*. This targeted intervention supports children at risk of exploitation or involvement in offending, with practitioners adapting delivery methods to better meet identified communication needs.

A more consistent and coordinated approach to knife crime has been established, including the introduction of first aid and restorative interventions, alongside joint work with Dorset Police to prepare for the implementation of updated national guidance.

In response to violence against women and girls (VAWG), the YJS introduced a Girls Group to provide a safe, structured environment to build confidence, explore healthy relationships and strengthen peer support. This will be further developed with the introduction of a Boys Group in 2026.

The service has continued to embed a trauma-informed approach through the Trauma Recovery Model, supported by multi-agency formulations and a dedicated health team, including CAMHS nurses. Quality assurance activity has also been strengthened, including a multi-agency audit focused on children in care involved in the youth justice system.

Impact

This work has contributed to improved engagement, understanding of need and more effective safeguarding responses for children and young people in contact with the youth justice system.

- Investment in speech and language therapy has significantly improved practitioners' ability to understand and respond to previously unidentified communication needs, ensuring that children's voices are more effectively heard and inform decision-making
- Targeted interventions for children at risk of extra-familial harm have strengthened early intervention and prevention, reducing the likelihood of escalation into offending
- A consistent approach to knife crime has supported risk reduction and improved understanding of consequences, with restorative approaches helping to address harm and promote behavioural change
- The Girls Group has provided a safe and supportive environment, with feedback demonstrating increased confidence, improved peer relationships and greater awareness of healthy relationships
- Multi-agency working continues to be a key strength, with strong collaboration between health, social care, education and police supporting coordinated and holistic responses to risk

- Trauma-informed practice has improved the ability of practitioners to respond to complex emotional and mental health needs, supporting better engagement and outcomes

Overall, the YJS is contributing to reduced risk of reoffending, improved engagement with services and more positive outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

Areas for focus

Whilst progress has been made, several areas require continued focus:

- A high proportion of children continue to present with complex and multiple vulnerabilities, including communication needs, trauma and mental health challenges
- Continued development of targeted interventions, including the planned Boys Group, is required to address harmful behaviours and promote positive relationships
- Further work is needed to strengthen understanding of repeat patterns of risk and long-term outcomes, including reoffending and sustained engagement
- Ensuring that learning from quality assurance activity is consistently embedded across practice remains a priority

The YJS will continue to strengthen early intervention, partnership working and trauma-informed practice to improve outcomes for children and young people across Dorset.

5. Dorset Council Education & Learning

Actions taken

Over the past 12 months, Dorset Council has continued to strengthen the role of education within safeguarding arrangements, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*. Through the Families First for Children Pathfinder, partners have further developed approaches to ensure education is fully embedded within both strategic and operational safeguarding activity.

The Dorset Education Safeguarding Board has become an established mechanism for this work, providing oversight, challenge and coordination across all phases of education, from early years through to post-16 provision. The Board has continued to drive improvement through quality assurance activity, including analysis of Section 175/157 safeguarding audits, practitioner feedback and data review, alongside supporting the dissemination of learning from inspections and safeguarding reviews.

Education partners have been supported through the development of guidance, training and communication mechanisms, including Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

networks and safeguarding bulletins. Focus has also been placed on emerging risks, including online safety, with the introduction of guidance for schools on mobile phone use and wider digital safeguarding. This has been complemented by engagement activity with parents and carers, including a well-attended digital safeguarding event delivered in partnership with multi-agency colleagues.

In addition, the annual safeguarding conference, *“Wellbeing First: Building Resilience in Young Lives”*, brought together practitioners, partners and young people to share learning and strengthen multi-agency approaches to safeguarding and wellbeing.



Impact

This work has strengthened the visibility, influence and effectiveness of education within multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, leading to improved practice and outcomes for children and young people.

- Education is now more fully embedded within safeguarding governance, with stronger representation and influence in partnership decision-making
- Quality assurance activity has supported improved consistency of safeguarding practice across education settings, with learning effectively shared and acted upon

- Inspection outcomes continue to provide assurance that safeguarding arrangements in schools are effective, reflecting strong leadership and robust practice across the sector
- Increased focus on online safety and digital wellbeing has supported schools, parents and carers to better understand and manage emerging risks, contributing to safer environments for children
- Engagement activity, including conferences and events, has strengthened multi-agency understanding and collaboration, whilst ensuring that the voices of children and young people inform practice
- Ongoing communication through DSL networks and safeguarding updates has improved the sector's ability to recognise, respond to and escalate concerns in a timely and effective way

Overall, this work has contributed to a more connected, informed and responsive education safeguarding system, supporting improved identification of risk and more effective protection of children.

Areas for focus

Whilst progress has been made, further work is required to continue strengthening the role of education within safeguarding arrangements.

- Ensuring that the voice of education is consistently represented across all partnership activity and decision-making
- Continuing to respond to emerging safeguarding risks, particularly in relation to online safety and the evolving digital environment
- Strengthening the use of data and quality assurance to further understand patterns of risk, including persistent absence, vulnerability and safeguarding trends
- Supporting education settings to respond to the increasing complexity of need, particularly in relation to children with SEND and mental health needs
- Ensuring that learning from audits, reviews and inspections is consistently embedded across all settings

Dorset Council will continue to work in partnership with education providers to strengthen safeguarding arrangements and ensure that all children are supported to learn and thrive in safe environments.

6. Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People

Actions taken

Over the past 12 months, the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People has continued to provide strong multi-agency leadership, aligning partners across health, education, social care, police and the voluntary and community sector to deliver the priorities set out in the Children, Young People and Families Plan.

Particular focus has been placed on strengthening co-production, ensuring that the voices of children, young people and families actively shape service design and delivery. This has been supported through ongoing engagement activity and collaboration across partner agencies.

The Alliance has continued to drive system-wide transformation, including delivery of the Families First for Children Pathfinder, development of early help and family support models, and improvements across early years, education and care provision. Strong governance arrangements have supported oversight of delivery across the seven strategic priority areas, ensuring a coordinated and joined-up approach across the partnership.

Impact

The work of the Strategic Alliance is delivering tangible and sustained improvements in outcomes for children and families across Dorset.

- A stronger focus on co-production has resulted in services that are more responsive to the needs and experiences of children, young people and families, improving engagement and accessibility
- Families are experiencing a healthier start to life, with improved support for parents and carers leading to stronger parent-child relationships and increased confidence in caring for babies
- Earlier identification of need across early years and education settings has contributed to improved school readiness and early development outcomes, supporting children to achieve their potential
- A continued focus on early help and coordinated family support has supported a reduction in the number of children entering care, enabling more children to remain safely within their families
- Positive external scrutiny outcomes, including the Outstanding judgement for Dorset Council Children's Services and positive findings from the Area SEND inspection, provide assurance that partnership working is effective and delivering improved outcomes

Overall, the Strategic Alliance is demonstrating strong system leadership, with collective action across partners leading to improved experiences and outcomes for children and young people.

Areas for focus

Whilst significant progress has been made, the Alliance recognises that continued focus is required to sustain and build on these improvements. Key areas include:

- Ensuring that co-production is consistently embedded across all services and extends to all groups of children and families, particularly those who are most vulnerable
- Continuing to strengthen early help and prevention, particularly in response to increasing complexity of need and demand across services
- Improving the use of data and intelligence to better understand patterns of need, including repeat vulnerability and long-term outcomes
- Maintaining momentum in delivering the Families First for Children Pathfinder reforms, ensuring that changes are embedded and deliver sustained impact
- Addressing inequalities to ensure that all children and young people have equitable access to support and positive outcomes

The Strategic Alliance will continue to provide strong leadership and oversight to ensure that services remain joined-up, effective and focused on improving outcomes for children and families across Dorset.

7. Adult Safeguarding Board Partnerships

Actions taken

Over the past 12 months, the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership has strengthened its partnership working with the Adult Safeguarding Board, recognising the importance of a whole-family and life-course approach to safeguarding.

Key developments have included improving transition pathways for young people moving into adult services, ensuring safeguarding arrangements remain effective as needs change. Adult Safeguarding colleagues have also been actively engaged in multi-agency safeguarding forums, including the Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panels, supporting joint oversight of complex cases.

Governance links between children's and adult safeguarding have been further strengthened, with representation at respective boards supporting improved alignment of priorities, shared learning and coordinated system leadership.

Impact

This strengthened collaboration has contributed to more joined-up safeguarding responses and improved support for children and young people as they transition into adulthood.

- Improved pathways have supported smoother transitions between children's and adult services, reducing the risk of gaps in safeguarding oversight
- Multi-agency involvement across both partnerships has enhanced the system's ability to identify and respond to complex and overlapping risks, particularly for older adolescents and young adults
- Stronger governance links have supported greater alignment of priorities and shared learning, improving consistency of safeguarding practice across services
- Increased collaboration has strengthened the system's understanding of risk across the life course, particularly where vulnerabilities extend beyond childhood

Overall, this partnership approach is supporting a more integrated and effective safeguarding system for individuals with complex and evolving needs.

Areas for focus

Whilst progress has been made, further work is required to strengthen this partnership approach.

- Continuing to develop and embed transition pathways, ensuring consistent support for all young people moving into adult services
- Strengthening the use of shared data and intelligence to better understand patterns of vulnerability across children's and adult services
- Ensuring that joint working arrangements are consistently applied across all relevant multi-agency settings
- Further embedding a whole-family safeguarding approach, particularly where risks span both children's and adult services

The partnership will continue to build on this progress, ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully aligned across services and responsive to the needs of children, young people and adults.

8. Voice of children and families

The voice of our children and families has continued to be a priority for the partnership in 2025-2026. This has been demonstrated in the following activities:

- During multi-agency audits we seek to gain feedback from families and young people about the services that they receive.
- We are continuing to embed the use of the mind of my own app in children services to seek feedback from young people.
- We co-designed our annual partnership conference in December 2025 with young people. This included a young person attended the steering group to support the development of the conference. We had a young person MC the conference, we had a presentation from young people and a Q&A panel at the end made up of lived experienced young people.
- We ensure that our practice across the multiagency partners is trauma informed and all direct work with children is age appropriate, empathetic and relational.
- At key decision-making points we ensure that we speak to children, whether that be for their Child in Care review and Child protection conferences.
- When we complete rapid reviews, we start with an update about the child and family to capture their voice/lived experience.
- When we complete LSCPR's we aim to involved the family, to make sure their voice and views is captured in the report.

We are continuing to develop our parent participation forum to support us in our on-going development of services. This group will be made of parents with lived experiences of services.

9. Aggregated Scrutiny

During the 2025/2026 reporting period, the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership commissioned an independent scrutiny review of its governance arrangements following its transition to a standalone partnership in 2024, with the aim of strengthening leadership, accountability and multi-agency effectiveness. The review drew on attendance at partnership meetings, analysis of documentation and engagement with safeguarding partners, and found a strong and well-functioning partnership with clear leadership, committed stakeholders and no systemic safeguarding concerns identified. Governance arrangements were found to be well established, supported by a dedicated business unit,

effective multi-agency audit processes and a strong learning culture where insights from reviews and audits are translated into practitioner briefings and training.

The partnership demonstrated positive impact through robust quality assurance activity, clear local ownership of safeguarding issues and the ability to respond flexibly to emerging need, alongside evidence of strong multi-agency collaboration and continuous improvement. The review also highlighted opportunities to further strengthen practice, including enhancing the visibility and influence of the voice of children and families, developing a more integrated approach to performance data through a shared dashboard, streamlining governance structures to improve efficiency, and ensuring clarity of roles across partnership boards.

Overall, the scrutiny confirms that the partnership is effective in its safeguarding role and provides a clear framework for further development to ensure increasingly strong oversight, impact and outcomes for children and families across Dorset.

Effective scrutiny within safeguarding partnerships extends beyond independent scrutiny and includes partners constructively challenging one another, testing evidence of impact and holding each other to account for improving outcomes for children and families.

Areas for focus

- Further strengthening the links between the Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety Partnership where we are working on shared priorities.
- Enhancing the visibility and influence of the voice of children and families,
- Developing a more integrated approach to performance data and further
- Evolving the MACPT Board.

Across audits, reviews, scrutiny activity and quality assurance undertaken during 2025/26, several recurring themes emerged. These included the importance of effective multi-agency information sharing, relationship-based practice with children and families, trauma-informed approaches, early identification of risk, and ensuring that children's lived experiences remain central to assessment, planning and decision making. These themes continue to inform partnership priorities and workforce development activity.

Section 5: Additional Information

Priority areas

Priority 1: Violence experienced by children and young people

- a) **Extra-familial harm** (including physical violence, knife crime, sexual violence and abuse including on-line abuse).

Why is this a priority?

In the previous set of the Partnership's strategic priorities 2023-2025, physical violence and knife crime and sexual violence and abuse, including on-line abuse featured as separate sub-categories of priority area number one (violence experienced by children and young people). The Partnership agreed to retain these sub-priority areas for 2025-2027 but bring them under the umbrella term of extra-familial harm, which includes various different types of harm that children and young people can experience outside of the family environment. This also reflects the Partnership's recently published extra-familial harm strategy.

Despite the numbers of under 18-year-olds as victims of knife crime having remained consistently low across the reporting period 2024-2025, the overall numbers of under 18-year-olds as victims of public place violent crimes remains high. Although noting that the number of repeat victims of public place violent crime has also remained stable since this was originally set as a priority area in 2023. In recognition of the fact that overall numbers of public place violent crimes where under 18-year-olds are victims remains high, the Partnership have agreed to retain this as a priority area given there is more work to do to try and reduce these numbers.

In relation to sexual violence and abuse, the Partnership have identified further learning in this area from recent local learning reviews which indicate that not all previous learning has been embedded across practice. In addition, the latest quarterly data shows that the number of children experiencing sexual exploitation has risen in the last year. There is a concern that the number of children experiencing sexual exploitation are underrepresented at the extra-familial harm panels, and so the Partnership is working to address this.

- b) **Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

Why is this a priority?

The Partnership recognises that violence against women and girls (VAWG) is increasing nationally and locally and so wanted to establish this as a sub-priority area in its own right.

Violence against women and girls makes up just under 20% per cent of all recorded crime in England and Wales. In the year ending March 2023, police recorded 103,135 rape and serious sexual offences. The Violence against Women and Girls research update (November 2023) contains several different data sources in relation to VAWG from across a number of different agencies and sectors.

There has already been a significant amount of multi-agency activity in relation to raising awareness and utilising preventative measures in relation to VAWG including:

- The Pineapple Project led by Dorset Council in conjunction with partners and local businesses has a strong focus on promoting and intervening around VAWG
- The Partnership's annual conference held in November 2024 was focused on VAWG

Priority 2: Domestic violence and abuse

Why is this a priority?

Domestic abuse continues to feature as one of the highest proportion of reasons for referral to Children's Social Care nationally and locally. The number of children identified as living in households where there has been reported domestic abuse has remained stable since Q3 2023/2024, with a slight increase in numbers in Q2 2024/2025. The number of referrals to Children's Social Care where domestic abuse was a factor increased by forty from 191 to 231, the highest level seen for seven quarters.

We also know that from the domestic abuse quality assurance activity completed by the Partnership in 2023-2024, that coercive control continues to be an area where professionals require additional support, recognising and effectively responding to.

In addition, a recent local child safeguarding practice review, and individual multi-agency reviews, have highlighted learning around how professionals recognise and respond to domestic abuse.

Priority 3: The impact of children's and parental mental health and wellbeing on children

Why is this a priority?

The Partnership decided to rename this priority, from the previous priority set of 'children's mental health and wellbeing', to refine its area of focus to acknowledge that children's mental health and emotional well-being is a broad area, not all of which is not overseen by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Partnership have refined the focus down to the impact children's and parental mental health and wellbeing on children.

Despite the slight reduction in quarter two data 2024/2025 in the number of children receiving a service from CAMHS, the numbers remain high overall. Mental health continues to be a predominant concern in referrals from the Police, and within social care and health, including child attendances at A+E departments. In total, there were 765

referrals to Children's Services family support and advice line related to child mental health from April 2024-March 2025. In addition, we have also had a recent child safeguarding practice review where there was a strong theme in the review of support required for the young person's mental health and emotional well-being. Between March 2024-2025, parental mental health overtook domestic abuse as the primary reason for referrals to Children's Social Care.

This mirrors the national trend which is set out in the ADCS Safeguarding Pressures Report (on page 9) as follows "And, for the first time, poor parental mental health has overtaken domestic abuse as the most common factor in children's social care assessments" There are some questions to be unpicked in terms of whether the higher number of referrals relating to parental mental health are due to increased mental health issues for parents/carers and/or whether partner agencies and Dorset Children's Services are identifying these concerns.

There has been some progress in relation to this priority area, in relation to the implementation locally of the national initiative 'right care, right person', for example. However, the Partnership decided that this would be retained as a priority area until we are satisfied that such initiatives have been embedded in practice and are making a difference to the overall numbers of children seeking mental health support and that we are satisfied that this is appropriately recognised and responded to across the Partnership.

Section 6: Funding

The Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership is committed to the principles of equitable and proportionate funding with shared and equal responsibilities as set out in Working Together (2026). There is a dedicated Business Team to support the work of the partnership across the Dorset area. The budget will also fund the Partnership's statutory functions, such as completion of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Independent Scrutiny activity.

In 25/26, the contributions from NHS Dorset and PCC were split by 50% to Dorset SCP and 50% to BCP SCP. The Dorset SCP also received £1000 funding from probation.

The Partnership have been able to secure an independent reviewer, who will continue to work with the partnership in 26/27.

As at 31/03/26 the funding balance was £76,520. The 2026/27 contributions = £151,570 in total.

Section 7: Future Planning – Next Steps

There are several key areas currently under development in the partnership including:

- To implement the agreed recommendations from the independent scrutiny of the partnership's governance.
- To further develop and improve the voice of the child within the work of the partnership.
- To further develop our partnership data collection and how we present this data within the partnership for optimal impact on how we use the data to improve services and inform what our children and families need from partnering agencies in Dorset.
- To embed quarterly multi-agency audits with a forward plan to support the audit program.
- For the independent scrutineer to review how our partnership responds to child sexual abuse.
- Embed a forward plan of scrutiny work for the independent scrutineer to complete.

The partnership will further develop its use of data to better understand whether particular groups of children and families are disproportionately represented within safeguarding systems and to ensure services are responsive to need.



Section 8: Conclusion

As we conclude the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for 2025–2026, we recognise the continued strength and impact of our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, underpinned by strong collaboration, shared responsibility and a clear commitment to improving outcomes for children and families across Dorset.

This year's quality assurance activity, including multi-agency audits, has demonstrated the strengths of our multiagency trauma-informed and child-centred approach, and how this leads to earlier identification of risk, stronger engagement with families, and more effective safeguarding interventions.

As we look into the future, we remain focused on further capturing and embedding the voice of our children, young people and families in the way that we work and improve services across the system.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to every individual and organisation that has contributed to our mission. Your support has been invaluable, and it is through our continued partnership that we will forge a path towards a safer, more nurturing environment for all children and young people in the Dorset area.

Cabinet

6 October 2026

Mampitts Community Hub Progress Update For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr S Bartlett, Planning & Planning Enforcement

Local Councillor(s):

Cllr Jeanes, Cllr Beer

Senior Leadership Team:

J Britton - Executive Director, Economy & Environment

J Mair - Director, Assurance and Governance

Report author and job title:

Andrew Galpin – Infrastructure & Delivery Planning Manager

Email: andrew.galpin@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Town and Country Planning Act 1990

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

1. Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the delivery of the Mampitts Green Community Hub – a project led by Shaftesbury Town Council providing café, flexible meeting space and a Dorset Council Family Hub uses alongside associated outdoor formal and informal open space. It follows two previous Cabinet reports setting out funding conditions and milestones associated with project delivery.
- 1.2 Dorset Council have recently acquired freehold ownership of the Mampitts Green land from developer Persimmon Homes, enabling delivery and operation of the hub through a lease arrangement with Shaftesbury Town Council.
- 1.3 The report seeks a decision from the Cabinet to regularise the use of Chief Officer urgency powers which have enabled the project to proceed to delivery stage avoiding financial risks.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

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

4. The report

- 4.1 Through items presented to Cabinet on the 15th October 2024 and 9th October 2025, Dorset Council agreed arrangements for the award of s106 funding and the transfer of land to Shaftesbury Town Council to deliver important community facilities required by planning obligation at Mampitts Green, Shaftesbury.

- 4.2 At its meeting on 15 October 2024 the Cabinet's resolution to award ringfenced s106 developer contributions to Shaftesbury Town Council was subject to the fulfilment of conditions including one requiring the provision of additional information within 6 months of the Cabinet decision. The Cabinet's resolution included that *'Failure to meet this condition would require the funding offer to be revisited by Dorset Council'*.

- 4.3 The timescale set by the Cabinet in its 15th October 2024 decision was not met and so in accordance with the previous decision the matter was revisited by the Cabinet. At its meeting on 9th October 2025. the Cabinet resolved to extend the previously set timescale milestone for the award of s106 funding to Shaftesbury Town Council as follows:

(a) That the timescale condition requiring the completion of all necessary information required by condition, extended to 9th June 2026.

(b) That the commencement of work on-site, extended to: 9th July 2026:

The Cabinet's resolution was specific that failure to comply with either milestone extension would result in referral to Cabinet for further consideration.

- 4.4 Ahead of the 9th June 2026 deadline, Dorset Council received a comprehensive package of information complying with part (a) of the Cabinet's 9th October 2025 decision. This included project costings, operating plan and risk register. The information was then appraised by officers with a recommendation that the project pass to delivery stage. That recommendation was properly agreed by the Corporate Director for Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning.

- 4.5 Although the Cabinet's 9th June 2026 deadline was satisfied, matters outside of the control of both Shaftesbury Town Council and Dorset Council meant that the 9th July 2026 deadline passed without work being commenced on site.
- 4.6 Given the express terms of the Cabinet's 9th October 2025 decision (that failure to comply with either milestone extension would result in referral to Cabinet for further consideration) the Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the matter should then have been referred to Cabinet for decision. Instead, reliance was placed upon Chief Officer powers to act in a case of urgency so that the Town Council could go ahead and contract with their procured builder. Works then commenced on site on 14th September, starting a build phase lasting up to 12 months.
- 4.7 Whilst understanding that the intention was to avoid delay, the Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the express requirement for a referral back to Cabinet meant that this was not an appropriate exercise of an officer delegation. Accordingly, the matter is being reported to Cabinet with a request that the Cabinet formally adopt as its own the decision made under delegated powers.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Given the requirements of the 9th October 2025 Cabinet decision, it is not an option to rely upon the use of officer delegated powers.

6. Legal considerations

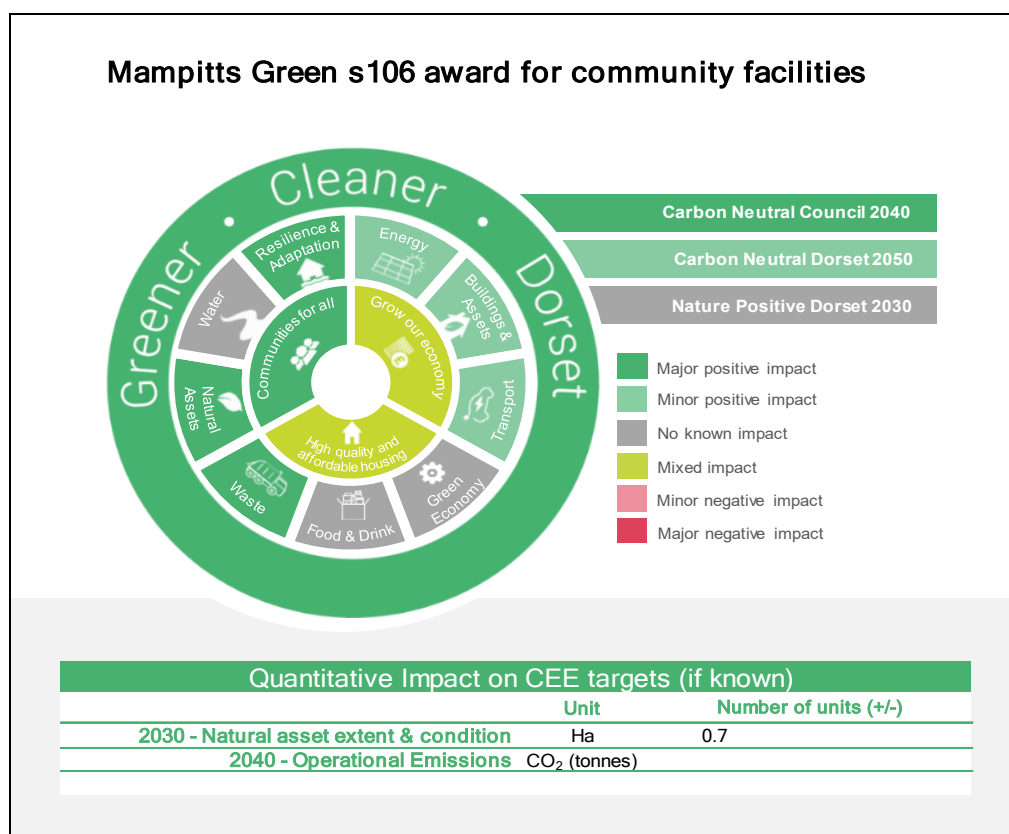
- 6.1 Adoption by the Cabinet will regularise the inappropriate use of delegated powers.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 Following the early drawdown of the s106 award to support project delivery, and a further application for s106 funding approved under delegated powers, the total balance of s106 funding available for this project stands at £1,107,910.03. Separate to s106, a grant of £187,200 is provided for the delivery of the Family Hub to provide integrated support services for children, young people and their families.
- 7.2 Both grants are managed under separate detailed grant agreements with Shaftesbury Town Council.

8. Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Considerations

- 8.1 It is considered that that long term effects of this proposal are positive in terms of impact on the environment. The construction materials and inclusion of renewable energy technology will reduce the requirement of external power sources.



9. Other implications

- 9.1 None.

10. Risk implications

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

11. Equalities

- 11.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. The proposal conforms to the requirements of planning policy providing a range of community facilities which meet the requirements for which associated planning obligations were established in 2007.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix A – Copy of Officer Delegated Decision

13. Background papers

13.1 Cabinet report dated 15th October 2024 - *Allocation s106 developer contribution funding for community facilities at Mampitts Green Shaftesbury*

13.2 Cabinet report dated 9th October 2025 - *Developer contribution funding for community facilities at Mampitts Green, Shaftesbury*

13.3 Dorset Council's protocol for Planning Obligation Funding Allocations – Community Schemes, agreed 18th May 2021

14. Report sign-off

14.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Assurance & Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Director for Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Cabinet Member(s)

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Officer Delegated Decision

Date: 13 th August 2026
Decision: Under Chief Officer urgency powers, extend the on-site commencement milestone set by Cabinet on the 9 th October 2025 associated with the delivery of the Mampitts Community Hub Project, Shaftesbury.
Key Decision: Yes/ No Please see definition below.
Reason(s) for Decisions: To allow a small extension of time to enable the legal agreements associated with the project to be finalised and signed prior to the on-site commencement of works. The extension of time would enable the project to proceed to delivery stage, avoiding financial risks that could otherwise arise with any time delay caused by referring the matter back to Cabinet for decision.
Decision Maker (Name and Title): Steven Ford – Assistant Chief Executive
Alternative options considered and rejected: A referral back to Cabinet for decision on whether to grant an extension of time to the milestone. This option was considered within the Chief Officer decision. Obtaining a decision at Cabinet would incur an extended time delay, this action was considered to carry risks that could threaten the delivery of the project including additional costs and building contractor availability.
Any conflict of interest declared by any member consulted: None
Any dispensation granted in respect of any declared conflict of interest: None

Definition of Key Decisions

Key decisions are defined in the Constitution as decisions of the Cabinet which are likely to -

- "(a) result in Dorset Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates namely where the sum involved would exceed £500,000; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in Dorset."

How to complete this pro forma:

- (1) The date of the decision.
- (2) A brief description of the decision.
- (3) The reasons for the decision.
- (4) Officer title.
- (5) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision.
- (6) Any conflict of interest declared by any member who had been consulted by the officer which relates to the decision.
- (7) Any dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service in respect of any declared conflict of interest.

N.B. Please avoid using acronyms

Name of Committee

6 October 2026

Temporary Accommodation Policies For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr G Taylor, Housing & Homelessness

Local Councillor(s): All

Senior Leadership Team:

S Crowe - Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities

Report author and job title:

Miriam Smith, Supported and Temporary Accommodation Team Leader

Email: Miriam.smith@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Katherine Sibthorpe, Interim Service Manager Housing Solutions

Email: Katherine.sibthorpe@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority:

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

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Housing Solutions Service is responsible for securing, allocating and managing accommodation for households undergoing assessment under the homelessness provisions contained within Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Households owed an accommodation duty may be placed in a range of temporary accommodation options, including Bed and Breakfast accommodation, Dorset Council-owned hostel provision, or accommodation secured through private sector leasing arrangements.
- 1.2 The South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) audit recommended that the Council undertake a comprehensive review of its Temporary Accommodation policies to ensure they reflect current legislation, statutory guidance and good practice. This included the development and revision of policies relating to the sourcing of accommodation, the management of void properties and the allocation and letting of temporary accommodation.
- 1.3 In response to these recommendations, the Council has developed a suite of policies that together provide a clear framework for the sourcing, allocation,

and management of temporary accommodation. Collectively, these policies will help ensure that accommodation secured by the Council is safe, compliant and suitable, while maintaining a flexible portfolio capable of meeting the diverse needs of households experiencing homelessness. The policies also promote transparency by clearly setting out the principles and criteria used when matching and allocating accommodation.

- 1.4 Without an agreed policy framework, the Council would be exposed to an increased risk of inconsistent decision-making, legal challenge and reputational damage. The adoption of these policies will strengthen the Council's ability to fulfil its statutory duties under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended, while safeguarding the rights, welfare and wellbeing of households accommodated through the homelessness service.
- 1.5 The Housing Service is now an integral part of the Housing, Communities and Prevention Directorate and this will provide emerging opportunities to embed closer working relationships with our Communities, Commissioning and Health partners. Alongside strengthening the council's ability to fulfil its statutory duties the new policies will support our aims in terms of prevention and communities supporting us to respond to specific needs of our homeless residents experiencing multiple disadvantage, reduce reliance on less suitable forms of accommodation and strengthen coordination with our Housing Homelessness Service and Assets and Property.
- 1.6 These policies will give our homeless residents absolute clarity around the service they can expect to receive from the council, and transparency around our decision making processes, at a time when they are at their most vulnerable.
- 1.7 The Sourcing Policy, in particular, supports the Council Plan target to achieve the desired balanced position of a smaller but sustainable temporary accommodation stock over the next 5 years. The policy suite as a whole, supports the wider plan to reduce the numbers in temporary accommodation by 30%.

2. **Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the following policies 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

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

- 3.1 To support officers in meeting the needs of applicants who are homeless by providing appropriate and safe accommodation that represents value for

money, facilitates suitable placements in line with statutory requirements, and ensures accommodation charges remain affordable.

4. **The report**

- 4.1 The Council has statutory responsibilities under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to prevent and relieve homelessness and, where required, secure accommodation for eligible households. Whilst Dorset Council has achieved positive outcomes in preventing homelessness, there remains an ongoing need to provide temporary accommodation for households owed a specific duty such as the S188 interim duty or S193, the Main Housing duty.
- 4.2 The pressures on the need for temporary accommodation have risen over the last year with the three most common causes of homelessness being the end of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST), exclusion from accommodation by family or friends, and domestic abuse. The profile of homelessness in Dorset broadly reflects the national picture; however, there are some notable differences including an increase in domestic abuse approaches of 22%, compared with the national average 17%.
- 4.3 Dorset also records a greater proportion of households becoming homeless following departure from an institution, including hospitals and offender accommodation, at 9.9% compared with 6.7% nationally. In addition, the proportion of households whose cause of homelessness is recorded as 'Other Reason' is more than double the national figure, at 14% compared with 6.9%.
- 4.4 These higher proportions are likely to contribute to increased demand for temporary accommodation and may indicate a need for a broader range of prevention and support interventions to address the underlying causes of homelessness within Dorset.
- 4.5 Council-owned temporary accommodation forms part of the Council's wider operational property portfolio and requires ongoing collaboration between Housing Services and Assets & Property to ensure effective asset management, maintenance, statutory compliance and the provision of safe, suitable and available accommodation for residents.
- 4.6 Any accommodation secured for homeless households must be considered suitable, regardless of whether it is provided on an interim basis or as a means of discharging a homelessness duty through a permanent offer of accommodation. Chapter 17 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance sets out the factors that must be taken into account when assessing suitability. Suitability extends beyond the physical condition and standard of the property and must also consider the specific needs, circumstances, and vulnerabilities of the individual household.

- 4.7 The Council recognises that Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation should only be used as a last resort for households accommodated under Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996. However, there will be occasions when immediate accommodation is required, and no suitable alternative is available. Legislation prohibits households with dependent children from remaining in B&B accommodation for more than six weeks, and 16 and 17-year-olds must never be placed in B&B accommodation. In addition, B&B accommodation is not regarded as suitable for care leavers.
- 4.8 These policies will assist the Council in meeting the requirements set by the Secretary of State to ensure that any Bed and Breakfast accommodation used is of an appropriate standard. Compliance will be achieved through regular inspections, ongoing monitoring, and quality assurance arrangements with accommodation providers.
- 4.9 To support Dorset Council's commitment to minimising the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation, it is essential that vacant units within the temporary accommodation portfolio are returned to use as quickly as possible. This includes ensuring that all necessary repairs, maintenance works, and statutory compliance requirements, such as the completion of gas safety inspections and certification, are undertaken within the shortest practicable timescales through effective working arrangements between Housing Services and Assets & Property. These vacant properties are referred to as 'voids'.
- 4.10 The efficient management and processing of void properties maximise the availability of temporary accommodation and helps reduce reliance on more costly forms of emergency accommodation, such as Bed and Breakfast establishments. This contributes to better outcomes for homeless households and supports the effective use of Council resources. Successful delivery of the policies will require ongoing collaboration between Housing Services and Assets & Property to coordinate repairs, maintenance, compliance activities and property turnover arrangements
- 4.11 Both the Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy and the Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy will influence decisions regarding the location of accommodation. Dorset Council's preference is to secure accommodation within the Dorset Council area wherever possible. However, where this is not achievable, the search area may be extended beyond the Council's boundaries. When making placement decisions, the Council will seek to minimise disruption and ensure that households can maintain existing employment, education, family connections, healthcare arrangements, and established support networks wherever reasonably practicable.

- 4.12 Affordability is a key element of accommodation suitability. The Council is required to consider whether an applicant can meet the housing costs associated with a placement without being deprived of basic necessities, including food, clothing, heating, transport, and any other essential expenses relevant to their circumstances.

5. **Alternative options considered**

- 5.1 The recommended option is the formal adoption and implementation of all four policies. The only alternative would be for officers to continue operating without an approved policy framework. While officers already work broadly in accordance with the principles contained within these policies and could continue to deliver some of the associated benefits, the absence of formally adopted policies exposes the Council to unnecessary risk. Their adoption will enhance transparency, promote consistent and evidence-based decision-making, and reduce the potential for legal challenge.

6. **Legal considerations**

- 6.1 The adoption of a Placement Policy is not a statutory requirement. However, in *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* [2015], the Supreme Court recommended that local authorities maintain an up-to-date, publicly available policy setting out how temporary accommodation is procured and allocated. Such a policy can assist in explaining the factors considered when making placement decisions for individual households.

Implementing an Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy will support a transparent, consistent and accountable approach to meeting the household needs in respect of temporary accommodation. Without a formal policy, the Council may face challenges regarding the allocation of accommodation and the decision-making process, potentially leading to complaints, adverse publicity, reputational damage, and the use of resource-intensive review and appeal procedures.

Where concerns cannot be resolved through internal processes, complaints may be escalated to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, which could result in findings against the Council and recommendations for compensation. In addition, a decision not to adopt the Policy may increase the risk of legal challenge, including by way of Judicial Review.

Implementing a Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy and Void Policy will only strengthen the Council's position by ensuring that safe and compliant accommodation which is charged at an affordable rate is available or becomes available in a timely manner.

If these policies are adopted, it is essential that they are applied consistently and in accordance with their provisions. Failure to follow policy could expose

the Council to the same risks of complaint, challenge and legal action as having no policy in place.

7. Financial implications

7.1

Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy

- An increase in the provision of suitable long term accommodation will reduce the reliance on making placements into expensive B&B nightly rate accommodation.

Voids Policy

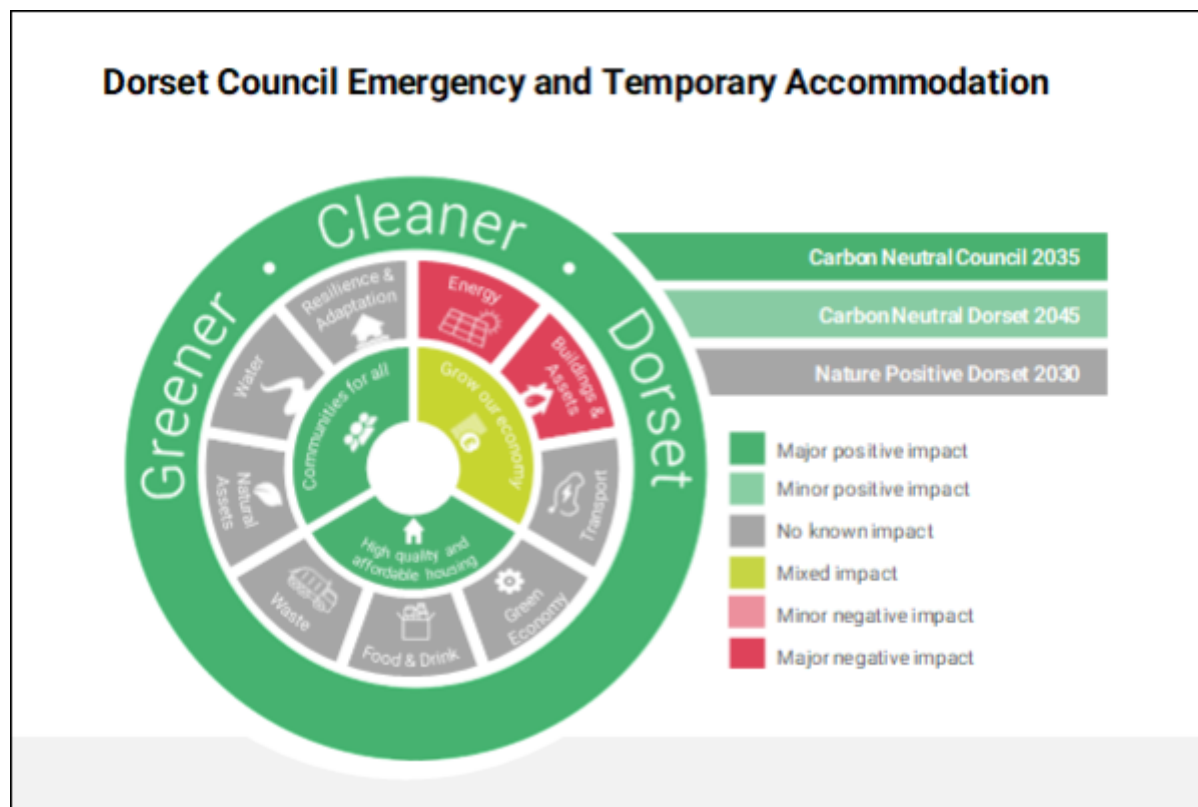
- Minimising turnaround times when a property becomes vacant, by achieving key performance indicators, should enable a reduction in income loss and reduce expenditure incurred, such as Council Tax and utilities. Achievement of these targets will require continued support from Assets & Property in delivering repairs, maintenance works, statutory compliance activities and safety inspections to return properties to occupation as quickly as possible

Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy

- No discernible financial implications arise from this policy.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

8.1



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

Corporate Plan Aims	Impact
Grow our economy	neutral
High-quality and affordable housing	strongly supports it
Communities for all	strongly supports it

Recommendations	
Energy	

Ensure all electrical equipment is the most energy efficient	The duty place on the Housing department is to secure accommodation, it is not to provide any of the appliances within. However some properties may be acquired with kitchen 'white appliances' already integrated. Our primary concern is in relation to the safety of the installation and not as to its efficiency. Where a property this is the responsibility of the owner and not Dorset Council. Conversations can and will take place however should equipment need to be replaced as to efficiency ratings.
Maximise energy efficiency of the building fabric (e.g. Loft & wall insulation, triple glazing)	Dorset Council will aim to onboard the most energy efficient properties where possible. Owners of properties within the existing portfolio will be advised as to any current schemes available as well as signposting to services such as Healthy Homes Dorset.
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	
No recommendations found for this category	
Natural Assets & Ecology	
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	
No recommendations found for this category	

9. Well-being and health implications

- 9.1 The proposed Void Policy, Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy, and Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy are expected to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of households accessing temporary accommodation. Collectively, these policies support the Council's statutory duties while promoting accommodation that is safe, suitable, affordable, and capable of meeting the diverse needs of residents experiencing homelessness.

The Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy will help ensure that accommodation procured by the Council meets appropriate quality and safety standards. Access to accommodation that is safe, well maintained, and free from significant hazards contributes directly to both physical and mental wellbeing. By undertaking regular inspections and quality assurance checks, the Council will seek to ensure that residents are accommodated in environments that support their health, dignity, and personal wellbeing during what is often a period of significant uncertainty and stress. This is supported through the Council's property management arrangements, with Assets & Property providing repairs, maintenance and compliance services to Council-owned temporary accommodation

The Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy recognises the importance of maintaining access to established support networks and essential services. Wherever reasonably practicable, placements will seek to minimise disruption to employment, education, healthcare provision, childcare arrangements, family relationships, and community connections. This approach supports residents' emotional wellbeing and reduces the potential negative impacts associated with displacement from familiar surroundings. Careful consideration of household circumstances and vulnerabilities when determining suitability also helps to ensure that accommodation placements support individual health and welfare needs.

The Void Policy will contribute to health and wellbeing outcomes by reducing the length of time that temporary accommodation units remain unavailable for occupation. Efficient management of voids will increase the supply of suitable accommodation and support the Council's objective of reducing reliance on Bed and Breakfast accommodation. This is particularly important for families with children and vulnerable households, for whom prolonged stays in emergency accommodation can negatively affect health, wellbeing, educational attainment, and social outcomes. Faster turnaround of vacant properties will assist households in accessing more suitable accommodation at the earliest opportunity.

Overall, the three policies are designed to work together to improve the quality, affordability, availability, and suitability of temporary accommodation.

Whilst some households may still need to be accommodated outside their preferred area due to limited housing supply, the policies provide a framework that seeks to minimise adverse impacts and promote positive health and wellbeing outcomes for residents experiencing homelessness. The proposals are therefore considered to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing and support Dorset Council's commitment to improving outcomes for vulnerable residents.

10. Other implications

10.1 None.

11. Risk implications

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

Current Risk: **(Medium)**: Without approved and consistent policies, there is a risk of inconsistent decision-making, challenges to placements, ineffective use of temporary accommodation, financial inefficiencies, and difficulties demonstrating compliance with statutory homelessness duties.

Residual Risk: **(Low)**: The implementation of clear policies will provide a consistent framework for sourcing, managing, allocating and charging for temporary accommodation, reducing the likelihood of inconsistent practice and supporting compliance with legislative requirements. Some residual risk remains due to ongoing pressures on temporary accommodation demand, availability of suitable accommodation, and changes in legislation or case law.

12. Equalities

12.1 The EQIAs are contained within the appendices. These have been submitted and are currently awaiting sign off.

13. Appendices

Appendix 1:

SWAP Audit Report – Temporary Accommodation

Appendix 2:

SWAP Audit Report Findings & Action Plan – Temporary Accommodation

Appendix 3:

Policy for the Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation

Appendix 4:

Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy

Appendix 5:

Voids Policy Housing Management – May 2026

Appendix 6:

EQIA Policy for the Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation

Appendix 7:
EQIA Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy
Appendix 8:
EQIA Voids Policy Housing Management May

14. Background papers

14.1 None.

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)

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Audit Objective

To review the effectiveness of controls and processes which allow the council to remain compliant with legislation and deliver value for money to taxpayers.

Executive Summary



Assurance Opinion

The review identified significant gaps, weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance. The system of governance, risk management, and control requires improvement to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Management Actions

Priority 1	1
Priority 2	5
Priority 3	11
Total	17

Organisational Risk Assessment

Medium

Our audit work includes areas that we consider have a medium organisational risk and potential impact.

The key audit conclusions and resulting outcomes warrant further discussion and attention at senior management level.

Key Conclusions



We tested 25 properties for H&S certification, 14 were found to have not undergone comprehensive asbestos surveys, or the existing records have not been appropriately maintained or updated. This situation presents a high risk potentially compromising the well-being and safety of both occupants and contractors. The Assets and Regeneration team should ensure asbestos surveys have been completed for all housing properties and any records which have not been updated will be rectified. A centralised tracking system will also be created to ensure consistent and timely completion in the future.



An Assets Register for properties is not present to comprehensively track and monitor organisational assets and action is needed to finalise essential policies, in order to adapt to changing regulations and industry standards. The implementation of these documents will enable the service to improve their operational framework.



The council currently does not set the rents for temporary accommodation at the level recommended by guidance. By setting this, it would mean the council are more likely to obtain the money owed and able to move the clients out of temporary accommodation quicker by preventing rent arrears building up for the client.



There is a significant lack of staff training in using the internal software system, leading to inefficiencies, errors, and reduced proficiency. The information in the system lacks completeness and there are areas that show incorrect information which needs to be cleansed. Through designing and executing a thorough staff training program for effective internal software system use, proficiency and accuracy of processes and data will improve.

Audit Scope

The scope of the audit considered the following areas:

- Supply of temporary accommodation,
- The voids process and the property Health & Safety compliance
- Budgeting and forecasting
- Rent collection process
- Monitoring performance and KPI's
- Placing residents in temporary accommodation including requirements and monitoring
- Leaving temporary accommodation and temporary to permanent housing

Next Steps

At the commencement of the audit, the service did identify many issues prior to our review. The "Findings & Action Plan" which accompanies this report includes details of the management actions, which once completed, will enhance the control environment.

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Audit Findings & Management Action Plan – September 2024

Finding 1.

Asbestos surveys not completed, or records not updated

All properties used for temporary accommodation (TA) should have up to date Health & Safety certifications including Gas Safety, Electrical, Asbestos and Energy Performance.

Testing on 25 properties for Health & Safety (H&S) Certification was conducted. Initial testing showed that there were a number of properties that had out of date Gas Safety and Electrical Certificates. Upon review, the documentation for these certificates was acquired by the Assets and Regeneration team; these documents had not been uploaded to Huume (the system used by the Housing team). However, 14 of the properties had not undergone comprehensive asbestos surveys, or the existing records have not been appropriately maintained or updated.

This situation presents a high risk as it creates uncertainties regarding the precision of asbestos-related data for these properties, potentially compromising the well-being and safety of both occupants and contractors.

Addressing this issue is crucial to ensure the effective management of asbestos risks across the council's property assets and uphold the highest standards of Health and Safety compliance.

Action

The Assets and Property team will ensure asbestos surveys have been completed for the properties identified in our testing. In addition, a process will be implemented to make sure all housing properties are checked to ensure they have an asbestos survey.

Priority	1	SWAP Reference	AP#4994
Responsible Officer		Corporate Director Assets and Regen	
Timescale		31 st October 2024	
All the completed asbestos annual review documents will be located and made accessible to the Temporary Accommodation team.			

Priority	2	SWAP Reference	AP#5004
Responsible Officer		Corporate Director Assets and Regen and Service Manager Housing	
Timescale		31 st March 2025	
The Housing and Assets and Property team will ensure that there is access to the premises health and safety matters for all relevant individuals			

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#5005
Responsible Officer	Corporate Director Assets and Regen		
Timescale	31 st October 2024		

Finding 2.

Maintenance and H&S Housing checks are inconsistent

The housing checks for maintenance and H&S have shown inconsistencies, with reports indicating that some properties have not received the required checks, potentially leading to unidentified safety hazards or maintenance issues.

Specific areas of concern include inconsistent scheduling and completion of checks, and discrepancies in the documentation of findings. These inconsistencies pose a risk to the well-being of occupants and the overall maintenance of the properties.

Action

The Housing service will create a centralised scheduling and tracking system for maintenance and H&S checks to ensure consistent and timely completion. A comprehensive review of all properties will be conducted to identify and address any outstanding checks or maintenance issues.

Additionally, training will be provided to personnel involved in conducting and documenting these checks to ensure uniformity and accuracy.

Priority	2	SWAP Reference	AP#4978
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	31 st March 2025		

Finding 3.

An asset register will be formalised for all properties used for TA

An assets register for properties is not present to comprehensively track and monitor organisational assets.

The absence of these essential documents not only creates a risk of inconsistent practices in sourcing accommodation but also hinders the ability to effectively monitor and manage the organisation's diverse range of assets, leading to potential inefficiencies and compliance concerns.

Action

The Housing service will in conjunction with Assets and Property formalise a comprehensive asset register to track all accommodation assets. This includes recording property location, ownership, acquisition date, value, and related agreements which will be regularly updated to maintain accuracy and compliance with policies and regulations.

Priority	2	SWAP Reference	AP#5042
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	31 st March 2025		

Finding 4.

The rent setting for temporary accommodation is not aligned with guidance.

The council currently does not set the rents for temporary accommodation at the level recommended by Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) guidance. Currently the council charge all the costs incurred by housing residents in temporary accommodation back to those residents. This is more than the local housing allowance, which the residents will be claiming and the Housing Benefit support they can also claim. The result of which is that the residents will get into debt to the council leading to them staying in temporary accommodation longer as social housing companies are very reluctant to rent to anyone who already has rent arrears. Thus, stopping the council from housing anyone else in that property.

By setting rent at the level the guidance recommends, the council are more likely to receive the money owed and able to move the clients out of TA quicker. This will free up temporary accommodations quicker, meaning the council spend less money on temporary solutions such as bed and breakfasts and therefore more suitable housing is available to people who are in need.

The temporary accommodation team does not have a policy around the income management. However, they have started to draft one, this will detail the process of how the temporary accommodation team set rents and collect rent owed to them.

There is a debt management policy which covers housing and homelessness which aligns with the corporate debt management policy. The new income management policy should align with these current policies.

Action

The Housing service will ensure that temporary accommodation rents will be set at the level recommended in the Housing Revenue Accounts guidance.

Priority	2	SWAP Reference	AP#5012
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	31 st March 2026		

The Housing service will ensure the new income management policy should align with the debt management policy housing.

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4895
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	30 th April 2025		

Finding 5.

Data Recording of current TA residents is inconsistent

The review found inconsistencies in the recording of current residents' data across different temporary accommodation properties. These inconsistencies relate to the completeness and accuracy of personal information, living areas and reasons for residency.

Areas are either not being completed or are irrelevant as a whole due to the system being adopted as a Housing Management tool. There has been no cleansing of fields to populate or indeed regular training with usage of the software.

An inconsistent approach to data recording hinders the ability to effectively monitor and manage temporary accommodation facilities.

There is a significant lack of staff training in using the internal software system Huume, leading to inefficiencies, errors, and reduced proficiency. The system lacks completeness and there are areas that show incorrect information which needs to be cleansed.

Comprehensive and ongoing training programs are essential to ensure staff can fully leverage the software, optimize efficiency, and safeguard sensitive information.

Action

The Housing service will design and roll out a thorough staff training program for effective use of the internal software system (Huume).

Priority	2	SWAP Reference	AP#4937
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	30 th April 2025		
A review and cleanse of the data recording software within Huume will be carried out to make sure fields are relevant and completed where necessary.			

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4906
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	31 st December 2024		

Finding 6.

Completion of Policies

Action is needed to finalise essential policies such as Sourcing Accommodation, Voids, and Allocations & Letting, in order to adapt to changing regulations and industry standards. All three of these policies were currently in the draft phase at the time of the audit.

These policies are crucial for strengthening the operational framework by providing clear guidelines for procurement, property management, and tenant allocation, thereby ensuring comprehensive risk management, compliance excellence, and a culture of transparency and accountability.

Action

The Housing service will undertake a comprehensive review and revision process for the Sourcing Accommodation, Voids, and Allocations & Letting policies to align with current regulations and industry standards. The necessary approvals for the finalised policies to ensure adherence to compliance requirements and risk management will be obtained.

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4963
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	30th April 2025		

Finding 7.

Data collection method

We are aware and have obtained evidence that Dorset Council already collect placement data. The Service Manager for Temporary Accommodation & Supply provides a weekly update on the placement data to the Service Manager for Housing Strategy & Performance. In addition to this, we have obtained a copy of the Performance and KPI spreadsheet master copy which outlines KPI's, however these are not all in use yet as there is uncertainty around the collection of KPI data.

Currently, managers will have 1-2-1 meetings with officers to establish data in relation to the KPI's and then this information should be entered onto the Performance and KPI spreadsheet. This does not provide a turnover to distinguish the amount of work due to be carried out in comparison to the actual amount of work carried out. Furthermore, it appears that this data cannot be relied on as this may not be a true and accurate representation of data at any given time due to the manual input expectation from managers. At the moment, it is understood that the Business Insight team are investigating how a BI Dashboard could be established and utilised for data collection. It would be desirable if the BI dashboard could be used for officers to upload their work onto and then data is extracted and highlighted via the dashboard.

Action

The Housing service will assess the capacity of the BI dashboard in the role of data collection for performance purposes.

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4905
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	30th April 2025		

Finding 8.

Establish a performance governance structure to illustrate KPI's and their reporting routes

At the moment, the Property Management team share Placement data with the Service Manager for Housing Strategy and Performance initially which is then reported to the Head of Service and Corporate Director on a weekly basis. The directorate also has a set of placement KPIs agreed with the Head of Service, Corporate Director and Executive Director which are reported to the Senior Leadership Team, Scrutiny Committee and published externally.

The team have already identified which other performance indicators, in addition to the above, that they would like to utilise, however these are not yet fully established due to uncertainties around collection methods. Once all other temporary accommodation KPI's are in use, the Property Management team should then establish a governance structure to show the reporting route that all other KPI's should take. Terms of references for groups should be updated to reflect this.

Action

The Housing service will implement a KPI reporting route to highlight the reporting function of temporary accommodation data.

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4922
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	30 th April 2025		

Finding 9.

Housing debt and rent statements.

Currently all the financial information for the residents and former residents of temporary accommodation is held on the Council's financial system, SAP. The policy of having one account across the council for each person makes it hard for the housing service to chase the money owed to them specifically. Therefore, the Housing service must go through the debts for each person and extrapolate the amount of rent owed to the housing team.

Because housing rent has different rules for collection compared to a sundry debt, the Council's normal dunning process cannot be used. The differences include producing rent statements, which need to be issued with the breakdown of the debt for each resident.

Currently, the system the Temporary Accommodation team use, Huume, does not interact with SAP. The process outlined in the above paragraph uses a lot of resource to find out what rent is owed, and then create a rent statement to send to the residents.

The service should review the process they need to produce an accurate rent statement to make it more efficient.

Action

The Housing service will review the processes they need to produce accurate rent statements.

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4897
Responsible Officer		Service Manager Housing	
Timescale		31 st March 2026	
The Housing service will review the new finance element in Humme to establish if it will help the service produce accurate rent statements or if they need to procure a new housing management system			

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4897
Responsible Officer		Service Manager Housing	
Timescale		31 st March 2026	

Finding 10.

Deleted Properties

Properties that have been "deleted" are still appearing on live data in Huume, creating the risk of misreporting and confusion. At the time of testing, 369 properties were reported to be deleted which means they are no longer available to the Council for reasons such as the landlord has not renewed an agreement. We were informed that these records are kept on Huume in case they became active again to prevent creating another record for the same address.

It would be useful to establish an archived area to segregate deleted properties from active ones and prevent their appearance in live data, ensuring accurate reporting and data integrity.

Retention of records relating to deleted properties could be a data protection issue and advice should be sought from the Council's data protection officer.

Action

The Housing service will review all of the deleted properties on the Huume system and archive them where appropriate. Advice will be sought from the Council's Data Protection Officer regarding retention of records concerning deleted properties.

Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4936
Responsible Officer	Service Manager Housing		
Timescale	31 st December 2024		

Finding 11.	Action			
<u>Monthly housing inspection form to be drawn up</u> Housing authorities have a continuing obligation to keep the suitability of accommodation under review and adhere to the Lettable Standard drawn up by the Council. Monthly inspections at the time of testing, are being carried out on between 30 and 50 properties, the results of which should be uploaded to the internal system Huume. Currently, inspection data is held with the relevant officers with a view to this data being centralised onto the Huume system. A monthly housing inspection form should be developed to standardise the inspection process across all properties. This form should encompass key areas of concern, such as health and safety, maintenance, and compliance with regulations.	The Housing service will complete a standardised monthly housing inspection form covering key areas including health and safety, maintenance, and regulatory compliance.			
	Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#5021
	Responsible Officer		Service Manager Housing	
	Timescale		31 st December 2024	

Finding 12.	Action			
<u>Tenant Satisfaction Surveys</u>	The Housing service will distribute tenant satisfaction surveys to tenants in order to assess performance of the team and Council overall. This will aid in improving the service.			
Dorset Council officers visit tenants for settling in visits however in order to monitor performance surrounding tenant satisfaction, the service could implement tenant satisfaction surveys which could identify improvement areas and potential learnings to be taken forward.	Priority	3	SWAP Reference	AP#4916
	Responsible Officer		Service Manager Housing	
	Timescale		31 st August 2025	

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Policy for the Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Context
3. Purpose and Aims
4. Scope
5. Legal and Regulatory Framework
6. Principles for Sourcing Accommodation
7. Accommodation by Type
8. Quality Assurance
9. Monitoring and Review
10. Document Control



1. Introduction

This policy sets out Dorset Council's approach to sourcing temporary accommodation in the discharge of its duties as a local housing authority. Its primary aim is to ensure that sufficient, suitable, cost-effective and legally compliant accommodation is secured to meet the needs of homeless households

This policy should be read alongside the following documentation (this list is not exhaustive)

- Housing Voids Technical Specification: Dorset Council, Property and Housing Repairs.
- Void Procedure (Temporary Accommodation)
- Placement and Suitability Policy and Procedure (in development)
- Lettable Standards Guidance (Temporary Accommodation)
- Rent Setting Policy (in development)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement – Dorset Council
- Health and Safety Policy (Property and Premises) – Dorset Council

2. Context

Dorset Council owns a small amount of stock and relies predominantly on external providers to secure temporary accommodation.

Whilst the Council seeks to minimise the use of emergency Bed and Breakfast accommodation it is recognised that in certain circumstances this may be necessary.

Most longer-term accommodation is expected to be sourced through leasing arrangements with the private sector. This will include long-term lease arrangements (10 years plus one day) via private investment.

3. Purpose and Aims

The purpose and aims of this policy are to

- meet statutory homeless needs
- secure sufficient and suitable accommodation for homeless households
- minimise use of expensive emergency accommodation
- reduce reliance on emergency placements
- reduce out of area placements where possible



- support households toward settled housing solutions
- a transparent and consistent approach to sourcing temporary accommodation

4. Scope

This policy applies to all properties sources for use or management by Dorset Council across its temporary accommodation portfolio.

This includes (but is not limited to);

- properties leased or licensed from private landlords
- properties managed in partnership with registered providers or commissioned support services

The policy applies to a wide range of accommodation types including:

- emergency Bed and Breakfast
- hostels (self-contained or shared rooms with communal facilities)
- shared accommodation (e.g. with shared kitchens and/or bathrooms)
- self-contained accommodation (exclusive use of all living facilities)
- supported housing schemes.

5. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The following legislation, regulatory standards and national frameworks underpin property management and the provision of suitable, compliant accommodation.

A. Statutory Legislation

This policy and the way in which the council manages its voids process complies with the contractual, statutory, regulatory and health and safety requirements as set out in the following non exhaustive list:

- Housing Act 1996 (Part 7) as amended
 - Housing Act 1985
 - Localism Act 2011
 - Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
 - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2024 (Awaab's Law)
 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) as amended 2018.
- Approved Code of Practice and guidance.



- Health and Safety Legislation including Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as amended by Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015 and Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendments) Regulations 2022
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 2018
- Electrical Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) England Regulations 2006
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR
- Equalities Act 2010

B. Regulatory Standards and National Guidance

- Code of Guidance Homelessness
- Regulator of Social Housing – Home Standard
- Decent Homes Standard (2006 – pending update)
- Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Practice Guidance
- Homes England Capital Funding Guide

6. Principles for Sourcing Accommodation

This policy is underpinned by five strategic principles

1. Safety first – accommodation must be safe and legally compliant.
2. Suitable – accommodation must meet household needs
3. Value for money – obtaining the best use of public funds



4. Locality – keeping households as close as possible to their community
5. Prevention of long term temporary accommodation dependency – seek to support move into settled accommodation as quickly as possible.

In sourcing temporary accommodation the council will seek to actively manage temporary accommodation market to achieve value for money, maintain a diverse and resilient supply base, reduce dependency on individual providers and prevent excessive pricing through benchmarking, competition, demand management and strategic investment in council- controlled accommodation.

All sources of temporary accommodation will be guided by the following principles:

- Sufficiency – ensuring adequate supply to meet demand
- Suitability – meeting the needs of households and statutory requirements. The sourcing approach will consider housing needs assessment insight to ensure accommodation meets:
 - 1 Household size and make up
 - 2 Medical needs and disabilities
 - 3 Access requirements
 - 4 Risk relating to domestic abuse
 - 5 Educational needs of children
 - 6 Employment and caring responsibilities
 - 7 Cultural and religious considerations when needed
- Value for money – achieving cost efficiency and long term financial sustainability. The sourcing approach will consider;
 1. Relevant framework agreements
 2. Benchmarking of nightly rates
 3. Relevant competitive
 4. Whole life cost assessment
- Compliance – adhering to relevant legislation, standards and safeguarding requirements. Temporary accommodation will meet the council's Lettable standard and be adjusted where required to meet the standard.
- Sustainability – this policy will consider the council's sustainability commitment for temporary accommodation. Where possible it will:
 1. give preference, where practicable, to accommodation with higher energy performance standards and lower running costs to occupants.



2. acquire newer or retrofitted properties where possible
3. encourage providers to improve energy efficiency ratings
4. reduce reliance on poor quality and energy inefficient stock
5. procure properties close to households existing communities, schools, employment, health services and networks wherever possible.
6. work with providers who contribute positively to local communities where possible

Ethical sourcing – the council will not knowingly source accommodation from providers or investors whose business practices fail to meet appropriate ethical, legal or regulatory standards.

- Local provision – prioritising accommodation where possible as follows
 1. Within the Dorset council area
 2. Close to support networks
 3. Near education and employment
 4. Accessible by public transport
 5. Near health and support services

Supplier selection and due diligence

The council will undertake the following checks:

- financial stability (where relevant)
- landlord/director due diligence – consideration of criminal offences, practice of unlawful discrimination, contravention of any provision of law relating to housing or acted otherwise than in accordance with any applicable code of guidance for the management of a HMO
- property ownership verification
- compliance history
- references and track record checks
- safeguarding arrangements
- insurance requirements

All relevant agreements will set expectations on termination, handover requirements for residents, performance, provider suspension or removal.

7. Accommodation by Type



Bed and Breakfast Accommodation

Approach

The council aims to minimise the use of emergency accommodation but works with a limited number of trusted providers, some of whom offer entire buildings for council temporary accommodation use. Where appropriate block booking arrangements may be utilised to achieve cost efficiencies.

Where contracted providers are unable to meet demand alternative nightly paid accommodation, including hotel chains may be secured through spot purchasing.

Regard will be had with regards to the regulations governing the required standards for properties that fall within the definition of House of Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Location

Preference will be given to accommodation within the Dorset Council area. However out-of-area placements may be made where:

No suitable in area accommodation is available; or

A specific placement requirement has been identified based on household needs.

Usage restrictions

B&B accommodation will only be used for households with dependent children where no alternative is available and must not exceed six weeks.

B&B accommodation will not be offered to applicants under 18 years of age.

The council will avoid the use of B&B for care leavers wherever possible. Where this is unavoidable, the placement must be for the shortest period possible, be subject to a documented risk and suitability assessment, and include appropriate support arrangements.

Private Sector Leased Accommodation

Approach

Private Sector Leasing (PSL) forms the primary source of longer-term temporary accommodation. These properties are secured from private landlords and managed as part of the council's temporary accommodation portfolio. In addition, the council is considering the development and operating of a leasing model through investment partnership arrangements. The aim of both models is to reduce reliance on emergency



accommodation by increasing the supply of longer-term temporary accommodation. However accommodation sourced through the investment route will be subject to separate business case approval, governance and operational procedures.

The Council will maintain a mix of property sizes to meet varying household needs. It may;

Prioritise two-bedroom properties where this supports efficient portfolio management and value for money. Two-bedroom homes generally offer the greatest flexibility across a range of household sizes. However accommodation will only be used where it is suitable for the household concerned and consistent with statutory requirements.

Source properties with more than four bedrooms where a specific need is identified.

Affordability and Value

The council will seek to source temporary accommodation at rates that are aligned to or as close reasonably achievable to the applicable Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Where accommodation costs exceed LHA levels, the council must be satisfied that the accommodation represents best value, meets identified housing need and that alternative suitable accommodation at a lower cost is not reasonably available.

- It will use LHA levels as the primary benchmark against which value for money is assessed.
- Consider incentives above these levels where there is clear evidence of longer term financial benefit

Location Criteria

Properties will normally be sourced within the Dorset Council area. Location selection will be made considering:

- Existing concentrations of temporary accommodation;
- Access to transport links and support services
- Demand patterns based on applicants' origin postcode.

Out-of-area sourcing will only be considered in exceptional or urgent circumstances.

Registered Providers

Approach



The Council will continue to work with a small number of Registered Providers (RPs) to access social housing stock for use as temporary accommodation.

However as the Council's preferred approach is to discharge its duty into permanent housing offers under Part 6 of the Housing Act, use of RP stock for temporary accommodation will be limited.

Agreements

Formal agreements will be established with Registered Providers. These will consider the requirements of this policy;

Define roles and responsibilities;

Set quality and performance expectations;

Ensure compliance with statutory and contractual requirements.

Acquisition of property by Dorset Council

Approach

The purchase of units for use as TA will help the Council to meet demand from homeless households by providing a ready supply accommodation. Purchasing homes provides a secure base for residents during their time in TA. In terms of the cost of this provision, by investing in assets, the Council is less exposed to shortages and fluctuations in rent costs in the private market and the use of expensive hotel provision.

The Council has and will continue to make use of MHCLG and Homes England funding such as Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP), Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) and Local Authority Housing Fund Round LAHF grant programmes to facilitate these acquisitions. Applying for funds in future programmes will be considered when they can assist in supporting the Council to meet an identified need.

Funding will often be targeted to help specific groups, if there are gaps in provisions that this funding can help to meet then applications will be considered. Funding programmes can cater for single person, self-contained provision whilst other rounds result in medium sized family homes (2-3 beds) and larger settled units (4bed+).

It is anticipated that most purchases will be simple transactional purchases made on the open market.

It is anticipated that most purchases will be simple transactional purchases made on the open market.



Location Criteria

Properties will normally be sourced within the Dorset Council area. Location selection will be made considering:

- Existing concentrations of temporary accommodation;
- Access to transport links and support services
- Demand patterns based on applicants origin postcode.

Out of area sourcing will not be considered except in exceptional circumstances.

8. Quality Assurance

For the period when the temporary accommodation is owned, leased, used and/or managed by the council a pre-procurement inspection, a pre-placement inspection and periodic re-inspections will be undertaken to ensure that

- Properties are suitable for intended use;
- Properties are safe and in good condition
- Properties hold valid evidence of mandatory safety certifications;
- No accommodation with a category 1 hazard and/or significant category 2 hazard is sourced
- No accommodation with an EPC rating of F or below will be sourced
- Accommodation meets required standards
- providers are suspended where serious hazards are identified.

The council will consider resident feedback, monitor relevant complaints and carry out spot checks. It will monitor and maintain key performance indicators which may include

- percentage of properties passing inspection
- Void turnaround times
- Number of complaints
- Average cost per placement
- Percentage of placements within the council area
- Number of households moved to settled homes

Equality and Diversity

The council's sourcing decisions for temporary accommodation will:

- Avoid discrimination



- Meet public sector equality duties
- Consider protected characteristics
- Ensure reasonable adjustments for disabled residents where possible

9. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy will be regularly monitored to ensure it remains effective in meeting demand, achieving value for money, and complying with legal obligations. The policy will be reviewed periodically to reflect changes in resources, demand, funding and legislation.

10. Document Control

Field	Details
Policy Owner	Service Manager – Temporary Accommodation and Housing Supply



Dorset Council

Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy



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Appendix



1. Introduction

The Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy sets out how the council will meet its duties to households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and required temporary accommodation. It is intended to ensure that placements into emergency and temporary accommodation are made consistently, fairly and transparently considering household circumstances, statutory requirement, available accommodation and is efficient in its use of resources. Accommodation may be both inside and outside of the Dorset Council area.

2. Purpose and Aims

The Council is committed to meeting its statutory duties where required to provide suitable emergency and temporary accommodation for eligible households. The purpose and aims of this policy are to set out how it will do this in accordance with relevant housing legislation and guidance, and best use of resources.

3. Scope

This Policy sets out how the council will make decisions about the placement of households in temporary and/or emergency accommodation provided under its homelessness duties and powers.

This policy applies where placements are required due to:

- Planned moves, client move-on arrangements, or the end of a licence/tenancy
- Transfers, decants, or placement changes
- Lease expirations, property hand backs, or contract terminations
- Evictions, abandonment, or legal possession
- Enforcement action, the death of an occupant, or safeguarding and legal interventions

It applies to all emergency and temporary accommodation used or managed by Dorset Council or provider partners for these purposes including (but not limited to):

- Properties owned by Dorset Council
- Properties leased or licensed from private landlords and any other private provider partners
- Properties managed in partnership with housing associations, commissioned support providers, or other accommodation partners.



Dorset Council will use available accommodation effectively and equitably. Accommodation will be suitable and consider the circumstances, needs, risks and support requirements for each household

4. Legal Framework

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure emergency and further temporary accommodation is available to homeless applicants in certain circumstances. This is governed by legislation. The council will have regard to the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities when determining how such a duty is met.

Other legal duties that the council must adhere to in accordance with homeless legislation includes (but is not limited to):

- Part VII of the Housing Act 1996
- The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities
- The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003
- The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Localism Act 2011
- Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989
- Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Prevailing case law

4.1 Specific Focus for this Policy

- Interim Placements made under section 188 of the Housing Act 1996
- Interim Placements made or continued under section 190 of the Housing Act 1996
- Longer term temporary accommodation placements made under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996
- Other discretionary placements made outside of our statutory duties

This policy does not specifically address accommodation placements made during periods of severe weather; instead, these are covered by the countywide Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP). Such placements are not a statutory requirement and may also be offered to individuals who are not otherwise eligible for assistance.



5. Types of Emergency and Temporary Accommodation

This policy applies to all property types within a defined scope. There is a wide range of accommodation types, including:

- Hostels (Self-contained or shared rooms with communal facilities)
- Shared accommodation (e.g. with shared kitchens and/or bathrooms)
- Self-Contained accommodation (exclusive use of all living facilities)
- Supported housing schemes, specialist housing, or Rough Sleeper Accommodation Program (RSAP/NSAP) properties

The council prioritises placements into council-owned or managed temporary accommodation where possible as it reliably meets residents needs and can deliver better value for money. However, other types of temporary accommodation such as nightly charged, privately owned (typically bed and breakfast) may still be used to meet high demand for homelessness services and mitigate a shortage of affordable move-on accommodation.

6. Emergency Accommodation Placements

In some cases, the council may need to provide emergency temporary accommodation at very short notice to ensure an eligible household has somewhere safe to stay while further enquiries or assessments are carried out.

Placement requests can be urgent, and there may be limitations on the accommodation options available. The council will seek to make emergency placements within the council's area but may also make placements outside the council area where necessary.

Placements are kept under review and, where appropriate and practicable, more suitable accommodation that meets the household's needs and location requirements will be identified.

7. Temporary Accommodation Placements

The council will allocate temporary accommodation based on availability and an assessment of the individual household's needs and circumstances. Factors considered include household size and composition, medical and welfare needs, risks including those associated with domestic abuse or violence, accessibility requirements, location, and any safeguarding needs.

People placed in temporary accommodation are expected to comply with the terms of their occupancy agreement and engage constructively with the council and any relevant support



services. Residents are also expected to take reasonable steps to secure their own settled accommodation where required.

8. Suitability Considerations

This policy explains how the council will meet its legislative requirements when considering the suitability of emergency and temporary accommodation placements.

Dorset Council will assess the suitability of all temporary accommodation on a case-by-case basis, considering the individual circumstances of the applicant and their household. Priority will be given to ensuring that accommodation is safe and suitable in relation to health, welfare, and safeguarding needs.

In making this assessment, the council will consider a range of relevant factors, including but not limited to those set out in this policy, alongside the availability of accommodation and the level of competing demand within Dorset and neighbouring areas at the time of placement.

In line with legislative requirements relating to suitability assessments, the council will consider:

- Level of any disruption to employment, caring responsibilities, or education.
- Proximity and accessibility of the accommodation to medical facilities and recognised support services.
- Proximity and accessibility of the accommodation to local services and transport links.
- Affordability
- Distance of the accommodation from Dorset.

All emergency and temporary accommodation will be expected to meet relevant health and safety standards, including those relating to gas, electrical, and fire safety, and the broader requirements set out in statutory guidance. Consideration will be given to whether facilities such as kitchens, bathrooms, or laundry areas are shared, and the impact this may have on the applicant and their household.

8.1 Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Size

The council will consider the size, layout, and bedroom provision of any emergency or temporary accommodation and will aim to provide accommodation that is suitable for the size and composition of the household. Wherever possible, accommodation will meet normal bedroom and space requirements.



The council may make temporary accommodation placements that exceed occupancy standards where necessary to comply with its statutory duties and where no suitable alternative accommodation is available. In these circumstances, the decision will be subject to a documented suitability assessment, appropriate management oversight, and regular review until more suitable accommodation becomes available.

8.2 Affordability

In exceptional circumstances, where accommodation that is affordable without additional support is not available, the Council may make a placement following an assessment of the household's circumstances, including consideration of any financial assistance that may be available. This may include the provision of financial assistance by the Council, welfare support, or other appropriate measures. Such placements will be subject to regular review to ensure the accommodation remains suitable and that affordability concerns are addressed at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

8.3 Location

The location of accommodation is an essential element of suitability. In accordance with section 208 of the Housing Act 1996, the council will seek to secure accommodation within the Dorset Council area wherever reasonably practicable.

Where this is not possible, accommodation may be secured outside the area, and in such cases will be located as close to Dorset as reasonably practicable, having regard to suitability and safety.

The Council will consider how the location may affect the applicant's employment, including whether they can continue working. Consideration will be given to whether the applicant's job requires specialist or professional qualifications, or whether their skills are transferable and they could reasonably find similar employment in another area.

The Council will consider the impact of the location on education, particularly for households with children, including during key stages of education and examination periods. The Council will also have regard to its duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.

The Council will consider the impact on any care arrangements or responsibilities, whether provided or received by the applicant or members of their household.

Consideration will also be given to access to essential services, including healthcare, public transport, local amenities, and support networks.



When emergency or temporary accommodation is secured outside the Dorset area to discharge the Council's homelessness duties, a documented assessment will explain why the placement is necessary and the circumstances of the case. These placements will be reviewed regularly to ensure more suitable accommodation is secured as soon as reasonably practicable and will remain under review until a more suitable or closer placement becomes available, subject to availability and demand. Where appropriate, the Council will work with partner agencies to minimise disruption.

8.4 Health, Welfare and Disability-Related Needs

The Council will consider any health, medical, welfare support, and disability related needs of the applicant or members of their household when assessing suitability, including the likely impact of the accommodation on those needs.

Any identified support needs, including those arising from vulnerability or risk factors, will be considered. The Council will also consider the impact of disruption to existing support arrangements and what steps can reasonably be taken to maintain appropriate support.

Relevant information provided by health professionals, social care, or other agencies will be considered where available.

The Council will consider whether the applicant has any relevant protected characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the extent of them, and what their likely effect would be in relation to any proposed emergency or temporary accommodation.

8.5 Risk of Violence, Abuse or Harassment

Any known or likely risk of violence, domestic abuse, harassment, hate crime, exploitation, stalking and safeguarding concerns towards the applicant or members of their household will be considered and treated as a significant factor in assessing suitability. Accommodation will not be regarded as suitable where the location of the accommodation may place any member of the household at risk of harm. In these circumstances, it may be necessary to secure accommodation outside the district to protect the safety and wellbeing of the household. Relevant information provided by the applicant and partner agencies will be taken into account when making these placement decisions.



8.6 Expected Length of Occupation

When assessing the suitability of a placement, the likely duration of the placement will be taken into account. Accommodation that is suitable for a short-term placement may not be suitable for a longer-term placement. Placements will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain suitable, taking into account both the anticipated and actual length of occupation.

8.7 Specific Groups

The council recognises some households may require additional consideration due to their vulnerability and will have due regard to any relevant statutory duties and guidance. This policy aims to ensure suitable emergency or further temporary accommodation is provided to all households, including specific groups identified in legislation and statutory guidance, including care leavers, pregnant women, households with children, disabled people, older people, survivors of domestic abuse, young people and those with welfare, health and/or support needs.

For care leavers, the council will consider their age, maturity, current and required care and support arrangements, including any responsibilities owed by Children's Services.

For pregnant women and households expecting a child, the council will have regard to legal restrictions relating to the use of bed and breakfast accommodation. The council will ensure accommodation is safe, appropriately located for access to healthcare and support networks.

The council will seek to provide placements that take account of the age and individual circumstances of all members of the household. It will consider the specific needs of younger and older people, including factors such as personal safety, independence, health and wellbeing, and access to education, employment, healthcare, carers, support networks, and social networks.

For households that have experienced, or are at risk of, domestic abuse, the council will assess the safety of the household, the level of risk, and any need to access specialist support services. Placements may be made outside the Dorset Council area where necessary to safeguard household members from harm and may include additional security measures.



8.8 Accommodation Standards and Checks

The council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all emergency and temporary accommodation used is suitable, safe, and of an acceptable standard. It will carry out checks and inspections to ensure compliance with relevant property standards and health and safety requirements, including statutory certification. This will include ensuring relevant documentation, including but not limited to the EICR, landlord gas safety record and Fire Safety Risk Assessment being compliant and all safety requirements actioned.

Reports of disrepair, hazards, and defects will be investigated, and appropriate remedial action or mitigation measures will be taken to ensure that the accommodation remains suitable throughout the period of occupation.

Where any accommodation arrangement includes roles and responsibilities for a third party, agent, or provider, the council will seek assurance that the accommodation meets relevant legal and compliance requirements. Third parties, agents, and providers are expected to maintain accommodation and respond promptly to repairs, health and safety issues, and compliance matters where these may affect the suitability of the accommodation.

8.9 Pets

Where reasonably practicable, Dorset Council will seek to secure temporary accommodation that enables households to remain with their pets or other companion animals. This will be subject to the availability of suitable accommodation and any restrictions imposed by accommodation providers, managing agents, landlords, or other third parties.

When assessing the suitability of temporary accommodation, the Council will take into account the household's circumstances, including the presence and welfare needs of any pets or companion animals. Whilst reasonable efforts will be made to identify suitable accommodation, this may not always be possible due to factors including, but not limited to, property size, health and safety requirements, licensing conditions, the type or number of animals, location, and restrictions imposed by accommodation providers away from our owned stock.

Where emergency accommodation is required, particularly outside normal working hours or where accommodation options are limited to support the emergency need, Dorset Council may need to secure the most suitable accommodation available at the time, irrespective of whether animals can be accommodated. In such circumstances, the Council's primary duty is to prevent homelessness and secure safe accommodation for the household. Where pets cannot initially be accommodated, the Council will consider whether alternative accommodation can reasonably be secured at the earliest opportunity, subject to availability and suitability.



Applicants remain responsible for the care, control, and welfare of their animals at all times. Where accommodation that can accommodate pets cannot be secured, households may need to make alternative temporary arrangements for their animals. Dorset Council may, where appropriate, provide information about organisations or services that may be able to assist, but responsibility for such arrangements rests with the applicant.

Households must inform the Council as early as possible of any pets or companion animals that form part of their household and provide any information reasonably requested. Early notification will assist the Council in assessing accommodation options and suitability. Accommodation suitable for households with animals will generally be self-contained wherever possible, although availability cannot be guaranteed.

8.91 Assistance Animals and Reasonable Adjustments

The Council recognises that assistance animals required by disabled persons are not ordinary pets and may be an important aid in enabling a person to live independently. When securing temporary accommodation, Dorset Council and its accommodation providers will have regard to their duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments where required.

The Council expects accommodation providers, managing agents, and other partners to give appropriate consideration to households requiring an assistance animal as a consequence of a disability. Decisions will be made on an individual basis, taking into account the needs of the disabled person, the characteristics of the accommodation, and any relevant health and safety considerations.

There is no statutory register or compulsory certification scheme for assistance animals in the United Kingdom. However, the Council may request reasonable evidence that an animal is required in connection with a person's disability where this is necessary to inform accommodation decisions.

Assistance animals may include, but are not limited to, animals trained to support individuals with visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility impairments, autism, epilepsy, diabetes, mental health conditions, or other disabilities where the animal performs specific tasks or functions related to the person's disability.

9. Right to Review and Legal Challenge

Applicants placed in emergency or temporary accommodation under the council's homelessness duties have the right to request a review of certain decisions made by the authority, including, where applicable, the suitability of the accommodation provided.



Where an applicant considers that their emergency or temporary accommodation is unsuitable, they may:

- Request a statutory review under section 202 of the Housing Act 1996 within 21 days of being notified that the accommodation is suitable.
- If dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, appeal to the County Court under section 204 of the Housing Act 1996 on a point of law.

A statutory right to a section 202 review applies to the suitability of emergency or temporary accommodation provided under the main housing duty.

There is no statutory right to a section 202 review of the suitability of accommodation secured under the interim duty in section 188 of the Housing Act 1996. Applicants may raise concerns about the suitability of their accommodation with the council at any time, and suitability will be kept under review.

Applicants may seek independent legal advice on legal remedies including a Judicial Review, where it is believed that the Authority has acted unlawfully, unreasonably, or failed to follow proper procedures.

Where an applicant requests a review in relation to emergency or further temporary accommodation, the council will comply with its statutory homelessness duties whilst the review is considered.

In the event that an applicant appeals to the County Court following a review decision, the council will consider whether to continue to provide accommodation pending the outcome of the appeal. In most cases, this is a discretionary power, and decisions will be made having regard to the applicant's individual circumstances and the merits of the case.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The council's Service Manager for Housing Solutions is responsible for the day-to-day management and suitability of emergency and temporary accommodation placements and for adherence to this policy.

The service works closely with council Homeless Advice and Guidance services, Revenues and Benefits services, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, and Safeguarding services.

In addition, the service works collaboratively with external partners to fulfil relevant statutory duties, identify risks, protect vulnerable people, address anti-social behaviour, and respond to safeguarding concerns. Partners may include the Police, probation services, domestic abuse services, health services, registered providers, support agencies, commissioned services, and voluntary sector organisations.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if triggered by any of the following:



- Significant changes to legislation, regulatory requirements, or government guidance.
- Evidence of systemic delays or proven poor performance through KPI monitoring.
- Introduction of new accommodation types, service delivery models, or contractual arrangements.
- A formal request from senior management, internal audit, or the Regulator of Social Housing.

The review will be coordinated by the relevant service with consultation from operational teams, contractors, and other stakeholders.

The latest version of this policy will be made available to staff, partners, and stakeholders.

11. Equality and Diversity

This policy meets the council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which provides that, in carrying out its functions, a local authority must have due regard to the following requirements to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12. Document Control

Field	Details
Policy Owner	Service Manager – Temporary Accommodation and Housing Supply
Version	1.0
Status	Complete
Date Approved	02.07.2026
Next Review	April 2029 or earlier if required
Approved By	(Interim)



Appendix 1

Relevant Housing Duty Considerations

Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996 provides that the Council must secure that accommodation is available for an applicant where it has reason to believe they may be homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need (these are all defined terms in law). This duty is known as the 'interim duty' and typically continues until the Council has made a final decision as to whether the applicant is owed the 'main housing duty' under s.193.

Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 provides that the Council must secure that accommodation is available for an applicant where it determines that they are homeless, eligible for assistance, in priority need, not intentionally homeless, and where it has not successfully 'prevented' or 'relieved' homelessness (these are all defined terms in law) and has not referred the application to another local authority. This is known as the 'main housing duty' and continues indefinitely until the applicant accepts an offer of a settled home, or until one of another of a list of prescribed events occurs.

Section 206 of the Housing Act 1996 provides that any accommodation provided under section 188 or 193, whether emergency, temporary or otherwise, must be suitable.

Chapter 17 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance codifies the factors, borne from various legal instruments, local authorities should consider when determining whether emergency or temporary accommodation is suitable. Such factors include the standard, affordability, and location of any accommodation.

Section 208 of the Housing Act 1996 provides that, so far as reasonably practicable, accommodation found by the Council should be in the local authority area. The law does recognise there are times where being accommodated out of area offers a clear benefit to the applicant, for example where they would be at risk of domestic abuse or other violence in the area. When accommodation is provided out of the area, the Council should notify the local authority in whose area the accommodation is situated.

Specific Suitability Guidance

The council will adhere to specific suitability guidance where it is available, including:

- The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003, which provides that households containing children or pregnant women should only be housed in bed and breakfast accommodation where no other accommodation is available and that, even then, such occupation should not exceed six weeks.
- Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004. The council will have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when assessing the suitability of emergency and temporary accommodation. Where a household includes dependent children, the council will consider the potential impact of the placement on their safety, health, education, development, and overall wellbeing.



Appendix 2

Rough Sleeper and Discretionary Placements

Dorset Council is committed to providing 'discretionary placements' in exceptional circumstances. There is no legal obligation on the council to provide this, and as such any additional placements need to be carefully applied to ensure that we are prioritizing customers that have the greatest need. The provision of discretionary placements will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is subject to the Council's assessment of individual circumstances, policy criteria and available resources.

While Dorset Council understands the challenges individuals may face, we are generally unable to provide temporary accommodation outside of our statutory duties, however to acknowledge this approaching need, Dorset Council has secured specified Rough Sleeper targeted accommodation models, which will be prioritised when considering this cohort and need for placement:-

For us to consider a discretionary placement, the following must apply:

- The individual must display clear evidence of rough sleeping – such as establishing street contact with relevant outreach teams
- The individual must have a timely, defined housing pathway available to them.

This section is in addition to our statutory duties. We are under no obligation to provide this and therefore there is no right to review the decisions around discretionary placements. This does not replace any of our statutory duties.

All individuals approaching this pathway are discussed weekly between dedicated teams both inside Dorset Council, and with partner agencies, to ensure timely decisions, set actions and supporting to define available pathways and case management.

If an individual has been previously evicted from temporary accommodation it is highly unlikely that we will be able to enact this process for that individual. If individuals pose significant risk to other residents or staff, it may also not be possible to provide a placement under these discretionary duties.

Discretionary placements are intended to provide short-term accommodation in limited circumstances where they can support an individual's move towards longer-term housing. They may also provide an opportunity for relevant services to assess support needs, coordinate assistance and help ensure that any subsequent accommodation placement is sustainable.



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Dorset Council
Void Policy
Housing Management
May 2026



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1. Introduction

This policy outlines the Council's approach to managing voids across its Temporary Accommodation (TA) and wider housing portfolio, including hostels, supported and specialist housing, shared accommodation, and self-contained units.

This policy supports Dorset Council's commitment to:

- Delivering **safe, clean, and secure accommodation**
- Ensuring **legal and regulatory compliance**
- Achieving **value for money and efficient use of available housing stock**
- Applying a **transparent and consistent approach to working**

To support, this policy should be read alongside additional documentation (not exhaustive):

- Housing Voids Technical Specification: Dorset Council: Property & Housing Repairs
- Void Procedure (Temporary Accommodation)
- Placement and Suitability Procedures (in development)
- Lettable Standards Guidance
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement – Dorset Council
- Health and Safety Policy (Property and Premises)

2. Purpose and Aims

Dorset Council's Voids Policy establishes a consistent and strategic approach to managing empty housing across its portfolio. It ensures that when properties become vacant, they are recovered, inspected, repaired, and re-let efficiently while meeting all legal, safety, and quality standards.

The policy is designed to minimise void turnaround times, reduce rental income loss, and support the Council's statutory duties - by making suitable accommodation available as quickly as possible. It emphasises providing safe, clean, compliant homes and adopting a person-centred approach that takes into account vulnerability, accessibility, and household needs.

The policy applies to all council-managed, leased, and partner-provided housing and covers the full voids process from tenancy termination and inspection through to repair,



compliance checks, and re-letting. It is underpinned by key legislation and regulatory standards.

Through defined lettable standards, categorisation of void types, and robust performance indicators, Dorset Council aims to ensure consistency, accountability, and value for money while continuously improving services through monitoring, reporting, and feedback.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all properties used or managed by Dorset Council across its accommodation portfolio. This includes (But not limited to):

- Properties owned by Dorset Council
- Properties leased or licensed from private landlords
- Properties managed in partnership with housing associations or commissioned support providers

The policy applies to a wide range of accommodation types, including:

- Hostels (self-contained or shared rooms with communal facilities)
- Shared accommodation (e.g. with shared kitchens and/or bathrooms)
- Self-contained accommodation (exclusive use of all living facilities)
- Supported housing schemes, specialist housing, or Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) properties

This policy applies to voids arising from:

- Planned moves or end of licence/tenancy
- Transfers, decants, or move-on
- Lease expiries, property hand backs, or contract terminations
- Evictions, abandonment, or legal possession
- Enforcement actions, death of a tenant, or safeguarding/legal interventions



4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The following legislation, regulatory standards, and national frameworks underpin void property management and the provision of high standard, suitable, accommodation.

A. Statutory Legislation

This policy and the way in which the council manages its void process complies with the contractual, statutory, regulatory and health and safety requirements as set out in the following (This list is illustrative and not exhaustive):

- Housing Act 1985
- Localism Act 2011
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
- Housing Act 1996 (Part 6)
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) as amended 2018.
Approved Code of Practice and guidance
- Health and Safety Legislation including Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015 and Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendments) Regulations 2022
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 2018
- Electrical Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002/2665
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR
- Equalities Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

B. Regulatory Standards and National Guidance

- Regulator of Social Housing – Home Standard
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (Awaab's Law)
- Decent Homes Standard (2006 – pending update)
- Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Practice Guidance



5. Performance Indicators

Dorset Council will monitor voids across all council-managed accommodation using the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). *Please refer to Appendix A for outline explanation of void categories:*

Indicator	Target or Monitoring Aim
Key-to-key turnaround (overall)	30 working days (Minor) 45 working days (Major)
Contractor repairs turnaround	20 working days (Minor) 35 working days (Major)
Rent loss per void	Minimise and report weekly

6. Monitoring Responsibilities

Housing Management Staff (Team Leaders, Seniors and Housing Officers) are responsible for overseeing all voids, progress, and turnaround times. Performance will be monitored through systems such as Huume and internal dashboards/systems.

Asset Management and Surveyors are responsible for monitoring the progress of void works and notifying the Helpdesk and Housing Management team of any blockages, delays, or access issues impacting turnaround, and initial categorisation of works required.

Team Leaders will:

- Review KPI performance on a weekly basis
- Report key performance trends or concerns to the Service Manager
- Escalate any voids exceeding agreed turnaround thresholds to senior management for intervention
- Reporting periodically to elected members

7. Internal Reporting

The Void Performance Dashboard will be reviewed weekly by Housing Management Leads.

Persistent contractor delays or repeated Lettable Standard breaches will be reviewed weekly, and consulted with Dorset Council Assets Team – who lead on works raised and contractor delegation.

A weekly review of average turnaround, spend, and property void time will be carried out to inform asset planning, contract performance, and service delivery strategy.



8. Policy Review and Update Schedule

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if triggered by any of the following:

- Significant changes to legislation, regulatory requirements, or government guidance
- Evidence of systemic delays or proven poor performance through KPI monitoring,
- Introduction of new accommodation types, service delivery models, or contractual arrangements
- A formal request from senior management, internal audit, or the Regulator of Social Housing

The review will be coordinated by the relevant Service Manager responsible for Temporary Accommodation and Housing Supply, in consultation with operational teams, contractors, and other stakeholders.

The latest version of this policy will be made available to staff, partners, and stakeholders via Dorset Council's intranet.

9. Document Control

Field	Details
Policy Owner	Service Manager – Temporary Accommodation and Housing Supply
Version	1.0
Status	Complete
Date Approved	01.06.2026
Next Review	April 2029 or earlier if required
Approved By	(Interim)



Appendix A – Void Categorisation Guide

1. Purpose

This guide sets out how Dorset Council classifies temporary accommodation voids to ensure:

- Consistent assessment of void works
- Clear performance targets and expectations
- Efficient prioritisation of resources

Void categorisation supports:

- Faster turnaround of low-complexity properties
- Effective planning of major repair works
- Accurate performance monitoring and reporting

2. Principles of Categorisation

Void categorisation is based on:

- Property condition at inspection
- Extent and complexity of repairs required
- Health and safety risks
- Estimated time to bring the property to lettable standard

Categorisation will be confirmed following the initial void inspection and may be reviewed if circumstances change.



3. Void Categories

Void Category	Description	Typical Findings	Works Required	Target Timing
Minor Void	Property requiring minimal work and quick turnaround Routine repairs: no structural issues	Generally good condition No significant damages No major compliance issues Moderate wear and tear	Cleaning and Waste Clearance Minor Repairs Small Replacements Safety Checks Joinery Repairs Minor Kitchen/Bathroom works Redecoration Fixture Replacement	Up to 30 days - unless escalated, and/or specialist services required (Plasterers, listed building works etc)
Major Void	Significant works required	Major damage Structural issues H&S risks	Full replacements Electrical/plumbing works Damp/structural works Cyclical upgrades Specialist clearance	Up to 45 days – allowance for longer periods if additional departments or untypical practice applies. Examples (not limited to) of insurance claims and planning permissions.
Exceptional Void	Property requiring extensive, complex or non-standard works involving multiple stakeholders and/or specialist interventions	Extensive damage or deterioration Complex structural failures Fire/flood/major incident damage Full property refurbishment or rebuild	Specialist fire, asbestos or environmental works Major structural repairs	Typically 60+ days – subject to complexity, statutory approvals, funding, and multi-agency coordination - Review at reasonable periodic timescales. Timescales may extend significantly depending on planning, legal or insurance requirements. Examples (Not limited to) of community impact reporting, closure orders, dilapidation.

4. Categorisation Process

Categorisation will be determined:

- At initial void inspection
- By the appointed scheduler or other relevant officer

Categorisation will be:

- To be recorded on huume/relevant housing management system for the relevant property details
- Linked to expected timescales and contractor instructions

Re-categorisation may occur where:

- Additional defects are identified
- Works become more complex than originally assessed upon review and feedback from attending contractors, or revisit from surveyors/housing officers

5. Performance Monitoring

Void categories will be used to monitor:

- Turnaround times
- Contractor performance
- Cost of works

Persistent delays or mis-categorisation will be reviewed through:

- Weekly performance monitoring
- Contract management processes via Dorset Council Assets Management Team



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the [Dorset Council style guide](#) and also use the [accessibility checker](#) to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

1. Initial information

Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy

2. Is this a (please delete those not required):

New Policy

3. Is this (please delete those not required):

Both internal and external

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

Dorset Council has a statutory duty to secure accommodation in order to meet the obligations imposed by the Housing Act 1996 as amended. Dorset owns a small amount of stock and is therefore reliant on external provision to temporarily house homeless applicants. This policy provides a brief overview as to the type and location of accommodation that should be sought in order to meet the needs of these households

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

In 2024 an audit was undertaken by SWAP in relation to the properties managed by the Housing Solutions Team. The scope of the audit included the following:

- Supply of temporary accommodation
- Voids process and Health and Safety compliance
- Rent collection process
- Budgeting and forecasting
- Monitoring performance and KPIs

- Placing applicants in temporary accommodation including requirements and forecasting
- Leaving temporary accommodation and temporary to permanent accommodation.

The report noted that some of the policies devised by Housing Solutions remained in draft state and that work needed to be undertaken to ensure that they were completed and the requisite approval obtained. In their words

“these policies are crucial for strengthening the operational framework by providing clear guidelines for procurement, policy management and tenant allocation, thereby ensuring comprehensive risk management, compliance, excellence and a culture of transparency and accountability”.

Three specific policies were cited as requiring adoption, Voids, Placement and Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation.

Evidence gathering and engagement

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

Primarily reference has been made to the Housing Software System, Huume, which records the number of households that approach Dorset Council as homeless and are placed into temporary accommodation. Data has been assessed for the calendar year 2025 to provide a fuller picture regarding the breakdown of applicant types, age, sex etc.

MHCLG statistical tables on homelessness data.

Reference to Local Housing Allowance figures.

7. What did this tell you?

In 2025 651 684 individual households were placed into temporary accommodation. 236 of these households were households with dependent children. Dependent children are classified as 19 years or under and in education.

Age of Primary Applicant

55+ = 106

24-54 = 448

16-24 = 130

Sex of the lead applicant

Male = 326

Female =354

Trans = 4

Other – 0

Whilst the above data is based on the calendar year 2025 reference has also been made to the homelessness data held by MHCLG on the live tables. The quarterly returns made to central government include the number of households accommodated on the last day of the quarter. A direct comparison has been made between Quarter 3 – 31 December 2025 and 31 March 2026. This showed that in Dorset the overall number of households accommodated rose between the two quarters. There was an increase of 6.7% whereas the average increase for England was 1.1%. This increase means that Dorset will need to identify suitable accommodation for temporary residency.

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

No internal or external partners have been consulted with in relation to this assessment

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

No.

Is an EQIA required?

Not every proposal will need an EqlA. The data and research should inform your decision whether to continue with this EqlA. If you decide that your proposal does not need an EqlA, please answer the following question:

This policy, strategy, project or service does not require a EqlA because (provide details):

Yes. Homelessness can be experienced by any member of society and at any age. Although an applicant must be a minimum of 16 years of age before an application may be accepted by the local housing authority there are clearly a large proportion of homeless households who are assisted due to the very fact that they comprise of families with dependent children.

There are specific pieces of legislation as well as government departmental issued advice which govern the type of accommodation that certain households can be placed in as well as the length of time. The EqIA gives an opportunity to consider the needs of all applicants and not just specified cohorts.

Accommodation will be required to meet the needs of a diverse range of people across the whole of district.

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age Older people Children under the age of 18 years.	Neutral	Data has been taken from households placed in temporary accommodation in 2025 as this would provide significant data for a whole year Of the 684 individual households placed 106 were aged 55 plus. This age was selected due to the fact that a lot of older persons housing advertised via Dorset Council Home Choice is eligible for occupation by applicants aged 55 years and over. Sourcing longer term leased accommodation may assist in ensuring that the older homeless applicants are not in emergency B&B provision for longer than necessary but equally this cohort may be successful in being offered a social property quicker due to the age requirements. 236 households had dependent children. Households with dependent children are regarded as being in priority need under the Housing Act 1996 as amended and therefore accommodation must be secured. Dorset Council is striving to minimise the use of Bed and Breakfast for all households but the primary focus always be on Families With Children due to the fact it is unlawful to accommodate in B&B for longer than six weeks. Research into the effect of time spent generally in temporary accommodation for children demonstrates a significant impact due to change in location resulting in change in schooling. A portfolio spanning a wide geographical area may help to mitigate this.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		England's Homeless Children: The crisis in temporary accommodation Children growing up in B&Bs – new data shows the full story Children's Commissioner for England Sourcing longer term leased accommodation will at least provide some stability to families and provide enough room for children to study and complete homework which emergency B&B will not do. The age of a homeless applicant however is not specifically referenced in this policy save for those households that contain dependent children.
Disability	Neutral	Of the 684 households placed in temporary accommodation: • 176 households declared that their support need was a physical disability. • 49 declared a learning disability as their support need • 305 stated that they had a history of mental health problems. It is unlikely that accommodation will be sourced that will meet specific requirements as adaptations are usually undertaken after a bespoke assessment. However the intention will be to source accommodation that is generally accessible. Those applicants who have a disability attributable to mental health or learning disability may benefit from being

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		accommodated in longer term self contained accommodation than in emergency B&B provision.
Care Experience	Neutral	Dorset has a number of housing schemes designated for occupation by care leavers and in most instances they would be considered for these rather than the homeless temporary route. However for those homeless applicants who are recognised as having a care experience background the Code of Guidance Homelessness states that B&B accommodation will not be regarded as suitable. Alternative longer term accommodation will need to be available. The Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation Policy does reference that there may be circumstances where B&B will be used for Care Leavers but where this occurs regular review meetings will be held.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	None of the schemes used by Dorset Council are designated as gender specific. This cohort may benefit from direct placement into longer term self contained accommodation.
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	It is not anticipated that applicants who are in a marriage or civil partnership would be impacted by accommodation in either emergency B&B accommodation or a longer term

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		placement. Homeless applications are made by a singular applicant and their household composition is considered accordingly. The policy therefore does not reference this specific characteristic.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	As with households with dependent children pregnancy is a priority need category in its own right. A household that comprises either solely or as a household member that is pregnant is not permitted to remain in emergency B&B accommodation for longer than six weeks. Recent amendments made to the Code of Guidance regarding suitability ensure that any property identified must have room for a cot. Households with a pregnant woman will be better accommodated in longer term temporary accommodation than emergency B&B. There is no data available as to whether there is any impact on maternity directly.
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral	Where English is not a first language, officers will continue to utilise interpreting and translation services to ensure applicants can access homelessness assistance and understand accommodation offers. The policy states that cultural and religious needs will be considered when necessary.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Religion and belief	Neutral	No specific impact has been identified in relation to this policy. The policy states that cultural and religious needs will be considered when necessary.
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral	Currently there are no schemes in operation as temporary accommodation which are designated for one sex only and no plans to create one. Whilst regard will be had in respect of placing an applicant into B&B or shared hostel scheme as to the general make up of the current residents sex will not have a bearing when it comes to the sourcing of an accommodation unit.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	No specific impact has been identified in this policy.
People with caring responsibilities	Neutral	No specific impact has been identified.
Rural isolation	Neutral	Accommodation is likely to be sourced in urban areas due to availability and access to services. Officers will seek, where

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		reasonably practicable, to secure accommodation so that households are close to employment, education, healthcare and support networks.
Socio-economic deprivation	Neutral	No specific impact has been identified.
Single parents	Neutral	Single Parents are the largest applicant type accommodated according to national homelessness statistics. Statutory Homelessness England Time Series 202512.ods Nationally at the end of Q3, 31 December 2025 33% of households accommodated in temporary accommodation were single female parents and 3% were single male. The aim of this policy is to source accommodation that will be suitable for the parent and their children. This is true whether the parent was single or co-parenting in a combined household.
Armed forces communities	Neutral	No specific impact.

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

This policy is expected to have a specific positive impact for applicants who are pregnant or where their household includes a pregnant woman due to the need to ensure that longer term hostel or self contained accommodation is available for their occupation in order to meet the statutory limit of no accommodating in B&B for longer than six weeks.

This policy is viewed as having a neutral impact overall with respect to age but as with pregnancy, those households with dependent children under the age of 19 years may benefit from access to longer term hostel or self contained accommodation.

The policy is viewed as having a neutral impact across all other protected characteristics. Individual needs will continue to be considered to ensure that accommodation is suitable and accessible.

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqlA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
The portfolio does not meet the need of presenting households.	Run quarterly reports to review number of households placed in temporary accommodation, against voids within portfolio and suitability review requests to establish any trends across the cohort.	Head of Housing Solutions.	First report by 31 March 2027 and three monthly thereafter.
Policy review.	Review the Placement Policy and EqlA at the next scheduled policy review or sooner if there are legislative or service changes.	Head of Housing Solutions.	October 2029 unless required to do so sooner.

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqlA: Miriam Smith

Officers involved in completing the EqlA: Louise Turner

Date of completion: 4 September 2026

Version Number: 1

EqlA review date:

Equality Lead Sign Off:

Next Steps:

- the EqlA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqlA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqlA, to get a better understanding.
- EqlA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to [Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#)



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

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Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

1. Initial information
Placement Policy

2. Is this a (please delete those not required):

New Policy

3. Is this (please delete those not required):

Both internal and external

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

Dorset Council has a statutory duty to secure accommodation in order to meet the obligations imposed by the Housing Act 1996 as amended. This policy aims to give staff and applicants an oversight as to how properties are matched with applicants taking into account statutory guidance in relation to suitability of accommodation.

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

In 2024 an audit was undertaken by SWAP in relation to the properties managed by the Housing Solutions Team. The scope of the audit included the following:

- Supply of temporary accommodation
- Voids process and Health and Safety compliance
- Rent collection process
- Budgeting and forecasting
- Monitoring performance and KPIs
- Placing applicants in temporary accommodation including requirements and forecasting
- Leaving temporary accommodation and temporary to permanent accommodation.

The report noted that some of the policies devised by Housing Solutions remained in draft state and that work needed to be undertaken to ensure that they were completed and the requisite approval obtained. In their words

“these policies are crucial for strengthening the operational framework by providing clear guidelines for procurement, policy management and tenant allocation, thereby ensuring comprehensive risk management, compliance, excellence and a culture of transparency and accountability”.

Three specific policies were cited as requiring adoption, Voids, Placement and Sourcing of Temporary Accommodation.

Evidence gathering and engagement

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

Primarily reference has been made to the Housing Software System, Huume, which records the number of households that approach Dorset Council as homeless and are placed into temporary accommodation. Data has been assessed for the calendar year 2025 to provide a fuller picture regarding the breakdown of applicant types, age, sex etc.

Reference has also been made to census data 2021.

7. What did this tell you?

This is detailed in the tables below.

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

- Housing Management teams
- Housing advice and homelessness teams
- Accommodation with support teams
- Community safety teams
- Housing standards teams
- Housing strategy and performance teams
- Housing register and lettings teams

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

No.

Is an EQIA required?

Not every proposal will need an EqlA. The data and research should inform your decision whether to continue with this EqlA. If you decide that your proposal does not need an EqlA, please answer the following question:

This policy, strategy, project or service does not require a EqlA because (provide details):

Yes. Homelessness can be experienced by any member of society and at any age. Although an applicant must be a minimum of 16 years of age before an application may be accepted by the local housing authority there are clearly a large proportion of homeless households who are assisted due to the very fact that they comprise of families with dependent children.

There are specific pieces of legislation as well as government departmental issued advice which govern the type of accommodation that certain households can be placed in as well as the length of time. The EqlA gives an opportunity to consider the needs of all applicants and not just specified cohorts.

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age Older people Children under the age of 18 years. Young People aged 18-25 years	Neutral	Data has been taken from households placed in temporary accommodation in 2025 as this would provide significant data for a whole year Of the 684 individual households placed 106 were aged 55 plus. This age was selected due to the fact that a lot of older persons housing advertised via Dorset Council Home Choice is eligible for occupation by applicants aged 55 years and over. 193 households had dependent children. Households with dependent children are regarded as being in priority need under the Housing Act 1996 as amended and therefore accommodation must be secured. Dorset Council is striving to eliminate the use on Bed and Breakfast for all households but the focus should always be on Families With Children due to the fact it is unlawful to accommodate in B&B for longer than six weeks. However there still remains significant concerns and research into the effect of time spent in temporary accommodation for children due to change in location resulting in change in schooling. The policy details the factors for officer to take into account when matching applicants against units of available accommodation to try and mitigate any level of disruption as much as possible. England's Homeless Children: The crisis in temporary accommodation Children growing up in B&Bs – new data shows the full story Children's Commissioner for England Homeless applicants aged 18 plus may struggle to source and secure their own accommodation due to a number of factors. The first being that if they are not self sufficient in their income they are often subjected to lower welfare benefit rates, in particular regarding amounts paid under Local Housing Allowance (LHA). This amount is applicable to the age of 35 years unless explicitly exempt for a specified reason. This makes securing permanent accommodation for this age group harder. This is also amplified by the fact that the supported accommodation within Dorset for young people is primarily focussed on those aged 16 and regarded as Looked After Children and therefore the older age range is not considered.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Disability	Neutral	Of the 684 households placed in temporary accommodation: • 176 households declared that their support need was a physical disability. • 49 declared a learning disability as their support need • 305 stated that they had a history of mental health problems. The wording for the support need reflects the information that is captured and reported to central government as part of the quarterly statistical return on homelessness – HCLIC. Given that a history of mental health issues will cover a broad spectrum it is anticipated that only a small number of applicants would be classified or classify themselves as having a disability as a result of a mental health diagnosis. Overall the indication is that the majority of applicants applying to us as homeless do not identify as having a disability. Although some applicants have not declared information to us, this would not indicate that applicants with a disability constitute a particularly high number of households. Where households have indicated a disability and associated needs such as a need to receive care or specialist medical treatment, this may result in an assessment of needing to remain in or immediately around the vicinity they approached from. This would in any event be a requisite in assessing the suitability of the accommodation for the household. Therefore the impact is deemed as neutral.
Care Experience	Neutral	Care experienced young people are recognised within homelessness legislation and national guidance as a group requiring particular consideration. The Placement Policy does not create additional entitlements but ensures that officers take account of pathway plans, professional advice and individual needs when making placement decisions. This includes having particular regard as to the suitability of accommodation and the fact that the Code of Guidance stipulates that B&B accommodation will not be regarded as suitable for Care Leavers. As the policy formalises existing practice rather than introducing new provisions, the impact is considered neutral.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	Whilst the housing management system only records the gender of the primary applicant officers will be alerted to those households that contain a member who has or is transitioning and record details appropriately. This could make a difference to the number of bedrooms that the household require.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		Transgender customers may be particularly at risk of housing crisis and homelessness arising from transphobic reaction by family, neighbours and members of the local community. None of the schemes used by Dorset Council are designated as gender specific. In schemes which share facilities such as bathrooms these are gender neutral. In April 2025, the UK Supreme Court ruled that for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the term “woman” refers to biological sex. The practical implications of this ruling are that services designated as women only or men-only must now apply those categories by biological sex. However, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty continue to provide protection against discrimination to those who identify as transgender or non binary. Dorset Council will work closely and compassionately with all homeless applicants who identify as transgender or non binary, taking personal risk and safeguarding considerations into account, to ensure they are offered accommodation which is non-discriminatory, safe, and suitable to their needs.
Marriage or civil partnership	Unclear	Although households of more than one person are asked to explain how they are related to other household members those in a relationship are listed on the system as partner. No distinction is made as to whether the relationship has a distinct legal status. Therefore no evidence has been identified to suggest the policy would disadvantage these groups as the data collection limitations mean impacts cannot be fully quantified. However as long as Dorset Council are satisfied under the legislation that the couple are indeed to be regarded as a household then accommodation would be sourced.
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	As with households with dependent children pregnancy is a priority need category in its own right. A household that comprises either solely or as a household member that is pregnant is not permitted to remain in emergency B&B accommodation for longer than six weeks.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		Recent amendments made to the Code of Guidance regarding suitability ensure that any property identified must have room for a cot. There is no data available as to whether there is any impact on maternity directly. Households that include a pregnant person are already afforded additional protection under homelessness legislation and suitability requirements. The Placement Policy does not alter these rights but provides a framework to ensure they are consistently applied when matching households to temporary accommodation. The policy therefore supports compliance with existing statutory duties and is assessed as having a neutral impact.
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral	It is not mandatory for applicants to declare their ethnic background. Of the 684 households placed the captured information is as follows 416 – White background 248 – did not complete 12 – Mixed ethnicity 2 – Black background 1 – Gypsy/Irish Traveller The percentage of white applicants is considerably lower than the figure recorded by the 2021 Census of 97.1%, How life has changed in Dorset: Census 2021 If, and of course this is only an if, if the 248 who failed to answer were all of white background then this would mirror. The remaining ethnic groups combined total 2.19% roughly in line with the census figure of 2.6%. Dorset has a small population of Gypsy, Roma and Travellers. Due to potentially perceived prejudices the exact figure is not known. 1 applicant in 2025 declared themselves as Gypsy/Irish Traveller. Whilst there are two sites managed by Dorset Council which rent pitches these do not form part of the temporary accommodation available within this policy. There is all likelihood that a homeless presentation from a member of this group may therefore be offered traditional style bricks and mortar in the first instance as temporary accommodation. However guidance would be sought in the

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		first instance from the council's Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer It is important to note that this data is taken from the number of households that were placed into temporary accommodation. Placement will occur irrespective of race or ethnic background provided the applicant meets the statutory requirements for placement.
Religion and belief	Unclear	There is limited data within Dorset's housing management system as to whether applicants of a particular faith or religion as well as those who express no belief, experience difficulties in obtaining any longer term accommodation. For those applicants who have expressed or stipulated the need for a place of worship this will be considered accordingly regarding placement near said provision. Faith based support services will also be considered as part of the access to support network where there is an established history. There is an absence of places of worship for some religions across the wider Dorset area. Unless the household is new to the area then they are likely to have experienced a need to travel to a designated place.
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral	Currently there are no schemes in operation as temporary accommodation which are designated for one sex only. Where a scheme has shared facilities such as kitchen, living room and bathroom than the general make up of the current residents including their sex may become a factor. It may not be considered appropriate for instance to place one woman in a scheme where she would be the only woman and vice versa. It is recognised that domestic abuse disproportionately affects women. Those applicants who have approached as homeless due to fleeing domestic abuse will be carefully assessed before placement taking into account other residents even in schemes where there are no shared facilities save a communal entrance. In April 2025, the UK Supreme Court ruled that for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the term "woman" refers to biological sex. The practical implications of this ruling are that services designated as women only or men-only must now apply those categories by biological sex. However, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty continue to provide protection against discrimination to those who identify as transgender or non binary. Dorset Council will work closely and compassionately with all homeless

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		applicants who identify as transgender or non binary, taking personal risk and safeguarding considerations into account, to ensure they are offered accommodation which is non-discriminatory, safe, and suitable to their needs.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Only the sexual orientation of the primary applicant is recorded by the case management system so no data is available regarding wider household members. Whilst no accommodation is specifically set aside for member of the LGBTQ+ community there are no barriers which would prevent a household from being considered for a unit of accommodation based simply on their sexual preferences. Risk assessments would be undertaken for anyone being placed in temporary accommodation who presented a risk of sexual harm to others irrespective of their sexual orientation.
People with caring responsibilities	Neutral	The Placement Policy recognises that some households may need to provide or receive care from family members or support networks. When assessing the suitability of accommodation, officers will consider the location of accommodation in relation to those caring arrangements. Whilst this helps ensure caring responsibilities are appropriately considered, the policy does not confer additional priority or create new rights beyond those already contained within homelessness legislation and guidance. The impact is therefore assessed as neutral.
Rural isolation	Positive	When considering the suitability of accommodation for a homeless household location and access to transport is one of the key considerations. Due to the need to have the most flexible accommodation units of TA will be sourced in urban areas rather than a village setting.
Socio-economic deprivation	Neutral	The Placement Policy supports low-income households without the means to resolve their own housing situation by offering access to emergency accommodation for those groups who qualify for it. Employment status will be taken into consideration when determining priority for in-district placements, ensuring users can maintain existing employment where appropriate. Homeless applicants will be supported to make claims for Housing Benefit, if they are eligible to do so, to ensure the costs of temporary accommodation are covered. Households in temporary accommodation are often linked up with dedicated tenancy sustainment. The purpose of which is

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		to assist applicants to maximise their income by claiming additional welfare benefits or to assist with reducing expenditure . Some households may be impacted as a result of benefit cap. Again these households would be linked in with tenancy sustainment to maximise income. There will be a new Rent Setting policy in due course which will also offer protection to these households by ensuring the amounts charged are in line with the relevant local housing allowance figures.
Single parents	Neutral	Single Parents are the largest applicant type accommodated according to national homelessness statistics. Statutory Homelessness England Time Series 202512.ods Nationally at the end of Q3, 31 December 2025 33% of households accommodated in temporary accommodation were single female parents and 3% were single male. The aim of the placement policy is to identify longer term accommodation that will be suitable for the parent and their children taking into account all the necessary factors such as location and affordability. This is true whether the parent was single or co-parenting in a combined household.
Armed forces communities	Neutral	The Council upholds the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure veterans are not disadvantaged by their service and works closely with veteran-focused projects Weymouth that provides advocacy and support. Additional support, advocacy, and signposting are available through organisations such as the Royal British Legion and SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, and Families Association).

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

Overall, the Placement Policy is assessed as having largely neutral impacts across most protected characteristics, with a positive impact for those affected by rural isolation. The policy is designed to ensure that temporary accommodation placements are made fairly, safely and in accordance with statutory homelessness duties, while taking individual needs and vulnerabilities into account.

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Monitoring of equality impacts following implementation of the Placement Policy.	Annual review of placement outcome data by protected characteristic where data is available.	Head of Housing Solutions.	Ongoing.
Policy review.	Review the Placement Policy and EqIA at the next scheduled policy review or sooner if there are legislative or service changes.	Head of Housing Solutions.	October 2029 unless required to do so sooner.

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA: Miriam Smith

Officers involved in completing the EqIA: Louise Turner

Date of completion: 8 July 2026

Version Number: 1

EqIA review date:

Equality Lead Sign Off:

Next Steps:

- the EqlA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqlA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqlA, to get a better understanding.
- EqlA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to [Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#)

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Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the [Dorset Council style guide](#) and also use the [accessibility checker](#) to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

1. Initial information

Name of the policy, project, strategy, project or service being assessed:

Void Policy – Housing Management

2. Is this a (please delete those not required):

New policy

3. Is this (please delete those not required):

Both internal and external

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

This policy outlines the Council's approach to managing voids across its Temporary Accommodation (TA) and wider housing portfolio, including hostels, supported and specialist housing, shared accommodation, and self-contained units.

This policy supports Dorset Council's commitment to:

- delivering safe, clean, and secure accommodation
- insuring legal and regulatory compliance
- achieving value for money and efficient use of available housing stock
- applying a transparent and consistent approach to working

Dorset Council's Voids Policy establishes a consistent and strategic approach to managing empty housing across its portfolio. It ensures that when properties become vacant, they are recovered, inspected, repaired, and re-let efficiently while meeting all legal, safety, and quality standards.

The policy is designed to minimise void turnaround times, reduce rental income loss, and support the Council's statutory duties - by making suitable accommodation available as quickly as possible. It emphasises providing safe, clean, compliant homes and adopting a person-centred approach that takes into account vulnerability, accessibility, and household needs.

The policy applies to all council-managed, leased, and partner-provided housing and covers the full voids process from tenancy termination and inspection through to repair, compliance checks, and re-letting. It is underpinned by key legislation and regulatory standards.

Through defined lettable standards, categorisation of void types, and robust performance indicators, Dorset Council aims to ensure consistency, accountability,

and value for money while continuously improving services through monitoring, reporting, and feedback.

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

In 2024 an audit was undertaken by SWAP in relation to the properties managed by the Housing Solutions Team. The scope of the audit included the following:

- Supply of temporary accommodation
- Voids process and Health and Safety compliance
- Rent collection process
- Budgeting and forecasting
- Monitoring performance and KPIs
- Placing applicants in temporary accommodation including requirements and forecasting
- Leaving temporary accommodation and temporary to permanent accommodation.

The report noted that some of the policies devised by Housing Solutions remained in draft state and that work needed to be undertaken to ensure that they were completed and the requisite approval obtained. In their words

“these policies are crucial for strengthening the operational framework by providing clear guidelines for procurement, policy management and tenant allocation, thereby ensuring comprehensive risk management, compliance, excellence and a culture of transparency and accountability”.

Evidence gathering and engagement

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

- delivery on the ‘Our Council Plan 2024-2029’ proposal
- internal performance data on void turnaround times and re-let times
- consultation with the Assets and Property team at Dorset Council, and their processes and proposed policies, with a focus on repair and call out
- typical response times to void works and how these are raised and reported internally (process)
- homelessness and temporary accommodation demand data
- national housing and regulatory standards

- relevant legislation including housing and health and safety requirements
- analysed Dorset Council homeless data, held on our Housing Register (Internal systems – specifically Huume at time of writing)

7. What did this tell you?

The evidence highlights a clear need to improve access to safe, suitable, and affordable housing, particularly for vulnerable residents and those at risk of homelessness. Demand for suitable Temporary Accommodation can at times exceeds supply (For example unforeseen social and external impacts), and delays in bringing empty properties back into use can have a direct impact on households in need.

The Council Plan 2024 - 2029 reinforces and identifies housing as a cornerstone of a fairer and more prosperous Dorset, with a need to improve access for local people, reduce inequalities, and support inclusive communities. The evidence shows that inefficiencies in void management can contribute to barriers in accessing housing, particularly for those already facing disadvantage.

This approach will also support the Council's longer-term aim to reduce and, where possible, eliminate the use of nightly paid accommodation, commonly referred to as bed and breakfast accommodation. This type of accommodation is often unsuitable for longer-term occupation. Under UK legislation and statutory guidance, households with dependent children or pregnant women should not be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks, except in emergency circumstances. Improving void turnaround times will help ensure that more appropriate and stable accommodation can be provided within this timeframe, or supersede it entirely.

The findings also highlight pressures across a range of specialist housing pathways, including those linked to supported housing, entrenched or repeat rough sleeping, and other targeted housing strategies. These groups often require accommodation that is suitable, safe, and available at the right time. Delays in re-letting or inconsistencies in property standards can impact the ability to respond effectively to these needs and may contribute to poorer outcomes.

In addition, the evidence supports the importance of partnership working. Delivering efficient void management requires coordination across housing, assets and property teams, support services, other internal teams, and external partners. This reflects the Council Plan principle that better outcomes are achieved by working together across services and with wider partners.

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

- Housing Management teams
- Housing advice and homelessness teams
- Accommodation with support teams
- Community safety teams
- Housing standards teams
- Housing strategy and performance teams
- Housing register and lettings teams
- Asset and repairs teams

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

Further monitoring data will be collected following implementation to assess performance across different groups, particularly around void turnover times, costs and average time voids are sat with contractors for work completion. Ongoing service user feedback may also help inform future revisions.

Is an EQIA required?

Not every proposal will need an EqIA. The data and research should inform your decision whether to continue with this EqIA. If you decide that your proposal does not need an EqIA, please answer the following question:

This policy, strategy, project or service does not require a EqIA because (provide details):

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.

- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Neutral	The policy applies consistently across all age groups and aims to ensure vacant properties are returned to use as quickly as possible. This may improve access to accommodation generally; however, no specific positive or negative impact on people because of age has been identified.
Disability	Positive	The policy includes consideration of accessibility and suitability, supporting disabled residents by ensuring properties are safe and appropriate. Mitigation: ensure reasonable adjustments and adaptations are prioritised.
Care Experience	Positive	Care-experienced young people can be disproportionately affected by housing instability and homelessness. By reducing void turnaround times and increasing the availability of suitable accommodation, the policy may help improve access to housing opportunities for care leavers and other care-experienced residents who require support when moving

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		into independent accommodation.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	The policy applies equally to all residents regardless of gender identity. No specific positive or negative impacts have been identified. The consistent and transparent management of void properties helps ensure fair access to accommodation opportunities.
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	No specific impact identified.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	Timely re-letting supports households requiring accommodation, with regards to families not being able to spend longer than 6 weeks in emergency accommodation with shared facilities (emergency accommodation), as per current legislation
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral	No specific impact identified.
Religion and belief	Neutral	No specific impact identified.
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral	Policy applies equally to all genders.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Policy applies equally to all genders.
People with caring responsibilities	Positive	Improved access to suitable housing supports those with caring responsibilities.
Rural isolation	Positive	Efficient use of available housing stock can improve access in rural areas. Mitigation: continue monitoring availability and location suitability.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Socio-economic deprivation	Positive	Supports quicker access to housing for those in financial hardship or homelessness – also supports accommodation options away from often unaffordable nightly charged emergency options.
Single parents	Neutral	Faster rehousing supports stability for single parent households. Avoids emergency placements and breaches of legislative responsibility - families not being able to spend longer than 6 weeks in emergency accommodation with shared facilities (emergency accommodation). However any parent with dependent children will benefit from a move into self contained accommodation irrespective of any relationship they are in.
Armed forces communities	Neutral	No specific impact identified, although access to housing is supported through general improvements.

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

Overall, the Voids Policy has a positive impact across most groups by improving access to safe, suitable housing and reducing waiting times. No significant negative impacts have been identified. The policy promotes fairness, transparency, and consistency, while recognising the need to consider individual needs such as disability, vulnerability, and household circumstances.

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Monitoring equality impacts of the Voids Policy	Monitor void turnaround times, re-let times and accommodation outcomes to identify any disproportionate impacts on protected groups and vulnerable households where data is available.	Housing Management Team	Ongoing – quarterly review
Accessibility and disability considerations	Ensure reasonable adjustments, aids and adaptations are considered as part of the void process where required to meet residents' needs.	Housing Management and Assets Teams	Ongoing
Care-experienced residents and vulnerable households	Monitor housing outcomes and access to accommodation for care leavers and other vulnerable groups to ensure the policy supports timely access to suitable accommodation.	Housing Management Team	Ongoing
Rural accommodation availability	Review availability and suitability of housing stock across rural communities to identify any barriers to access.	Housing Management Team	Annual review
Policy review	Review the EqIA alongside the next scheduled review of the Voids Policy or sooner if there are significant legislative, service or operational changes	Housing Management Team	October 2029 unless required to do so sooner.

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA: Sheena Browne

Officers involved in completing the EqlA: Sheena Browne

Date of completion: 30.06.2026

Version Number: 1

EqlA review date:

Equality Lead Sign Off:

Next Steps:

- the EqlA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqlA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqlA, to get a better understanding.
- EqlA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to [Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#)

Cabinet

6 October 2026

Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre Rollback Scheme (Hensleigh House Acquisition) For Decision

Cabinet Member: 06/10/26

Cllr Jack Jeanes, Economy & Environment

Local Councillor:

Cllr Belinda Bawden

Senior Leadership Team:

J Britton – Executive Director, Economy & Environment

Report author and job title: Jack Wiltshire – Corporate Director Highways & Engineering.

Email: jack.wiltshire@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Dorset Council

Report status: Part Exempt Para 3

1. Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)

The aim of this report is to obtain Cabinet approval for Dorset Council to transfer Environment Agency Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) funding (see Exempt Appendix A for financial implications) to Charmouth Parish Council for the purpose of facilitating the acquisition of Hensleigh House (or a suitable alternative in the event that this property is deemed during the conveyancing process to be unsuitable or otherwise becomes unavailable). The acquisition would enable a future relocation of the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre (CHCC), a nationally recognised tourism, education and scientific asset that is expected to become increasingly vulnerable to coastal erosion in the coming decades and potentially uninsurable in consequence, and as such unusable in the shorter term.

Charmouth is one of two Dorset communities selected to receive investment through the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme. The Cabinet-approved Dorset CTAP Outline Business Case identified the rollback of vulnerable community assets as a priority adaptation measure, with the future relocation of the CHCC identified as a key

project. Rollback involves securing land or property inland to enable the relocation of assets threatened by coastal erosion and climate change.

The proposal is fully externally funded through CTAP and is supported in principle by the Environment Agency, subject to satisfactory governance, legal and planning arrangements. Dorset Council's role is to facilitate the acquisition and ensure that the public funds achieve the intended coastal adaptation outcomes. Ownership and operation of the property shall be the responsibility of Charmouth Parish Council, and this position is accepted and agreed by Charmouth Parish Council.

The funding must be committed and spent by 31st March 2027. Approval of this recommendation will enable progress towards securing a strategically significant community asset, delivering a key commitment within the Future Coast Dorset programme and supporting the long-term resilience of Charmouth in response to coastal change.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- i. Approves the transfer of Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme funding (see Exempt Appendix A) to Charmouth Parish Council for the acquisition of Hensleigh House (or a suitable alternative);
- ii. Approves Dorset Council acting as facilitator and enabling authority for the acquisition in support of the Future Coast Dorset programme;
- iii. Delegates authority 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;
- iv. Approves the Executive Director for Economy & Environment be delegated to sign the requisite PMG1 and Sealing Form; and
- v. Authorises officers to proceed with the transfer, subject to satisfactory valuation, survey, planning, legal and funding compliance outcomes.

3. Reason for the recommendations

The recommendation supports delivery of the Cabinet-approved Dorset CTAP Outline Business Case and the objectives of the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme.

The proposal will:

- enable delivery of a key coastal adaptation project;
- support the long-term resilience of Charmouth against coastal erosion;
- secure a future rollback site for the CHCC;
- protect the future of an important tourism, education and community asset;

- maximise the benefit of external government funding;
- contribute to Dorset Council priorities relating to climate adaptation and resilient communities; and
- provide effective use of the funding and reduce the risk of significant programme underspend before the funding deadline of 31st March 2027.

4. The report

4.1 Strategic Priority

The proposal supports the Dorset Council Plan strategic priority in '*Responding to the Climate and Nature Crisis*'. The proposal enables a proactive response to the impacts of climate change through coastal adaptation and long-term planning for unavoidable coastal erosion. The acquisition of Hensleigh House supports the rollback of the CHCC, reducing future exposure to coastal risk and helping the community adapt to changing shoreline conditions.

The proposal supports the Dorset Council Plan strategic priority of '*Communities for All*' through directly improving community resilience to coastal change, by securing a future location for an important community, education, visitor and tourism facility. The CHCC plays a significant role in Charmouth's identity and community life. The project will help to maintain community assets and services in the face of coastal change.

The proposal supports the Dorset Council Plan strategic priority to '*Grow our Economy*'. The CHCC is a key visitor attraction supporting the local tourism economy and the wider Jurassic Coast destination. Securing a long-term alternative location for this facility helps to protect economic activity, visitor spending and employment associated with tourism in Charmouth.

The proposal aligns with the approach of Central Government to managing flood and coastal erosion risk by supporting proactive adaptation to unavoidable coastal change. It contributes to the long-term ambition of creating places that are more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk through planned adaptation, rather than continued reliance on unsustainable coastal defence measures.

4.2 Background

In 2024 the Environment Agency approved the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) Outline Business Case (OBC), which provided Dorset Council with £3 million of external funding to deliver coastal adaptation across Charmouth and North Swanage through the Future Coast Dorset project.

The Shoreline Management Plan policy for Charmouth has transitioned from "Hold the Line" to "No Active Intervention", recognising that long-term maintenance of coastal defences is unlikely to be sustainable. More than 120 homes and businesses, tourism assets and sections of the South West Coast Path could be affected by coastal change

over the next century. The CHCC itself is projected to be lost to coastal erosion by approximately 2055 unless adaptation measures are implemented.

The project has engaged extensively with communities, building on the work delivered through the *2008 DEFRA Coastal Change Pathfinder Programme*, to identify viable opportunities to acquire land or property to secure a future site for the CHCC. One of the most significant opportunities identified is the acquisition of the 'Hensleigh House' property, which provides a significant opportunity to function as a future rollback site for the CHCC.

Charmouth Parish Council is willing to take ownership and management responsibility for the property, subject to Dorset Council transferring the acquisition funds and establishing appropriate legal and governance arrangements to protect public funds and ensure the property is purchased and used for its intended purpose.

4.3 The scheme directly supports:

- **National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020):** supporting the strategic objective of creating climate resilient places through proactive adaptation to coastal change and helping communities prepare for and respond to long-term coastal erosion risk
- **South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan Review 2 (2011):** supporting adaptation to the planned policy transition in Charmouth from "Hold the Line" to "No Active Intervention", recognising that long-term defence of the frontage is not considered sustainable.
- **Future Coast Dorset Outline Business Case (approved by Cabinet, December 2024):** delivering the approved "Asset and Property Rollback" intervention and facilitating the future relocation of the CHCC
- **Charmouth Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (Draft):** supporting the long-term adaptation of a community facing increasing risks from coastal erosion, landsliding and shoreline recession.

5. Alternative options considered

A range of alternative rollback options were considered, including the acquisition of undeveloped land, existing properties, and public sector sites within Charmouth. These options were assessed against criteria including availability, deliverability, planning and legal constraints, long-term resilience to coastal change, affordability, and alignment with the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme timescales. While several locations demonstrated potential, they were either unavailable, subject to significant legal or development constraints, no longer on the market, or presented challenges in providing a viable and deliverable future location for the CHCC. Hensleigh House emerged as the preferred option because it offers the most realistic opportunity to secure a suitable rollback asset within the available funding window and supports the long-term objectives of coastal adaptation in Charmouth.

6. Legal considerations

The proposal is for Dorset Council to provide acquisition funds to Charmouth Parish Council to enable the Parish Council to purchase the Hensleigh House property. Protection of the funds pre-acquisition and protection against misuse of the property post-acquisition are key priorities, and will be safeguarded in the following ways:

- Dorset Council will only release the purchase monies to the legal representatives of Charmouth Parish Council, and this will be strictly conditional on the funds being held to our order until completion; in the event that the property purchase fails to complete, the funds will be returned to Dorset Council.
- Dorset Council will require Charmouth Parish Council to enter into a funding agreement prior to the acquisition funds leaving the control of Dorset Council, and this agreement will contain contractual covenants requiring that Charmouth Parish Council:
 - (a) only use the funds for the agreed purposes, i.e. to purchase the property and carry out defined alteration works etc.;
 - (b) only use the property for the agreed purposes; and
 - (c) have restrictive and positive covenants entered against the title to the property in the terms outlined below
- Charmouth Parish Council shall enter into a deed of covenant with Dorset Council made pursuant to Section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and registered as a Local Land Charge which stipulates that:
 - (a) the property can only be used in the agreed manner, i.e. materially the same uses as the CCHC is currently being used together with any pre-agreed additional, supplemental or incidental uses; and
 - (b) in the event that the property is no longer required for such uses, financial controls will be imposed, for example a requirement to sell the property and return some or all of the funding

The above measures will provide Dorset Council with the ability to take legal action to enforce both its contractual rights under the funding agreement and to enforce the covenants in the event that the property is not used as intended.

Legal advice has been sought regarding compliance with subsidy control requirements and remains under review. Confirmation of the proposal's compliance with applicable subsidy control legislation will be obtained following the conclusion of that advice.

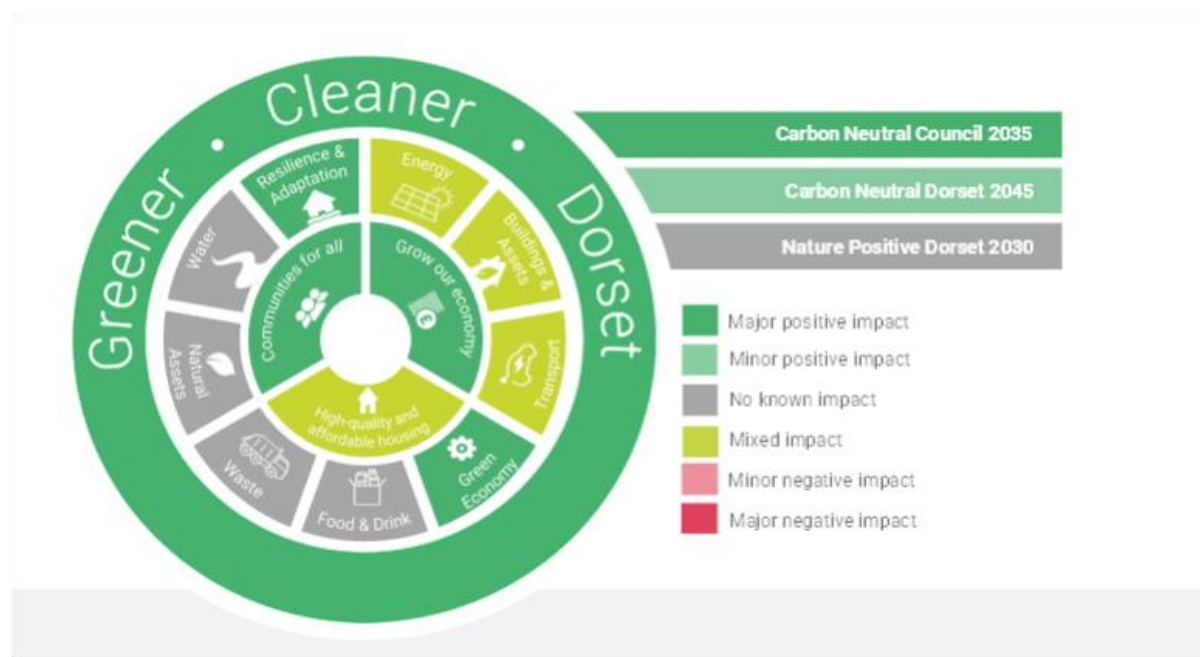
7. Financial implications

See Exempt Appendix A.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

The proposal to support the rollback of the CHCC will contribute to the long-term climate resilience of the community by proactively adapting to coastal change and the increasing risks of coastal erosion, as opposed to the previous promotion of coastal defence interventions. This approach is consistent with the current Shoreline Management Plan policy of 'No Active Intervention'.

The proposal involves the acquisition of an existing property for future community use. Re-use of an existing building is expected to reduce the need for any new construction works, with their associated carbon impacts.



ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS

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

Corporate Plan Aims	Impact
Grow our economy	Major positive impact
High-quality and affordable housing	Neutral
Communities for all	Major positive impact

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Responses -will this be incorporated into your proposal? How? And if not, why not?
Energy	
Support existing buildings to install onsite renewables like rooftop solar and flexibility measures	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council, to support the installation of renewable energies.
Support the deployment of low carbon heating, such as heat pumps and low carbon district heat networks	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council, to support the installation of low carbon heating.
Buildings & Assets	

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	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council, to support the energy efficiency.
Support occupants to better reduce, reuse and recycle	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council, to support occupants to better reduce, reuse recycle.
Support the protection, expansion and enhancement of Dorset's ecological network (e.g. through encouraging more wildlife-friendly gardens) or wider use of nature-based solutions for existing communities (e.g. SuDS)	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council, to support nature-based solutions.
Ensure old site has a site waste management plan	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council regarding waste management.
Transport	
Enable buildings to have easy, safe and affordable access to active and public transport options	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council regarding active and public transport.
Support the provision of EV charging facilities	Dorset Council will not own the asset; however, there are opportunities to provide advice to Charmouth Parish Council regarding EV charging installation.
Green Economy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Food & Drink	
No recommendations found for this category	
Waste	

No recommendations found for this category	
Natural Assets & Ecology	
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	
No recommendations found for this category	

9. Well-being and health implications

The proposal will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the local community by supporting community resilience to coastal change and securing the long-term future of the CHCC as a valued community and educational asset. It will also help sustain the local tourism economy by safeguarding an important visitor attraction that supports local businesses and employment within Charmouth and the wider Jurassic Coast area.

10. Other implications

None identified.

11. Risk implications

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

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Low

12. Equalities

There is potential for the funding of this facility to be considered by other local communities to be unfair to those other local communities, who may consider that they would equally benefit from such an acquisition, especially in light of the fact that the Parish Council intend to relocate their offices to the site in order to reduce their

overheads and accordingly make the running of this building more affordable for them. However, the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme carried out careful analysis and concluded that Charmouth was a community that was particularly at risk of the adverse impact of coastal erosion and it can be clearly demonstrated that this acquisition will merely replace an asset that would otherwise become unusable due to coastal erosion and accordingly, the acquisition is justified by the circumstances.

13. Appendices

- Appendix A: Exempt – by virtue of paragraph 3 of scheduled 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
- Appendix B: Dorset Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Outline Business Case
- Appendix C: Future Coast Charmouth - Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix D: Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme OBC Cabinet Paper (2024)

14. Background papers

Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Outline Business Case Cabinet Paper (See Appendix D)

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 Assurance and Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Director for Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

Outline Business Case Template for non EA Risk Management Authorities

External form: LIT 55372

Published: [Publish date]

Dorset Council

Dorset Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Outline Business Case



Black Ven, West Dorset. Eroding cliffs in front of Charmouth.

Recommendation

This document presents an Outline Business Case (OBC) to secure business case approval for the development of the CTAP programme project for Swanage North and Charmouth, Dorset.

The coastal communities of Swanage North and Charmouth are being challenged to adapt to a changing landscape due to sea level rise and weather pattern changes accelerating the risk of coastal erosion and cliff destabilisation. The Shoreline Management Plan preferred policy options for both of these

frontages is No Active Intervention / Managed Realignment from epoch 2 (2025) and beyond.

The Swanage and Charmouth CTAP programme will support the Government’s stated aim to manage down the risk to such coastal communities, and where they cannot be, support those communities to respond and adapt accordingly. The CTAP programme project will deliver a range of options at both Swanage and Charmouth to enable communities to adapt and thrive in the light of ongoing coastal change.

This report seeks FSoD approval for £3,000k of FCRM GiA funding to progress to the delivery stage of the Swanage North and Charmouth CTAP programme project. The £3,000k includes £125k sunk costs and 30% optimism bias contingency.

Version Control

Submission Rev 02

Version History

Version Number	Purpose	Date	Main Changes
01	Comment from Dorset Council and LPRG	03.09.24	
02	Submission to LPRG	13.09.24	
03	Updated following LPRG comments	12.11.24	

Assurance and Approval Record

RMA reference number: ???

EA reference number: DO004

Date of submission to EA: 13.09.2024

Assurance from Risk Management Authority

I confirm that this Outline Business Case meets our guidelines, quality assurance requirements, environmental obligations and Defra investment appraisal conditions. All internal approvals, including member approval, have been completed. I apply to the Environment Agency for capital grant and local levy in the sum of £3,000,000 (Grant Claim Value).

Name of RMA Project Executive: Matthew Penny, Service Manager FCERM

Approval from Risk Management Authority Council

Version approved: 03

Date:

Endorsement from Environment Agency Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager

I confirm that the Outline Business Case is ready for assurance.

Applications up to £10million - I have consulted with the Director of Operations and the Deputy Director of Finance.

Name of Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager:

Date:

Environment Agency Assurance and Technical Approval

I recommend that the application is granted technical approval. The record of assurance is appended to the business case.

Name of AFCRM or Lead Assurance Reviewer:

Date:

Financial Approval

Name of Approving Officer:

Date:

Name of Approving Officer:

Date:

Name of Approving Officer:

Date:

FSoD reference:

Date:

Financial Scheme of Delegation Co-ordinator

Notes

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1.0 Project Summary

This Outline Business Case builds upon the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) Strategic Outline Business Case that was submitted to the Large Project Review Group (LPRG) in February 2022. The SOC, (FSoD ref TBC), set out the approach to the allocation of the £36m for the whole CTAP Programme.

East Riding of Yorkshire and North Norfolk were identified as the primary locations in need of support with £30m allocated to them. The SOC allocated the remaining £6m to 'other projects' to be selected based on the initial learning from the first two areas. Dorset and Cornwall have since been identified as the most suitable areas. This OBC is for £3m to fund the Dorset CTAP.

The Dorset CTAP OBC will focus on Swanage North and Charmouth where the proposed shoreline management plan (SMP) policies will challenge communities to adapt to an eroding coastline. The Dorset CTAP will undertake activities that raise awareness and deliver practical action related to the risks of coastal erosion and cliff retreat and support the communities in adapting to their changing coastlines. The sites are located on the south coast of England within the county of Dorset. Dorset Council is the Coast Protection Authority and manages the coastal path and rights of way that traverse each location.

The Dorset CTAP provides an opportunity to develop, test and implement innovative coastal transition actions that are outside the scope of what central government usually funds and what local authorities are required to do.

Total Value of Project £3,000,000

Flood risk type: Coastal erosion

Numbers of households at erosion risk

Swanage North

- Households at medium term risk (≤ 20 years) - 33
- Households at long term risk (> 20 years) – 60 (50 year losses)

In total it is estimated that 116 households will be lost to coastal erosion and cliff loss over the next 100 years.

Charmouth

- Households at medium term risk (≤ 20 years) - 12
- Households at long term risk (> 20 years) – 19 (50 year losses)

In total it is estimated that 118 households will be lost to coastal erosion and cliff loss over the next 100 years.

Infrastructure at risk by 2124

Swanage North

- Beach huts (approximately 130+)
- Beach side cafes and restaurants including Down the Beach and The Cabin
- Utilities infrastructure
- Hotelries including Grand Hotel, Pines Hotel, Avon House and The Rookery
- Sheps Hollow access steps
- Section of the South West Coast Path
- Public toilets
- OceanBay Watersports

Charmouth

- Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre and car park
- Seafront car park
- Utilities infrastructure
- Charmouth Primary School
- Businesses including 3+ Bed and Breakfasts
- Section of the South West Coast Path including bridge over River Char
- Seadown Holiday Park

Type, condition and residual life of existing defences

N/A – the proposal seeks to support communities to adapt to coastal erosion in areas of No Active Intervention or Managed Realignment.

Environmental designations

The following environmentally designated sites are on or adjacent to the Swanage North or Charmouth coast –

Swanage North

- Dorset AONB
- Jurassic Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Purbeck Coast MCZ
- Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
- St Albans Head to Durlston SAC
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA
- Purbeck Ridge (East) SSSI

Charmouth

- Dorset AONB
- Jurassic Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Sidmouth to West Bay SAC
- Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC
- West Dorset Coast SSSI

How is flood and erosion risk managed?

N/A – the proposal seeks to support communities to adapt to coastal erosion in areas of No Active Intervention or Managed Realignment.

Summarise the case for change

Swanage North

Coastal erosion of the cliff toe along Swanage Bay has been largely reduced since the early 20th century through construction of coastal defences. However, the section of cliff along the Swanage North study area is still subject to landslides, which is compounded by ground instability primarily caused by groundwater and poorly managed land drainage. A variety of slope stabilisation measures have been implemented by private landowners which has stabilised the cliffs in localised sections. During the extreme wet winter of 2012/13, various landslides and cliff falls affected this area and caused damage. Structural measures, drainage and re-profiling would be necessary to help stabilise the cliffs and slow further recession.

More than 120 residential and commercial premises are located in the project area of Swanage North Cliffs. Unless actions are taken to reduce cliff recession, significant loss of property and infrastructure will occur over the long term. These cliffs are actively unstable in some locations and without intervention, will continue to experience further instability and cliff-top recession.

Charmouth

As detailed within the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) document, the coastline that Charmouth sits within is characterised by dramatic, geologically important cliffs which are subject to large-scale complex landsliding. These events are difficult to predict with any certainty, making management of this shoreline problematic. Sediment interlinkages along this frontage are relatively weak due to the interruptions caused by headlands and episodic landslide lobes extending across the beach and foreshore.

The nature of the erosion of these cliffs is integral to their designations and landscape value; however, the area is also important for tourism and Charmouth is also dependent upon this. The Heritage Coast Centre and seafront car park in particular will be under increased pressure as the adjacent cliffs recede further and maintenance to the seawall eventually stops.

The current policy for the SMP is hold the line but this will transition to a combination of No Active Intervention and Managed Realignment in the medium term (2025 onwards). Under this policy option it is estimated that over 120 residential and business properties will be lost within the next 100 years.

Selected option

The Swanage North and Charmouth CTAP aims to establish plans, policies and funding mechanisms to support long-term coastal transition based on the projected impacts of climate driven coastal change, while delivering the practical transition of community assets.

A number of options have been developed and discussed with the local communities and are presented to take forward for development at the next stage. The options cover the themes of Adaptation, Community, Resilience, Nature based solutions and Access.

Economic cost and benefit of selected option

- Costs – £3,000,000
 - Benefit to Cost Ratio – >1
-

Risk

- The total contingency amount is £656k.

Top three residual risks are:

- Local community resistance to project actions. Local communities may reject coastal transition actions on account of perceptions they will not be 'protected' from flooding and coastal change. This could lead to a lack of support and

potential objection from local leaders on behalf of their communities. Mitigation includes early and extensive community engagement.

- Coastal incident/weather event. A flood or erosion related incident that diverts coastal management expertise and resource away from CTAP. Mitigation includes recruitment of sufficient resources resulting in team capacity to plan and deliver. Such events may also affect risk one above if events overtake planned actions
 - Disruptive influences (individuals, social media, media, political). External parties influence and disrupt communications for other motives. Mitigation includes a robust Communications and Engagement Strategy as well as recruitment of sufficient resources resulting in team capacity to plan and deliver.
-

Schedule of critical milestone dates.

Milestone dates are:

- CTAP funding and work start: Nov 24
 - Option refinement: Nov 24 – May 25
 - Adaptation/ Access / Nature Based / Resilience solutions development: May 25 – March 26
 - Community solutions development: May 25 – Sept 25
 - Community solutions rollout: Oct 25 – March 27
 - Adaptation/ Access / Nature Based / Resilience solutions construction/delivery: Apr 26 – March 27
 - Adaptation plans: Apr 26 – March 27
 - Project completion: March 2027
-

2.0 Strategic Case

2.1 Introduction

This document presents an Outline Business Case (OBC) for activities to be completed for the Coastal Transition Acceleration Programme at two sites; Charmouth and Swanage North.

Charmouth is located on the Jurassic Coast in Dorset. It lies east of Lyme Regis and further east lies the small town of Seatown. The town of Charmouth is situated on high ground above the River Char. The Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre is situated on the coastal frontage and attracts many annual visitors. The Charmouth Heritage centre building was originally a cement factory constructed in the 1850s which closed shortly after in the 1870s. The building was bought in 1908 and in subsequent years used as a Scout facility amongst other uses. The building was reopened in the 1980s as the Heritage Coast Centre and was extended and redeveloped in 2005. In 2014 the building suffered severe storm

damage, and improvements to the seawall fronting the building followed in 2015/2016 including the addition of a stepped revetment. The Heritage Coast Centre is located on the first floor of the building with a café and shops located on the ground floor. The centre is a major focus for tourism in Charmouth as well as being an important community building.



Figure 1 Charmouth study area



Figure 2 Charmouth study area

Swanage North is located in East Dorset within Swanage Bay framed by Studland in the north and Durlston in the south. The Swanage North study area runs from the junction of Ulwell Road and Shore Road to Sheps Hollow. This captures the lower end of the Ballard Cliff feature. South of Sheps Hollow the cliff line is not included in the environmental designated areas that include the active cliff areas to the north. As a consequence, the frontage along this section of coast is formed of open cliff line with a range of formal and informal cliff defences fronted along much of the southern stretch by beach huts, beach cafes and shops plus cliff top property including the Grand Hotel, Pines Hotel and other businesses.

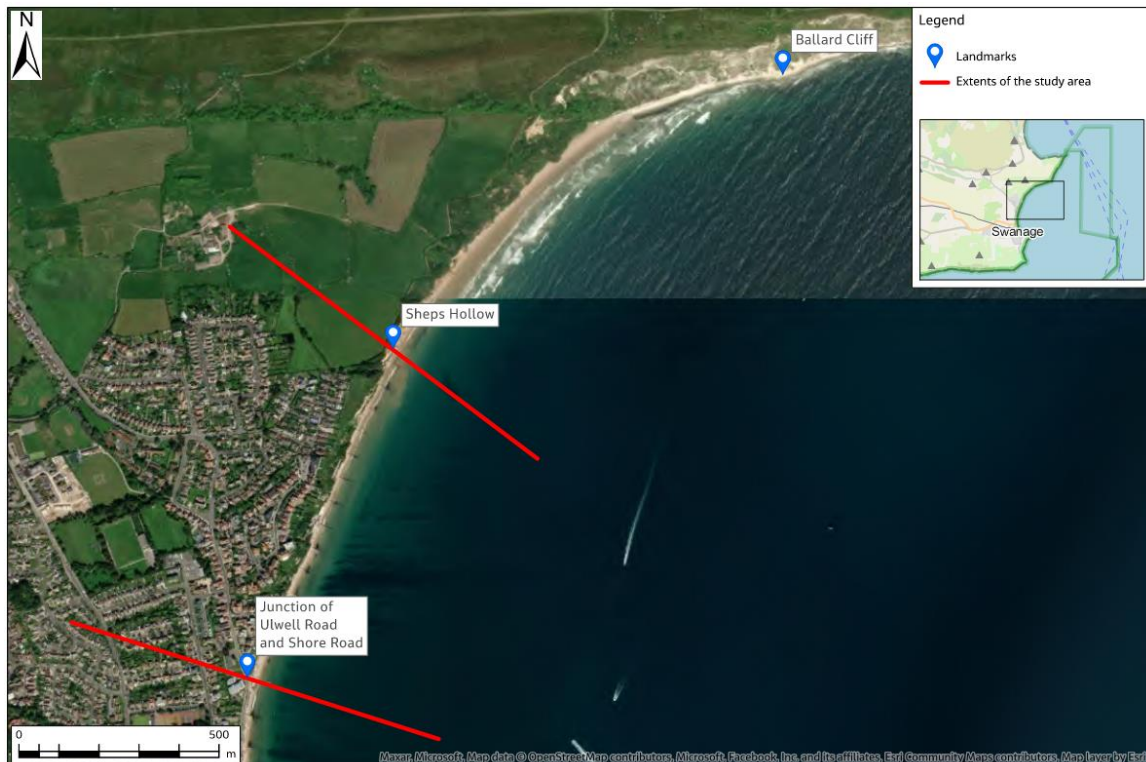


Figure 3 Swanage North study area

Photographs from both locations are included in Appendix A – Photos.

2.2 Strategic context

Coastal communities are at the forefront of a changing landscape due to sea level rise and weather pattern changes accelerating the risk of coastal erosion. This project supports the Government's stated aim to manage down the risk to our communities, and where they cannot be, support those communities to respond and adapt accordingly.

The government sets the policy framework on flood and coastal erosion management. The Environment Agency (EA) is responsible for flooding from main rivers, sea flooding and has a strategic overview to ensure that decisions by local authorities and others on the coast are made in a joined-up manner. Under the Coast Protection Act 1949, general powers for managing coastal erosion risk

are given to coastal erosion risk management authorities ('CERMAs') and to coast protection authorities ('CPAs').

The government policy statement on flooding and coastal erosion, published on 14 July 2020, sets out the government's long-term ambition to create a nation more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk. Alongside the policy statement, the EA published its new National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, which is also focussed on improving overall resilience to flooding and coastal change, adapting to climate change and provides a framework to guide the activities of those involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management.

This project, as part of the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) will make a significant contribution to the implementation of this wider resilience approach. The risks from flooding and coastal change are recognised in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment and the National Risk Register. This Programme will contribute towards delivery of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and Single Departmental Plan outcome for floods and water by reduced risk of harm from flooding and in particular coastal change. CTAP funds projects to help communities on areas of the coast that cannot sustainably be defended from coastal erosion.

New innovative actions and mechanisms to accelerate the transition of homes, businesses and infrastructure away from eroding sections of coast will be tested and the learning will be shared with other coastal local authorities and communities across the country.

CTAP is being run in consecutive stages:

- Stage 0 – Project definition – selection of the coastal accelerator locations and defining the list of innovative actions (2021/22)
- Stage 1 - Individual studies and project development for East Riding of Yorkshire and North Norfolk (2021/22 – 2022/23)
- Stage 2 - Delivery of projects in East Riding of Yorkshire and North Norfolk (2023/24 – 2026/27)
- Stage 3 – Consideration and selection of coastal projects in Cornwall and Dorset (2023/24)
- Stage 4 – Strategic planning development of coastal projects in Cornwall and Dorset (2024/25)
- Stage 5 – Delivery of coastal projects in Cornwall and Dorset (2025/27)

2.2.1 Shoreline management plans

A Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a non-statutory, high level, long term strategic planning document. SMPs provide a framework for managing coastal flooding and erosion risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment over a large area. They also take climate change into account in

planning long-term actions. SMPs are used to inform investment and planning decision on the coast. SMPs provide the latest information on coastal changes, including social, economic and environmental data. It will also contain suggested flood and coastal erosion risk management approaches (known as policies) for 20, 50 and 100 years to provide a 'route map' for coastal management into the future.

These are:

- Hold the existing line of defence: Covers situations where works or operations are undertaken to improve or maintain the standard of protection provided by an existing defence line. The type or method of coast protection may be changed to achieve this result. Also covers where a defence is maintained but not improved in pace with sea level rise, meaning the standard of protection decreases in real terms but the defence line remains. The SMP must make it clear which iteration of 'Hold the line' has been chosen. In any event, there is always a 'residual risk' of failure or overtopping of defences in extreme weather events.
- Advance the existing line of defence: Construct new defences seaward of the original defences – limited to areas where significant land reclamation is under consideration.
- Managed re-alignment: Identify a new alignment of the shoreline and, where appropriate, construct new defences seaward or landward of the original defences. Usually sets the shoreline back.
- No active intervention (NAI): Where there is to be no investment in coastal defence assets, and no other operations such as beach recharge. This policy denotes the 'direction of travel' for the authority responsible for a stretch of coastline, but it may be that third parties still wish to apply for permission to build or maintain defences. It may also be necessary to undertake emergency works (under the Coast Protection Act or health and Safety legislation) to sustainably and safely withdraw maintenance from an existing defence structure. Coastal transition through taking practical adaptation actions is essential in parts of the coast where there is a NAI policy.

The Charmouth frontage falls under Management Unit 6A18 of the Durlston Head to Rame Head shoreline management plan (SMP2, 2011). This unit runs approximately 150m from the western end of the seawall to the eastern side of the mouth of the River Char. The summary management approach here is to:

"Maintain the short length of sea wall and promenade until the end of their life, while developing adaptation measures to transition to No Active Intervention and the impacts of coastal change that will have on some parts of Charmouth. Within the River Char, a Managed Realignment approach will be adopted to allow defences to be realigned to provide protection against future flood risk to the area of Charmouth not directly impacted by coastal change. The 2011 Pathfinder Project together with the more recent Foreshore and Beach Management Plans

produced by Charmouth Parish Council should provide basis for planning and guiding community-led elements of transition and adaptation”.

The preferred policy option for this frontage is Hold the Line for the first epoch, followed by No Active Intervention.

East and west of this frontage the preferred policy option for all three epochs is No Active Intervention as the frontages consist of actively eroding cliffs.

The Swanage North frontage falls under subsection Handfast Point to Durlston Head 4 of the Hurst Spit to Durlston Head SMP (2011). The cliff section north of Sheps Hollow falls in the Handfast to Ballard Estate M.1 (SW4) section. The preferred policy option for this frontage is No Active Intervention for all three epochs.

The frontage from Sheps Hollow south is covered by New Swanage N1 (SWA3) where the preferred policy options are Hold the Line for epochs 1 and 2 with Managed Realignment from year 50 onwards. The summary management approach here is to:

“Maintain the viability and important heritage and community of Swanage whilst recognising the important landscape setting of the town and seafront, and the important geological value of the coast. The intent is to achieve this by maintaining the existing seawall/promenade and timber groynes, supported by periodic beach renourishment, to prevent erosion of the base of the cliffs in the short to medium term, whilst limiting further extension of defences, particularly further north along the shore in this unit. This will require use of risk management approaches which minimise landscape impact, whilst accepting some change and the potential requirement for adaptation measures where properties are affected. The approach in this area (north of the Tranville Ledges) is to provide suitable transition between the No Active Intervention approach in unit M.1 and the Hold the Line approach in units N.2 to N.4. The cliff top will continue to erode back due to drainage and weathering unless addressed by stabilisation measures that would need to be introduced by land owners.”

South of this frontage along Swanage Promenade the preferred policy options for all three epochs is Hold the Line.

2.2.2 Local context and previous work

In September 2009, Dorset County Council submitted a bid to DEFRA’s Coastal Change Pathfinder fund on behalf of a range of partners on the Jurassic Coast of Dorset and East Devon. £376,500 was awarded ‘to explore planning for, and managing, adaptation to coastal change on the Jurassic Coast’. The overall objective of the Jurassic Coast Pathfinder project was:

‘to ensure through meaningful engagement and participation that coastal communities are well-equipped to understand, debate and take part in decisions

about coastal change, adapting and becoming more resilient to those changes as a result, based on sound science and local knowledge’.

Charmouth and Swanage North were two out of six case study sites for the Jurassic Coast Coastal Change Pathfinder Project. Workshops were held with stakeholders to discuss plausible worst case storm scenarios, think about how impacts could be minimised and opportunities maximised, prioritise a short list of options and consider how they might be progressed further. While CTAP is a separate and distinct project to Pathfinder, the findings have been reviewed and built upon for this work.

At Charmouth, a Foreshore Management Plan was produced in 2016. This included a summary of a Charmouth Visitor Questionnaire (2014) which was a recommendation of the Pathfinder project. A strong theme was a wish for Charmouth to remain unspoilt and un-commercialised. Reasons for visiting included the beach, scenery, friendliness of locals, and fossils. The location and facilities were also key but difficulty of parking in the village was raised. The Plan also included a summary of a Charmouth Beach Management plan that acknowledged the SMP policy change from Hold The Line to No Active Intervention in the medium term. Some recommendations are no longer appropriate with the policy changing to NAI in 2025 (e.g. improved sea defences). Others, including a public access ramp to the beach are applicable to this OBC.

At Swanage, a Beach Management Plan was produced in 2020. This covers the central part of Swanage Bay from the Mowlem Theatre in the south up to Shep’s Hollow in the north. It advises how to manage the risk of coastal erosion and flooding to at least 2055 (the design life of the 2005/6 Swanage Beach Recharge Scheme). This includes periodic beach recharge, inspection driven maintenance of seawalls and replacement of timber groynes in 2040/41. A cliff management strategy is also currently in development.

The Swanage North cliff, beach and promenade is privately owned but provides access to the general public as part of the coastal path and right of way. Private landowners have constructed ad-hoc defences on the cliff with the aim of protecting their properties from land instability. The most recent intervention is the slope stabilisation scheme constructed by the owners of the Pines Hotel in between 2015 and 2017, following emergency slope stabilisation works in 2013. The complex nature of landownership, ad-hoc repairs, poor drainage, and numerous environmental designations has led Dorset Council to initiate a Cliff Management Strategy for the area (Swanage & Durlston Bays CMS) which will build upon several previous studies covering the area.

2.3 Environmental and other considerations

The key environmental designations for Charmouth and Swanage North are listed in Table 1 and Table 2 below. Designations relating to the active cliffs are underpinned by the continuing erosion of the cliffs.

The development of the OBC and consideration of options has considered a number of relevant environmental issues, regulatory requirements, legal and other obligations which require further consideration as the outcomes/schemes progress.

Table 1. Charmouth Environmental Designations

Designation Type	Name	Location	Link
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Dorset AONB	Whole of Charmouth	National Landscapes – Dorset (national-landscapes.org.uk)
UNESCO World Heritage Site	Jurassic Coast	Active cliffs	Dorset and East Devon Coast – UNESCO World Site
Special Area of Conservation	Sidmouth to West Bay SAC	Active cliffs	Designated Sites View (naturalengland.org.uk)
	Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC	Intertidal area fronting Charmouth	Designated Sites View (naturalengland.org.uk)
Site of Special Scientific Interest	West Dorset Coast SSSI	Active cliffs	SSSI detail (naturalengland.org.uk)

The entire Charmouth area also forms part of the non-statutory Heritage Coasts designation and the footpath which passes down Axminster Road, Higher Sea Land and east past the Heritage Coast Centre forms part of the National Trail. There are also several grade 2 and 2* listed properties within Charmouth town.

Table 2. Swanage North Environmental Designations

Designation Type	Name	Location	Link
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Dorset AONB	Whole of Swanage	National Landscapes – Dorset (national-landscapes.org.uk)
UNESCO World Heritage Site	Jurassic Coast	Active cliffs from Sheps Hollow to Ballard Cliff	Dorset and East Devon Coast – UNESCO World Site
Marine Conservation Zone	Purbeck Coast	Intertidal area fronting Swanage	Marine Conservation Zones: Purbeck Coast – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Special Area of Conservation	Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC	Active cliffs north of Sheps Hollow	Designated Sites View (naturalengland.org.uk)
	St Albans Head to Durlston SAC	Intertidal area fronting Swanage	St Albans Head to Durlston Head – Special Areas of Conservation (incc.gov.uk)https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteGeneralDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UK0030372&SiteName=&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=Western%20Channel%20&IFCAArea=
Special Protection Area	Solent and Dorset Coast SPA	Intertidal area fronting Swanage	Designated Sites View (naturalengland.org.uk)
Site of Special Scientific Interest	Purbeck Ridge (East) SSSI	Active cliffs north of Sheps Hollow	SSSI detail (naturalengland.org.uk)

The cliffs from Sheps Hollow to Durlston Bay form part of the non-statutory Heritage Coasts designation. The National Trail follows the cliff line footpath along the cliffs north of Swanage connecting Swanage to the Studland.

There are a great number of listed properties within Swanage town and a number scattered inland of the study area along northern Swanage.

Some of the CTAP proposals will require consents and licences from external parties. These will be applied for at the next stage and have been considered in the development of option costs and programme.

Plans showing the environmental designations for each site are included in Appendix B - Figures.

2.4 The case for change

The risks of erosion are expected to increase and accelerate as a result of sea level rise and climate change. We need to act now to explore how local authorities can best support those who live, work or play along coastal areas which cannot be defended in the future.

Bude in Cornwall and Charmouth and Swanage North in Dorset were selected to receive funding (circa £6 million) within CTAP after careful consideration of the concentration of coastal erosion risk over the next 20 years, where the Shoreline Management Plan identifies the need for coastal transition, project viability and readiness to proceed, in the context of the relatively short amount of time left to

deliver projects on the programme. After East Riding and North Norfolk, Dorset and Cornwall contain a large proportion of properties at risk of coastal erosion.

Both Cornwall and Dorset have projects (Bude, Charmouth and Swanage North) where significant engagement has already been undertaken with local communities on what actions need to be taken to adapt to an eroding coastline. This previous engagement means projects are ready to proceed.

In addition, both locations face social and economic/tourism challenges due to the location of essential infrastructure being at risk of coastal change. In Bude, local parking infrastructure which is significant part of the tourism offer in Bude, alongside the local RNLI lifeboat station are located in vulnerable locations. In Charmouth, a popular tourist entry point to the Jurassic Coast with local parking infrastructure, beach access and a visitor centre are at risk. While in Swanage North, at a point between two different SMP management approaches, there is a risk of coastal flooding of the town centre and beach access loss for local residents and tourists alike.

These two additional projects will support Defra's policy statement commitment to review national policy for Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) to ensure local plans are transparent, continuously review outcomes and enable local authorities to make robust decisions for their areas. It will also inform the EAs National Strategy ambition and commitments to continuously review and refresh SMPs, ensuring the learning is embedded in future local plans and supporting communities to adapt to coastal change.

2.4.1 Swanage North

More than 120 residential and commercial premises are located in the project area of Swanage North Cliffs. Unless actions are taken to reduce cliff recession, significant loss of property and infrastructure will occur over the long term. These cliffs are actively unstable in some locations and without intervention, will continue to experience further instability and cliff-top recession.

Coastal erosion of the cliff toe along Swanage Bay has been largely reduced since the early 20th century through construction of coastal defences. However, the section of cliff along the Swanage North study area is still subject to landslides, which is compounded by ground instability primarily caused by groundwater and poorly managed land drainage. A variety of slope stabilisation measures have been implemented by private landowners which has stabilised the cliffs in localised sections. During the extreme wet winter of 2012/13, various landslides and cliff falls affected this area and caused damage. Structural measures, drainage and re-profiling would be necessary to help stabilise the cliffs and slow further recession.

The current SMP15 Action Plan has the following action to occur once the Swanage/Durlston Cliff Management Strategy is completed - Develop a coastal adaptation plan for Swanage North and Durlston Cliffs to manage property/infrastructure losses, ensuring this links to both the Dorset Local Plan and Swanage Neighbourhood Plan, and continues engagement with the

community, statutory stakeholders and private landowners developed during production of the Cliff Management Strategy.

The above transitional element noted for the Swanage North section of coastline will mean that this community will need to adapt to an ever-changing coastline and managed realignment in the longer term. The hinge point of this transition from HTL to NAI is yet unknown and needs to be established and communicated via the SMP action plan. This area is therefore a good candidate for the CTAP project and will allow plans and practical measures to be developed which will support the community through this process.

This area is noted in the previous Purbeck District Council Local Plan as an area indicatively designated CCMA, which includes a 400m buffer zone for new development to demonstrate adequate drainage and no new development with in the SMP erosion zones. This policy and review of development on this section of coast will require further investigation and implementation into the new Dorset Local Plan, which the CTAP project can aid and develop.

2.4.2 Charmouth

As detailed within the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) document, the coastline that Charmouth sits within is characterised by dramatic, geologically important cliffs which are subject to large-scale complex landsliding. These events are difficult to predict with any certainty, making management of this shoreline problematic. Sediment interlinkages along this frontage are relatively weak due to the interruptions caused by headlands and episodic landslide lobes extending across the beach and foreshore.

The nature of the erosion of these cliffs is integral to their designations and landscape value; however, the area is also important for tourism and Charmouth is also dependent upon this. A key driver of the current SMP policy is therefore to allow the continuation of natural coastline evolution whilst managing the risk of erosion and flooding to the key settlements. The Heritage Coast Centre and seafront car park in particular will be under increased pressure as the adjacent cliffs recede further and maintenance to the seawall eventually stops.

At Charmouth, there is a need to address the increasing risk of further recession of the landslide complexes causing outflanking or even loss of the presently defended areas. Climate change and sea level rise will require managed realignment to occur around the mouth of the River Char and new set back defences to be delivered to manage the flood risk here. Therefore, the risk in these areas may be managed in the short to medium term through either maintenance of existing defences or further improvements. However, the long-term defence of these areas will be determined by the extent and location of future cliff recession and so it is necessary to consider measures to enable assets to be relocated away from the areas at risk.

The current policy for the SMP is hold the line but this will transition to a combination of No Active Intervention and Managed Realignment in the medium term (2025

onwards). This is duplicated in the long-term plan where the flood and erosion risk is managed by realignment of the mouth of the River Char which fronts most of the developed parts of the Charmouth area. The progressive nature of the SMP policy within the Charmouth area means that the community will need to adapt to an ever-changing coastline. This area is therefore a good candidate for the CTAP project and will allow plans and practical measures to be developed which will support the community through this process.

2.5 Objectives

2.5.1 Programme objectives

CTAP will trial opportunities in a small number of coastal areas at significant risk of coastal erosion to transition and adapt to a changing climate.

There are four key Programme objectives:

- Produce long-term sustainable strategic plans, by 2027, aligned with the Shoreline Management Plan, and embedded in existing local policy frameworks. The plan will clearly set out the policies and actions to support the ongoing transition of affected communities in the areas at risk and that supports economic, social and environmental prosperity of the area as a whole.
- Between 2023 and 2027, test and demonstrate innovative practical coastal transition actions. Practical coastal transition actions will be implemented in locations at significant risk of coastal change.
- Between 2023 and 2027, the participating authorities will capture evidence, tools and learning from the implementation of innovative practical coastal transition actions and share this learning with other coastal authorities to support coastal transition activities in other locations across the country. Progress will be measured through project-level monitoring and evaluation frameworks and a Defra-led programme level evaluation.

By 2027, the participating authorities will have improved evidence on the effectiveness of innovative actions to achieve coastal transition, demonstrated by the embedding of learning and approaches in existing FCERM policy and investment decision-making, as well as local-development planning policies in the chosen locations.

2.5.2 Project actions, outputs and outcomes

Actions, Outputs and Outcomes

The following actions were captured in the project plan and are embedded within the proposed programme of work. These will be developed through the Dorset

CTAP programme of work by 2027, in appropriate locations to ensure the delivery of the programme outputs and outcomes.

Table 3. Actions, Outputs and Outcomes

Action	Outputs	Outcomes
Informing national and local policy strategies and plans for coastal management	Providing baselining, evidence, optioneering, integrated planning and practical experiences to inform future development of local and national policy and strategies for management of coastal transitioning, including local plans, DC planning guidance and CCMA development	Supporting delivery of actions to inform policy and strategy both locally and nationally.
Build capacity to deliver coastal transition within Dorset in the long-term	Staff resource will be secured to ensure an ability to deliver the programme. CTAP work will provide experience to existing staff and delivery partners to aid transition of other communities within Dorset.	Recruitment of officer(s). Readiness of project team and partners.
Community, business and partner engagement	Engagement with the communities to help develop the OBC and then regular engagement during the development of the respective outcomes. Regular engagement events are proposed from Early 2024 onwards – facilitated by Dorset Coast Forum. This will be ongoing throughout the project.	Engagement of local community with the CTAP process and development of understanding of the adaptation and transition requirements of their community. Updated and improved understanding of erosion risk in Swanage North and Charmouth.
Charmouth: Community infrastructure adaptive solutions	Improving resilience of the heritage centre to reduce damage and flooding impacts. Investigation into the long term viability of the Centre and proposals for longer term management.	Minor adaptation actions, including shutters on windows and flood boards. Other measures to be considered to make the building more resilient.
Charmouth: Community infrastructure adaptive solutions	Replacement or redesign of beach access.	Access ramp or more resilient beach access has full planning permission that was renewed in 2021. This provides the basis to achieve this objective.
Charmouth: Asset and Property Rollback	Undertake activities that support the rolling back of the Heritage Coast Centre car park, e.g., future relocation of car park	Includes land availability study, ground investigation and land purchase.
Charmouth: Adaptation planning mechanisms	Developing an adaptation plan, including rollback, for properties on Higher Sea Lane, at the top of cliffs under	Completion of adaptation plan and adoption by the LPA into the Local Plan (where possible).

	a NAI SMP management approach. Homes at risk due to land instability accelerated by cliff toe erosion.	Extensive engagement with affected properties.
Swanage North: Community infrastructure adaptive solutions	Replacement or redesign of beach access.	Replacing beach access point on the SW coastal path where the steps keep being destroyed and replaced. This is on the border of the HTL/NAI intervention zone.
Swanage North: Adaptation planning mechanisms	Developing an adaptation plan (including funding mechanisms) for the area of Swanage North, which is identified in the Local Plan as a CCMA	Completion of adaptation plan and adoption by the LPA. Extensive engagement with affected properties. Draw on local knowledge and experience from previous Pathfinder.
Swanage North Adaptation planning mechanisms	Support the delivery of the Swanage & Durlston Cliff Management Strategy (CMS)	Successful delivery of the CMS.

2.6 Current arrangements

2.6.1 Swanage North

Existing defences

Along the Swanage North frontage, the cliff line is at sections protected by formal defences, informal defences and no defences. As each section of cliff is owned by the property/landowner down to Mean High Water, each property/landowner is responsible for their small section which has resulted in an array of approaches to addressing potential health and safety risk and property damage risk from cliff fall.

A concrete seawall runs along the entire study area frontage to the Pines Hotel in the north. North of this, where property is generally set back further from the cliffs, the cliffs are unprotected.

Between Burlington Chine and the base of the cliff line at the junction of Ulwell Road and Shore Road, the toe of the cliffs has been heavily developed. A narrow promenade runs along the seawall along the entire length, and this is backed by runs of beach huts, cafes and shops sometimes situated on terraced sections above the promenade.

Areas of recent cliff fall are present. In some sections, it is noted that beach huts have been modified to attempt to protect the inhabitants from cliff fall.

Along this section there are a series of access steps, associated with each privately owned section of cliff.

A series of timber groynes are in place along the entire frontage which are in good condition and actively retain beach material. Indeed, as described in section 2.2.2, the Swanage Beach Management Plan sets out how the groynes and beach levels are to be maintained/replaced up to the year 2055.

Access to the beach at Sheps Hollow is via a rickety set of steps, the foundations for which have been undermined. Local residents have attempted to form a replacement set of steps at the bottom out of the fallen talus. But the access point does present a significant health and safety issue.

Coastal Processes and Cliffs

This section of coastline is sheltered from the dominant south-westerly storms and exposed to the less frequent and generally less severe easterly – south-easterly storms (although, these are thought to be occurring more frequently).

The relatively soft cliffs make them vulnerable to toe erosion (where exposed), particularly with rising sea levels and increased wave energy expected with climate change. Beach material originates from erosion during the historical formation of Swanage Bay and is therefore a finite resource. Cliff erosion at the northern end of the bay supplies sands and some flint gravels; however, most inputs are fine materials that are transported offshore in suspension so that only thin, narrow beaches remain with limited littoral sediment drift (generally from south to north). Beach recharge has been the only significant source of material in recent times. The Swanage Beach Management Plan intends to maintain beach levels until the year 2055 with the next recharge recommended in 2024/2025.

Erosion contour estimates and flood zones are shown for Swanage in Appendix C – Coastal Change Risk Maps.

The National Coastal Erosion Risk Management 2 project has recently updated the estimates of recession and the data will soon be available for use. This most recent data will be taken into account at the next stage of the CTAP project. A key consideration at Swanage North for future change management and adaptation, is the ownership arrangement of the active cliffs and beach. The property and landowners at the top of the cliff own the land seaward of the cliff line to Mean High Water. Therefore, to ensure a holistic approach to adaptation along the entire cliff line will require agreement from all landowners and potentially tenants as to future management.

2.6.2 Charmouth

Existing Defences

The existing defences were constructed in 1994 and comprise a stepped concrete seawall/revetment with steel sheet pile toe, rock groyne and rock

armour protection. The defences front the Heritage Coast Centre, car park and seafront beach huts.

Wave action has smoothed the stepped revetment such that the form of the steps has been lost in places and rebar is exposed in a few localised spots. The beach is so low that the top of the sheet pile toe is now exposed.

Rock armour has been placed around the steps and at the western end of the wall. The rock armour at the western end of the wall forms an informal terminal groyne, such that this holds a beach to the west in front of the cliffs but reduces feed to the east so that the beach fronting the seawall is heavily denuded.

A wooden bridge has been constructed across the rock armour at the western end to allow access from the seawall to the western beaches.

Two concrete groynes can still be seen in place at the eastern end of the car parks and projecting from the seawall although they do not currently seem to be retaining beach material to a significant degree.

Coastal Processes

This section of coast faces south and is therefore exposed to waves from the south-west to south-east. This results in a net west to east littoral transport, though frequent reversals occur. Due to the presence of headlands there is now a lack of alongshore input of sediment resulting in narrow beaches fronting the cliffs that offer little in the way of toe protection contributing to the ongoing instability of complex landslides. The adjacent cliffs are therefore retreating at a rapid rate. This produces some coarse material retained on the beach but much of it is fine clay and transported offshore in suspension.

The River Char

The River Char runs from Bettiscombe to Charmouth. Due to the movement of beach material from west to east, the mouth of the river is periodically closed by the formation of a barrier beach.

In periods of low flow, water draining from the River Char catchment becomes trapped and the river can “pond” for up to 300m upriver causing localized flooding upstream.

Large fluvial flows will force an opening through the barrier beach, but this will close again due to the ongoing sediment drift.

Historically the mouth of the river has naturally been located further east and over the years efforts have been made to artificially “cut” an opening, but these in time reseal.

Upstream of the river mouth, a wooden footbridge allows access to the east of the river. Some localised erosion of the banks is present.

Cliff Erosion

To the west of Charmouth lies the high clay-rich cliffs of The Spittles including Black Ven. These cliffs are fronted by a narrow shingle beach and rocky shore platforms. These cliffs are subject to complex landsliding processes driven by rainfall/groundwater and coastal erosion. Events are episodic with many decades between larger events and so difficult to predict.

The fronting beach protects the cliffs from toe erosion, but with reduced sediment feed replenishing the beaches and increasing climate change impacts the beaches are narrowing, reducing the protection they provide.

It is estimated that there is a 5% chance that within 50 years the cliff line to the east of Charmouth will have reached areas of housing at Higher Sea Lane and Hammonds Mead.

Erosion contour estimates and flood zones are shown for each site in Appendix C – Coastal Change Risk Maps.

Also included in Appendix C is a map of land instability. The map of land instability indicates that no properties lie in the worst zone but some in the second worst zone which will result in the imposition of considerable constraints on development and that many planning applications in these areas may have to be refused on the basis of ground stability. As noted, the National Coastal Erosion Risk Management 2 project has recently updated the estimates of recession and the data will soon be available for use. This most recent data will be taken into account at the next stage of the CTAP project.

2.7 Main benefits

The main benefits that the investment will provide include:

- Reduction in risk to life as a result of more proactive transition.
- Reduction in mental and physical health issues linked to residents staying in properties at high-risk from erosion.
- Increased health and wellbeing of coastal residents through retention of recreation and amenity assets.
- Retention and expansion of employment opportunities (direct and indirect) through preservation of businesses, particularly in the tourism sector.
- Increase in resident satisfaction as they are more able to stay in coastal village close to employment, education and support networks.
- Increased community cohesion and confidence through investment in community infrastructure and community-level placemaking discussions, rather than individual engagement.
- Increase in attractiveness in area due to reduction in derelict / run-down properties, unauthorised development and anti-social behaviour.
- Increase in natural capital of the coast through environmental enhancements.

- Increased recognition of the value of working with natural coastal processes.
- Increased clarity on the integration between coastal transition and coastal / flood risk management policies.
- Provides a model for collaborative working between Dorset Council and the Environment Agency on transition / adaptation to risk.

2.8 Strategic risks, assumptions, constraints and dependencies

2.8.1 Risks

A risk register has been developed to identify and manage risks, refer to Appendix F.

The strategic risks associated with the delivery of the programme are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4. Strategic Risks

Risk Theme	Strategic Risk
Resource	Skills Gaps - Technical Expertise Resource availability
	Lack of resources within project partners to engage in project inc. skills gaps/technical expertise
	Coastal incident/weather event which diverts on coastal management expertise and resource away from CTAP
Political	Lack of corporate / political buy-in.
	Changes to National Government and/or Priorities on flooding and coastal erosion risk management.
	Changes to local political party and priorities.
Social	Lack of engagement and understanding from communities, businesses, and other stakeholders. Community do not support adaptation options.
	Activities surrounding the project cause, or are perceived to cause, actual blight.
Economic	National economic event/crisis
Legal	Limitations and associated liabilities with CPA and LA Powers
	Existing legislation unfit to support CTAP activities

2.8.2 Constraints

A number of constraints need to be considered in the further development of the CTAP programme:

- Availability of and restrictions associated with partnership funding (FCRM GiA, Dorset Council)
- Working within Environmental Designated Sites
- Landowners and local businesses
- Land availability

2.8.3 Dependencies

To deliver the programme objectives, the following internal and external dependencies will need to be considered and actively managed by the client team:

- Political acceptability
- Available skills and resources
- Communities support and engagement
- Government policy and strategies
- Local and national planning policies frameworks/plans
- Funding availability, particularly within the OBC development stage

2.9 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring, evaluation, and learning will underpin the delivery of the Dorset CTAP and will be a key element in measuring success. Progress will be measured through project level monitoring and evaluation frameworks alongside a Defra led programme level evaluation steered by Theory of Change.

Work Packages will include:

- Monitoring –
 - Monitoring, capturing and quantifying the economic, carbon, social and environmental benefits of the Dorset CTAP as it progresses.
 - Capturing and recording the unquantifiable, intangible benefits of the Dorset CTAP as it progresses, for example impacts on community health and wellbeing, etc.
 - Establishment of targets and triggers where appropriate against which progress may be measured.
- Evaluation –
 - Determining the costs and returned benefits of each option/intervention.
 - Evaluating which actions work, and under what conditions.
- Learning-
 - Reviewing benefit cost implications of each option/intervention and reassessing business case for continuation, amendment or cessation.

- Disseminating findings to the wider CTAP programme to promote learning and development of the CTAP programme and to inform future capital spending Programmes.

A primary task under the Dorset CTAP programme is to develop these outlines into a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MEL) Strategy and to begin monitoring in the early phases of the project and embed good evaluative practice from the start.

Defra Flood Policy is leading the programme level evaluation and monitoring project (Risk & Policy Analysts Ltd (RPA)) for the entire £200m Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme, which is establishing 'Theories of Change' (TOCs) with each of the existing projects and will be used to highlight/recommend changes to policy and practice during and upon completion of the programme. It is intended that the Dorset CTAP MEL framework will complement the programme level evaluation. The Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme will be aligned with this same Evaluation project, given that governance arrangements are already in place. A total of £2.5m Capital Department Expenditure Limit (CDEL) has already been allocated to the Defra-led Evaluation project from the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme.

RPA are currently developing a TOC for the Dorset CTAP programme. The TOC has not been made available during the development of this OBC but will be used to develop the MEL at the next stage.

3.0 Economic Case

The economic case in this section is based on application of the benefits framework for CTAP. The aim is to develop a high-level cost for each With-Project Option and to outline potential damages avoided, such as tangible '**value-at risk**' benefits where possible and qualitatively describe intangible '**value potential**' benefits.

The approach taken involves assessing the potential damages avoided and other benefits associated with each Option compared with the Business as Usual (BAU) baseline. BAU refers to the situation currently and the impacts on the local population if nothing changed. The With-Project Options refer to the actions implemented under CTAP and the associated benefits gained and damages avoided. Potential learning benefits are identified for each Option and will be developed throughout OBC delivery so future projects can draw on '**learning potential**' benefits following OBC delivery.

A key element of the economic case is to account for the effects of climate change. The appraisal of Options will consider how measures that reduce flood and cliff retreat risk today will become less effective over time due to climate effects that are predicted to augment flood and coastal retreat frequency and magnitude via increased rainfall intensity, sea level and wave energy.

A high-level cost for each Option has also been developed based on industry benchmarks and experience so that potential value for money of each Option can be assessed. The level of cost uncertainty has also been outlined and Options constraints and opportunities identified.

3.1 Business as usual baseline

As a Coast Protection Authority (CPA) under the 1949 Coast Protection Act, Dorset Council has permissive powers to provide flood and coastal erosion risk management measures. Maintenance of risk management assets are completed where affordable, practical and in line with Shoreline Management Policy utilising locally sourced funds. Larger scale investments in risk management infrastructure follow the FCERM guidance which includes Partnership Funding. Current and future Shoreline Management Policies at Charmouth and Swanage North Cliff mean that coastal change transition and adaptation needs are increasing.

In both Charmouth and Swanage North Cliff coastal erosion and cliff instability are likely to result in the permanent loss of residential and commercial properties, tourism infrastructure, highways, utilities infrastructure, community assets, public open spaces, car parks and landscape features. Some environmental habitats will also be impacted.

The BAU baseline is not a 'no cost option' and comprises planned activities such as beach recharge and decommissioning of derelict defences, and reactionary activities such as emergency repairs to defence structures, stabilisation measures and clearance of landslide debris.

Direct costs to the authority also include the officer time required to engage with residents and businesses to inform them of the level of risk and, in the future to facilitate relocation where necessary. Due to the urgency and sensitivity required in these discussions, which are undertaken on an individual basis, this form of engagement is intensive and prolonged, requiring a large amount of officer time. In addition, council officers play a coordinating role in responding to the impacts of erosion, liaising across different teams and organisations including the EA, NE, Jurassic Coast Forum (JCF) and the police to ensure that the coast is a safe and pleasant place to live, work and visit.

The bullet points below provide a list of direct costs incurred under the BAU baseline.

- Beach recharge
- Emergency repair to defences including stabilisation measures
- Repairs to beach access
- Security measures
- Debris removal from beach and promenade
- Demolition of property (e.g. damaged beach huts)
- Staff time – Dorset Council, Environment Agency and Specialists

- Staff time – emergency services
- Loss of Council revenue (e.g. tax and parking)
- Groyne maintenance
- Monitoring (e.g. beach levels)

There is also the potential to incur a range of intangible impacts including the following:

- Health and wellbeing costs – stress to residents, depression, mental wellbeing etc.
- Decrease in property values
- Negative press and reputational damage to the area (e.g. decreased tourism and booking numbers at caravan parks)
- Loss of other community activity i.e., lost opportunities because community effort is focused on coastal erosion issues
- Crime – arson and possible insurance fraud
- Area blight
- Lifeboat crew time
- Volunteer time
- Temporary loss of access

3.2 Value at risk damages

The BAU case described above is used as the basis for identifying the damages that are predicted to occur under BAU.

The value at risk damages described below take account of the SMP policies detailed in Section 2.2.1 so that coastal erosion estimates begin when the No Active Intervention policy comes into effect.

From the available coastal erosion estimates the following assets could be damaged or lost over the next 100-years (note that losses/damages avoided, or benefits, of investing in CTAP activities are described in Section 3.5.1):

Swanage North Damages:

- More than 120 residential and business properties (e.g., The Grand and Pines Hotels), services and the coastal footpath (at the northern end of the site only) are located close to actively unstable and eroding cliffs and will be damaged or lost in the future due to landslides, rockfalls, coastal erosion and cliff-top recession.
- The seawall, promenade, groynes, beach huts, a number of businesses (e.g., Down the Beach and The Cabin) and beach access at Shep's Hollow are located at the base of the actively unstable cliffs and will be

damaged or lost in the future due to coastal erosion, landslides and rockfalls.

Charmouth Damages:

- More than 120 residential and commercial properties, services, the Heritage Coast Centre, a primary school, a caravan park, various coastal defences, beach access, a section of the South West Coast Path and car parks are located adjacent to the beach or close to actively unstable cliffs and will be damaged or lost in the future due to coastal erosion, landslides and cliff-top recession.
- The caravan park, footbridge and a Wessex Water sewage pumping station are located within the tidal reach of the River Char and could be damaged or lost in the future due to rising water levels, increased storminess and rainfall and coastal and riverbank erosion.

Note that presently there is uncertainty of the scale and rate of coastal and cliff retreat and therefore the potential 100-year damages estimated above. Significantly reducing this uncertainty and improving quantification of benefits is a key area of focus for CTAP funding as detailed in Section 3.4.

In accordance with the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP) Outline Business Case Guidance (May 2021), no detailed estimate of the damages under the BAU baseline is carried out. Instead, only the additional damages avoided over and above BAU that the proposed solution would deliver are estimated – see Section 3.5 Economic appraisal.

3.3 Critical success factors (CSF)

This section lists the attributes essential to the successful delivery of the scheme against which the available options can be assessed.

Table 5. Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factor	Description/measurement	Priority (5 = high, 1 = low)
Strategic fit and meets business needs	How well the preferred way forward: • meets the agreed spending objectives, related business needs and service requirements • provides holistic fit and synergy with other strategies, programmes and projects	5
Potential Value for Money	How well the preferred way forward:	5

	• optimises social value (social, economic and environmental), in terms of the potential costs, benefits and risks	
Supplier capacity and capability	How well the preferred way forward: • matches the ability of potential suppliers to deliver the required services • appeals to the supply side	4
Potential affordability	How well the preferred way forward: • can be financed from available funds • aligns with sourcing constraints	4
Potential achievability	How well the preferred way forward: • is likely to be delivered given an organisation's ability to respond to the changes required • matches the level of available skills required for successful delivery	3
Community support	How well the preferred way forward: • incorporates feedback received from the community following effective community engagement • effectively communicates this to the community.	5
Sustainable and environmentally neutral options	How well the preferred way forward: • ensures no damage to adjacent designated sites • includes engagement with NE and consent holders as required	5

3.4 Preferred Way Forward

This section introduces and evaluates the cost and benefit of the With-Project Options at Swanage North Cliff and Charmouth as part of identifying the preferred way forward.

Appendix D provides the full With-Project Options Appraisal which is summarised below and in Table 6 for Swanage North Cliff and Table 7 for Charmouth.

The With-Project Options were developed in collaborative workshops with the CTAP Steering Group, comprising Dorset Council, Jurassic Coast Forum, Environment Agency and Jacobs, and stakeholder engagement events with the local communities at Charmouth and Swanage North Cliff. The following bullet points list the workshop and event objectives:

- Improve stakeholder and community understanding of society impacts caused by adverse climate/environmental change.
- Understand the tolerable level of coastal erosion risk to stakeholders and the community.
- Understand the stakeholder and community expectations on coastal adaptation and transition.
- Understand what is currently valued by stakeholders and the community and what they would like to see improved.
- Gather stakeholder and community ideas on approaches to adaptation and transition.
- Present possible adaptation and transition themes/approaches and gather feedback.
- Present feedback ('Learning Benefits') provided by EA on existing CTAP projects in North Norfolk and East Riding.

The following bullet points list the various stakeholder and community engagement activities undertaken in development of the Preferred Options.

- A provisional long list of With-Project Options was developed in collaboration with the CTAP Steering Group.
- These provisional Options were shared with each community via the JCF for initial feedback.
- A workshop was hosted with each community to discuss and develop the provisional Options and identify further Option ideas.
- A final list of With-Project Options was developed and shared with each community who completed an online poll to identify Preferred Options.
- A meeting with LPRG was hosted to present With-Project Options and gather feedback.

The following bullet points list the LPRG sub group feedback on the With-Project Options:

- LPRG identified 'value potential' in all Options presented and made the recommendation that Options are only cut from the Preferred Options list following initial further research at the next delivery phase. As such the OBC will carry forward all Options presented in Table 6 and Table 7 into the Preferred Way Forward.
- LPRG were positive about the scale and range of stakeholder and community engagement undertaken in support of Options development noting the importance of engagement in mitigating community buy-in constraints during project delivery. Through this process a number of the With-Project Options (e.g. nature-based solutions: vegetated slopes) originated from the community.

- LPRG were positive that a number of the Options will involve the community in Option delivery. For example, the National Coast Science Wardens will engage the local communities to gather data on coastal change (e.g. photographs) and this will encourage wider community buy-in.

Table 6. Options Appraisal summary Swanage North Cliff. See Appendix D for full appraisal.

Option No.	Option Name / Option Theme	Option Aim
1	Cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments / Adaptation	Develop a geomorphological understanding of what will happen to the cliffs over a range of timescales. Develop a framework to understand and quantify the associated risks over 20, 50 and 100 years. Improve the granularity of change predictions over work such as NCERM. Provide a sound scientific basis for all subsequent options. Monitoring system also to provide long-term refinement of change and impacts. This option will be carefully coordinated with the ongoing Cliff Management Strategy at Swanage North Cliff which is in development between 2024-2026 to avoid duplication of work. The findings of this work will feed into a number of other options including the Planning and Building control mapping and guidance, and the Adaptation Plan.
2	Planning and building control mapping and guidance / Adaptation	Ensure planning and building control of future development is appropriate to the changes and level of risk. Outputs for this option would be based on cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments.
3	Adaptation plan / Adaptation	Development of plan to support transition and resilience including programme of adaptation and implementation of adaptation measures based on understanding of coastal and cliff change. Outputs for this option would be based on cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments.
4	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan and an awareness campaign / Adaptation	Improve communities understanding of risk in relation to recent coastal and cliff changes and weather impacts and developing community plans for reacting to increasing risk. Reduce risk to life. Improve stakeholder awareness and acceptance of other options. The flood and cliff retreat warning system elements will tie into similar research being undertaken by Bournemouth University.
5	Access improvements: Sheps Hollow / Access	N/A note this option is no longer required because the steps have been replaced at Sheps Hollow whilst this OBC was in process
6	Vegetated slopes / Nature based solutions	Research the potential benefit of vegetation to mitigate shallow slope instability on the north side of Swanage. CTAP could potentially pay for some trials.
7	Surface and groundwater management / Resilience	Assessment of the viability of surface water and groundwater drainage to improve the stability of the cliffs. Ensure Wessex water minimise surface and groundwater impacts on the cliff.
8	National Coast Science Wardens / Community	Citizen science – community engaged to gather data of coastal change (e.g. photographs) to be collated in an app and interpreted. Development of data management system for longer term. Partnerships with local university for data management and can tie in with an early warning system. <i>Explore Coast Net – fixed photo positions for phones.</i>
9	Environmental and heritage reports / Adaptation	Development of baseline environmental and heritage reports to assist in planning developments and for private drainage-based cliff stabilisation schemes. With the new BNG requirements this could generate a new eco baseline via citizen science support and will

		simplify the pathway for private property owners to protect their assets within planning rules and environmental constraints.
10	Stakeholder steering group (e.g., coastal change or cliff management committee) / Community	Establish a stakeholder steering group to promote coordinated actions such as drainage schemes across multiple properties. The committee would be coordinated by the Council including various statutory stakeholders (by invitation and agenda) and coastal wardens.
11	Examination of alternative tourism revenues / Adaptation	Research on alternative tourism revenues Work to research alternative interests/activities for tourism where coastal and cliff change impacts areas of tourism interest. Significant losses to local revenue may arise from the impacts of the changing coastline. Review of potential options to diversify interests to support local revenue streams and local jobs.

Table 7. Options Appraisal summary Charmouth. See Appendix D for full appraisal.

Option No.	Option Name / Option Theme	Option Aim
1	Beach, river, cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments / Adaptation	Develop a geomorphological understanding of what will happen to the beach, river mouth, and cliff over a range of timescales. Develop a framework to understand and quantify the associated risks over 20, 50 and 100 years. Improve the granularity of change predictions over work such as NCERM. Provide a sound scientific basis for all subsequent options. Monitoring system also to provide long-term refinement of change and impacts. The findings of this work will feed into a number of other options including the Planning and Building control mapping and guidance, and the Adaptation Plan.
2	Planning and building control mapping and guidance / Adaptation	Ensure planning and building control of future development is appropriate to the changes and level of risk. Outputs for this option would be based on beach, river, cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments.
3	Adaptation plan / Adaptation	Development of plan to support transition and resilience including programme of adaptation and implementation of adaptation measures based on understanding of coastal and cliff change. Outputs for this option would be based on beach, river, cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments
4	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan and an awareness campaign / Adaptation	Improve communities understanding of risk in relation to recent coastal and cliff changes and weather impacts and developing community plans for reacting to increasing risk. Reduce risk to life. Improve stakeholder awareness and acceptance of other options. The flood and cliff retreat warning system elements will tie into similar research being undertaken by Bournemouth University.
5	Access improvements: West Beach / Access	Upgrade/replace access to west beach (either via stairs to the beach or a ramp to the west). The aim of this option is to go beyond the BAU approach (like for like replacement of damaged stairs) and research, design and build a novel solution which is resilient to wave attack and coastal retreat.
6	River flooding / Nature based solutions	Assessment of potentially re-opening natural flood zones to reduce flash flooding in the town.
7	Vegetated slopes / Nature based solutions	Research the potential benefit of vegetation on shallow slope instability on the west side of town. CTAP could potentially pay for some trials.
8	Heritage Coast Centre (HCC) and carpark rollback and pop-up / Rollback	Research on moving the HCC and carpark to the primary school, grass carpark behind the Centre or out of town. Research replacing beach front facility with a popup centre that can be moved to avoid significant storms. HCC upstairs only with popup catering.

		Install Park and Ride for HCC. Research repurposing the HCC building and land with something that is appropriate given the level of risk. Note this option doesn't deliver the rollback itself, rather just the research to identify a viable location and the planning elements.
9	Defence adaptation study / Resilience	Research adaptation of current defences such as moving rock already on site to augment defences at vulnerable sites. Research returning the coastline to a natural system to build beach and reduce coastal erosion.
10	Surface and groundwater management / Resilience	Assessment of the viability of surface and groundwater management and its impact on stability of the slopes above the cliffs.
11	Improve HCC flood and erosion resilience / Resilience	Augment HCC with shutters, flood bunds etc. to prevent or limit the impact of floods and erosion.
12	Assess the risk to the sewage pumping station / Resilience	Review the impact of high-water levels on the pumping station and potential solutions. The aim of this option is to work in partnership with Wessex Water to determine the risk to the sewage pumping station and identify a solution. CTAP funding will not be used for delivery of the solution which should be paid for by Wessex Water.
13	National Coast Science Wardens / Community	Citizen science. Community engaged to gather data of coastal change (e.g. photographs) to be collated in an app and interpreted. Development of data management system for longer term. Partnerships with local University for data management. Data could tie in with the early warning system. <i>Explore Coast Net – fixed photo positions for phones.</i>
14	Environmental and heritage reports / Adaptation	Development of baseline environmental and heritage reports to assist in planning developments and for private drainage-based cliff stabilisation schemes. With the new BNG requirements this could generate a new eco baseline via citizen science support and will simplify the pathway for private property owners to protect their assets within planning rules and environmental constraints.
15	Stakeholder steering group (e.g., coastal change or cliff management committee) / Community	Establish a stakeholder steering group to promote coordinated actions such as drainage schemes across multiple properties. The committee would be coordinated by the Council including various statutory stakeholders (by invitation and agenda) and coastal wardens.
16	Examination of alternative tourism revenues / Adaptation	Research on alternatives to the HCC to encourage tourism and generate revenue. Work to research alternative interests/activities for tourism where coastal and cliff change impacts areas of tourism interest. Significant losses to local revenue may arise from the impacts of the changing coastline. Review of potential options to diversify interests to support local revenue streams and local jobs. This option is linked adaptation planning for the HCC to avoid lost revenue.
17	Riverside path / Access	Re-establish the access path along the eastern side of the River Char and combine with access to the HCC and beach to potentially develop a wider adaptation pathway.

3.4.1 Investment scale and phasing

A suite of actions are proposed, ranging in scale from the development of an adaption plan to rollback and relocation of the Heritage Coast Centre at Charmouth. The study areas of Charmouth and Swanage North are relatively small and well-defined. Therefore, some of the proposed actions are well-understood and have well-defined locations (e.g. access improvements at Sheps Hollow); others will require further data and stakeholder engagement to optimise their phasing.

3.4.2 Investment measures

The project proposes a broad range of activities that are designed to be delivered in combination. The actions seek to address different areas of coastal transition, ranging from improving knowledge of the active cliff behaviour processes in the project area to increasing community preparedness and physical interventions to improve public access to the beach.

Combining actions to deliver a range of different benefits will help to develop communities who are better informed and better able to transition away from areas of risk.

3.4.3 Wider ambitions for regeneration and growth

The project has started to identify potential benefits (see Section 3.5.1) which will continue to be explored and refined as the project progresses. These benefits cover economic growth, natural capital, ecosystem services, social values and outcomes, flood risk and erosion risk, and learning benefits.

Studies to better understand alternative tourism revenue are included in the suite of proposed actions. The project also seeks to increase the knowledge and skills of the local communities through the proposed National Coast Wardens initiative.

3.4.4 Stakeholder and community

Stakeholder and community engagement are key themes of the Dorset CTAP project. Working in partnership with the Charmouth and Swanage North communities to develop action plans will also enhance their understanding of coastal change and increase community preparedness and resilience. During the OBC development, collaborative workshops with the CTAP Steering Group, comprising Dorset Council, Jurassic Coast Forum, Environment Agency and Jacobs have been held, in addition to stakeholder engagement events with the local communities at Charmouth and Swanage North Cliff.

A critical partner in the engagement of the community is the Dorset Coast Forum; this is an independent coastal partnership that brings together individuals and organisations for the betterment of the Dorset Coast and has a strong public engagement presence.

3.4.5 Evidence and learning

The proposed cliff monitoring activities will increase evidence which may be able to help other RMAs develop future business cases and support stakeholder engagement.

The proposed National Coast Warden could be adopted by other coastal communities. The learning benefit could be assessed through surveying wardens at the beginning and during their time as wardens to track increased knowledge/understanding and ownership of coastal processes and the level of understanding in the wider coastal community.

3.5 Economic appraisal

3.5.1 Assessment of benefits

The provision of benefits both potentially economic and intangible, expected from the Preferred Way Forward options, are presented against the benefits categories listed below:

- **Value at Risk**, defining the potential losses avoided by:

- Damage to properties
- Damage to infrastructure.

This is a quantitative evaluation drawing asset values where data are available.

- **Value Potential**, defining intangible benefits including:

- Enhanced community assets
- Enhanced well-being
- Enhanced resilience, response and recovery
- Improved service reliability
- Environmental impacts, enhancements and opportunities.

This is a qualitative evaluation of intangible benefits which cannot be costed.

- **Learning Potential Benefits**, defining the benefits that future projects can draw on. This is a qualitative evaluation to identify potentially successful options that could provide benefits at other coastal locations in the UK.
- **Stakeholder Acceptability**, defining the level of acceptability and support for each Option from the local community and asset owners. This metric is based on the stakeholder engagement detailed in Section 3.4 and summarised below:
 - Initial Longlist Options ideas emailed to stakeholders to inform them of preliminary ideas and stimulate stakeholder feedback and ideas.
 - Options workshop held to present possible adaptation themes/approaches, garner feedback on initial Options and gather additional options ideas from stakeholders.
 - Online Options poll to define stakeholder options preferences.
- **Is the option innovative**, defining the level of innovation involved in each option. This qualitative evaluation takes account of CTAPs central tenet that options must be innovative and not represent a 'business as usual' approach.
- **Local constraints evaluation** to identify any issues which may restrict the feasibility and success of an option or may inflate the initial cost estimates. Preliminary constraint mitigation suggestions have also been made to identify where constraints could be avoided or reduced.

Due to uncertainty on the scale and extent of future coastal erosion, landslide and river flooding impacts it is presently not possible to quantify the losses avoided for all scheme Options without potentially creating significant issues for OBC delivery due to speculative and unrealistically high benefits targets. To demonstrate value for money whilst avoiding these issues the following approach has been taken:

- The CTAP project options have been grouped under the following themes:
 - **Adaptation** - measures that help the community to adapt to coastal change.
 - **Resilience** - measures that help the community be more resilient to coastal change.
 - **Community** - measures which promote society benefits through community engagement, awareness and volunteering activities.
 - **Nature based** - measures which work with natural processes to reduce coastal change risks.
 - **Access** - measures which improve access to the coast and associated benefits such as tourism.
- The objective within each themed group of Options is to achieve a BCR of 1 to demonstrate value for money.
- Where possible, the economic value of losses avoided by investing in an Option have been quantified.
- Where it is not possible to estimate the value of losses avoided by investing in an Option, estimates have been made on the duration of time over which the option would have to delay damage losses to achieve a BCR of 1.

Table 8 and Table 9 summarise the appraisal of Option benefits at Swanage North Cliff and Charmouth respectively.

Appendix I provides the value of losses avoided by investing in the Options and the methods used to make these estimates.

As introduced in Section 3.4, preferred way forward, all potential Options will be carried forward to the next phase of delivery where the geomorphological terrain and behaviour assessment will be undertaken. This activity provides accurate and up-to-date predictions on coastal change, including the range of uncertainty, which are critical in defining the most beneficial Options to deliver under the CTAP criteria and then to ensure selected Options are developed to best address identified issues and deliver CTAP benefits.

The geomorphological assessment will define the following:

- The scale and extent of future hazards including coastal erosion, cliff retreat, land instability riverbank erosion and flooding. This work will build on NCERM2 coastal change predictions and other relevant work and

literature to provide an improved and more granular appreciation of coastal change and associated risks at each study site.

- The scale and extent of the consequences including loss of properties and infrastructure and intangible damages to the community. With this work it will be possible to quantify the value of losses and benefits (both tangible and intangible) on a more localised scale.

Table 8. Option Benefits summary Swanage North Cliff. See Appendix D for Options Summary Tables and Appendix I for Losses and Benefits Assessment

Option No.	Option Name / Option Theme	Benefit 1. Value at risk 2. Value potential 3. Learning benefits 4. Stakeholder acceptability 5. Innovation
1	Cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments / Adaptation	1. Provides a better understanding of what assets are at risk and when. This work will feed into delivery of options 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 below which have the potential to reduce future losses. This work is required to determine the extent and scale of future cliff retreat and reduce uncertainty in value at risk estimates. Losses avoided of £50.3k for Swanage and Charmouth (see Table 9) combined have been estimated based on the mental health cost of erosion (See Appendix I). Losses avoided are achieved in combination so shared with Options 3 and 4 below. 2. Potential to reduce economic impacts (emergency costs, infrastructure and transport), environmental impacts (regulating services and biodiversity) and social impacts (political systems, health and well-being, fears, and aspirations). 3. Approach and lessons learnt would be applicable to other coastal sites. 4. Acceptable to the community as they understand the need for and benefit of this work. 5. Moderately innovative. A geomorphological approach is not new, but it isn't widely used in a coordinated wider approach that enhances planning and building control and provides an adaptation plan, a flood and cliff retreat warning system, an emergency response plan, and an awareness campaign.
2	Planning and building control mapping and guidance / Adaptation	1. Helps reduce the risk of damage/loss of future investments in assets in potentially unsuitable locations but doesn't reduce losses to existing property. Appendix I demonstrates that prevention of the development and loss of 1 new average home or 3 new average property extensions to erosion or landsliding in the future would make this option value for money. 2. Appropriate planning enabling building in low-risk areas and preventing it in high-risk areas reduces future risk exposure and negative impacts on well-being. 3. Appropriate planning and building control are applicable to all urban coastal sites. 4. The community understand the need for and benefit of this work however some individuals have concern that this will prevent some investments they might want to make in the future. 5. Moderately innovative. Planning and building control aren't new but is seldom based on a sound geomorphological understanding and within a coordinated wider approach providing an adaptation plan, a flood and cliff retreat warning system, an emergency response plan, and an awareness campaign.
3	Adaptation plan / Adaptation	1. Helps the local authority plan for future changes and adaptation measures and to potentially move assets out of the risk zone or make them more resilient. Losses avoided of £50.3k for Swanage and Charmouth (see Table 9) combined have been estimated based on the mental health cost of erosion (See Appendix I). Losses avoided are achieved in combination so shared with Options 1 and 4.

		- Good potential to enhance assets, well-being and resilience. - Elements of a sound adaptation plan could be applicable to other coastal sites. - The community understand the need for and benefit of this work however some individuals have concern that they will be encouraged to adapt away from the coast. - Moderately innovative. Adaptation plans aren't new but are not always based on a sound geomorphological understanding and used as part of a co-ordinated wider approach including provision of planning and building control mapping and guidance, a flood and cliff retreat warning system, an emergency response plan, and an awareness campaign.
4	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan and an awareness campaign / Adaptation	- Improved awareness, warning of and response to coastal erosion and cliff retreat events has the potential to reduce damage losses and improve response. Losses avoided of £50.3k for Swanage and Charmouth (see Table 9) combined have been estimated based on the mental health cost of erosion (See Appendix I). Losses avoided are achieved in combination so shared with Options 1 and 3. - Good potential for enhanced well-being and resilience. - Potential to demonstrate the value of long-term monitoring and planning to other coastal sites, as well as highlighting the value of improved awareness in the community. - The community understand the need for and benefit of this work. - Moderately innovative. The overall ideas are not new but have previously not always been based on a sound geomorphological understanding and used as part of a co-ordinated wider approach including provision of an adaptation plan and planning and building control mapping and guidance.
5	Access improvements: Sheps Hollow / Access	N/A note this option is no longer required because the steps have been replaced at Sheps Hollow whilst this OBC was in process
6	Vegetated slopes / Nature based solutions	- Reasonable potential to reduce the risk of landslides. Appendix I demonstrates that a vegetated slopes scheme would have to delay landslide impacts by 2 years to be deemed value for money. - Enhances community assets and well-being. - Approach could be applicable at similar coastal cliff/slope environments. - Highly acceptable idea put forward by the community and has no obvious negative impacts. - Moderately innovative. This is a well-known concept but would have to be made site specific e.g. what is the impact of local plant assemblages' impact on stability?
7	Surface and groundwater management / Resilience	- This option has good potential to reduce the risk of landslides which, at present with the seawall and promenade at the base of the cliff, are driven by weathering and surface and groundwater triggers. The potential to reduce damage losses due to landslides by investing in drainage research is estimated in Appendix I. It shows that a drainage scheme would be value for money if it achieved a 13 year delay in landslides. - Provides reasonable enhancements to local assets and well-being and potentially a good improvement on mudslide resilience. - Approach could be applicable to similar coastal cliff/slope sites. - Highly acceptable to the community as it is a tangible improvement on stability. - Some potential for innovation though this could be viewed as a standard industry approach.
8	National Coast Science Wardens / Community	- Potential to augment data which could be used to understand what is at risk and reduce damage losses. This work, along with monitoring undertaken in option 1 will continually improve understanding of property at risk. Appendix I demonstrates that between both sites £131k of losses could be avoided through the social benefits of volunteering, avoided costs of paid employment and educational trips. - Good potential for enhanced response, assets, well-being and resilience.

		3. If successful, this could be implemented at other sites. 4. Highly acceptable to the community as this is a community idea. 5. Highly innovative to involve the community in such a scheme.
9	Environmental and heritage reports / Adaptation	1. Potentially smooths the route to private stabilisation/drainage schemes. 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced assets, well-being and resilience. 3. If successful, the approach could be implemented at other sites. 4. This is a community idea that they are moderately keen to support. 5. Highly innovative.
10	Stakeholder steering group (e.g., coastal change or cliff management committee) / Community	1. Encourages cooperation and potentially smooths the route to private stabilisation/drainage schemes. <i>Although it is currently not possible to quantify benefits of the steering group, this option would have to achieve £69k losses avoided for the community themed Options to be value for money (see Appendix I)</i> 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced assets, well-being and resilience. 3. If successful, the approach could be implemented at other sites. 4. Highly acceptable to the community. 5. Moderately innovative.
11	Examination of alternative tourism revenues / Adaptation	1. N/A value at risk damages are not reduced by this option. 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced community assets and well-being. 3. If successful, the approach could be implemented at other sites. 4. Moderately acceptable to the community. 5. Moderately innovative.

Table 9. Option Benefits summary Charmouth. See Appendix D for Options Summary Tables and Appendix I for losses and benefits assessment.

Option No.	Option Name / Option Theme	Benefit 1. Value at risk 2. Value potential 3. Learning benefits 4. Acceptability 5. Innovation
1	Beach, river, cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments / Adaptation	1. Provides a better understanding of what assets are at risk and when. This work will feed into delivery of options 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 below which have the potential to reduce future losses. This work is required to determine the extent and scale of future cliff retreat and reduce uncertainty in value at risk estimates. <i>Losses avoided of £50.3k for Swanage (see Table 8) and Charmouth combined have been estimated based on the mental health cost of erosion (See Appendix I). Losses avoided are achieved in combination so shared with Options 3 and 4 below.</i> 2. Potential to reduce economic impacts (emergency costs, infrastructure and transport), environmental impacts (regulating services and biodiversity) and social impacts (political systems, health and well-being, fears, and aspirations). 3. Approach and lessons learnt would be applicable to other coastal sites. 4. Acceptable to the community as they understand the need for and benefit of this work. 5. Moderately innovative. A geomorphological approach is not new, but it isn't widely used in a coordinated wider approach that enhances planning and building control and provides an adaptation plan, a flood and cliff retreat warning system, an emergency response plan, and an awareness campaign.
2	Planning and building control mapping and guidance / Adaptation	1. Helps reduce the risk of damage/loss of future investments in assets, in potentially unsuitable locations but doesn't reduce losses to existing property. <i>Appendix I demonstrates that prevention of the development and loss of 1 new average home or 3 new average property extensions to erosion or landsliding in the future would make this option value for money.</i> 2. Appropriate planning enabling building in low-risk areas and preventing it in high-risk areas reduces future risk exposure and negative impacts on well-being.

		3. Appropriate planning and building control are applicable to all urban coastal sites. 4. The community understand the need for and benefit of this work however some individuals have concern that this will prevent some investments they might want to make in the future. 5. Moderately innovative. Planning and building control aren't new but is seldom based on a sound geomorphological understanding and within a coordinated wider approach providing an adaptation plan, a flood and cliff retreat warning system, an emergency response plan, and an awareness campaign.
3	Adaptation plan / Adaptation	1. Helps the local authority plan for future changes and adaptation measures and to potentially move assets out of the risk zone or make them more resilient. <i>Losses avoided of £50.3k for Swanage (see Table 8) and Charmouth combined have been estimated based on the mental health cost of erosion (See Appendix I). Losses avoided are achieved in combination so shared with Options 1 and 4.</i> 2. Good potential for enhanced assets, well-being and resilience. 3. Elements of a sound adaptation plan could be applicable to other coastal sites. 4. The community understand the need for and benefit of this work however some individuals have concern that they will be encouraged to adapt away from the coast. 5. Moderately innovative. Adaptation plans aren't new but are not always based on a sound geomorphological understanding and used as part of a co-ordinated wider approach including provision of planning and building control mapping and guidance, a flood and cliff retreat warning system, an emergency response plan, and an awareness campaign.
4	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan and an awareness campaign / Adaptation	1. Improved awareness, warning of and response to coastal erosion and cliff retreat events has the potential to reduce damage losses and improve response. <i>Losses avoided of £50.3k for Swanage (see Table 8) and Charmouth combined have been estimated based on the mental health cost of erosion (See Appendix I). Losses avoided are achieved in combination so shared with Options 1 and 3.</i> 2. Good potential for enhanced well-being and resilience. 3. Potential to demonstrate the value of long-term monitoring and planning to other coastal sites, as well as highlighting the value of improved awareness in the community. 4. The community understand the need for and benefit of this work. 5. Moderately innovative. The overall ideas are not new but have previously not always been based on a sound geomorphological understanding and used as part of a co-ordinated wider approach including provision of an adaptation plan and planning and building control mapping and guidance.
5	Access improvements: West Beach / Access	1. Value at risk damages such as those to tourism and recreational visits could be reduced by this option if access is lost to the cliff on the west side of the River Char without intervention. <i>Appendix I demonstrates that £1.49m of losses due to displaced tourism and loss of beach access could be avoided.</i> 2. Good potential to provide social, health and well-being benefits by improving recreation and reducing the disruption to local economy. 3. Potential to research innovative/adaptable access approach/design which may be applicable elsewhere. 4. This is the most popular option with the local community. 5. Potentially highly innovative. This option presents the chance for innovative research into adaptable access approach/design.
6	River flooding / Nature based solutions	1. Reasonable potential to reduce river flood and erosion risks and damages if natural flood areas are identified and available for use. <i>Appendix I demonstrates that this option would have to delay flood impacts by 7 years to be deemed value for money.</i> 2. Enhances community assets and well-being. 3. Approach could be applicable at similar coastal/river environments.

		- Acceptability is potentially good if the flood risk can be reduced, however land-use change to floodplains may be unpopular. - Moderately innovative. This is a well-known concept but would have to be made site specific.
7	Vegetated slopes / Nature based solutions	- Reasonable potential to reduce the risk of mudslides in the meadow below the west side of town though it is unlikely to impact a deep-seated Black Ven-type failure. <i>Appendix I demonstrates that a vegetated slopes scheme would have to delay landslide impacts by 2 years to be deemed value for money.</i> - Enhances community assets and well-being. - Approach could be applicable at similar coastal cliff/slope environments. - Highly acceptable idea put forward by the community and has no obvious negative impacts. - Moderately innovative. This is a well-known concept but would have to be made site specific e.g. what is the impact of local plant assemblages' impact on stability?
8	Heritage Coast Centre (HCC) and carpark rollback and pop-up / Adaptation	- This option aims to preserve the function of the HCC and carpark and the revenue they produce for the council and local tourism. <i>Appendix I demonstrates losses avoided are based on the benefit of early planning so that the CHCC can be moved before it is lost to flood/erosion impacts. This means that closure of the Centre would be minimised during planning and undertaking the move.</i> - Potential to enhance the HCC asset and well-being as a result. - There are other coastal communities based around similar centrepiece assets at risk so the solution developed could be applicable elsewhere. - Highly acceptable to the local community. The HCC is vital to the survival of Charmouth as a coastal resort. It is the primary asset in Charmouth and a key concern to the community. - Potentially highly innovative, particularly a pop-up HCC.
9	Defence adaptation study / Resilience	- Rock armour may be moved to benefit other frontages and reduce value at risk at other locations. - Withdrawal/adaptation of defences assists in managing return of coastline to natural state with potential environmental and societal benefits. Proactive withdrawal of defences reduces health and safety risks. - Defence adaptation will be site specific and so applicability will have to be considered on a site-by-site basis. - The community is split on investing in defences. The EA is also unlikely to fund a 'hold the line' or 'business as usual' scheme. - Potential for innovation is moderate. Defences often left to fail and removed when become a health and safety issue. Proactive withdrawal of defences is not standard industry practice.
10	Surface and groundwater management / Resilience	- This option has good potential to reduce the risk of shallow landslide and mudslides between the current cliff crest and assets landward. <i>The potential to reduce damage losses due to landslides by investing in drainage research is estimated in Appendix I. It shows that a drainage scheme would be value for money if it achieved a 13 year delay in landslides.</i> - Provides reasonable enhancements to local assets and well-being and potentially a good improvement on mudslide resilience. - Approach could be applicable to similar coastal cliff/slope sites. - Highly acceptable to the community as it is a tangible improvement on stability. - Some potential for innovation though this could be viewed a standard industry approach.
11	Improve HCC flood and erosion resilience / Resilience	<i>Appendix I evaluates historical annual repair costs and economic impacts caused by flood and storm damage to the HCC. Over a 20 year period it is demonstrated that £60.7k of repairs and revenue losses could be avoided.</i> - Reasonable potential to enhance well-being and resilience. - The approach will not be applicable to other sites. - Highly acceptable to the community as would be a tangible improvement to the HCC resilience.

		5. This is not an innovative approach.
12	Assess the risk to the sewage pumping station / Resilience	1. This assessment is critical in reducing/managing pollution and the associated damage/clear up costs. 2. Good potential for enhanced assets, well-being and resilience. 3. The approach will not be applicable to other sites. 4. Highly acceptable to the community as there have been previous concerns around this infrastructure. 5. Depending on the solution that is ultimately developed, this may or may not be innovative.
13	National Coast Science Wardens / Community	1. Potential to augment data which could be used to understand what is at risk and reduce damage losses. This work, along with monitoring undertaken in option 1 will continually improve understanding of property at risk. <i>Appendix I demonstrates that between both sites £131k of losses could be avoided through the social benefits of volunteering, avoided costs of paid employment and educational trips.</i> 2. Good potential for enhanced response, assets, well-being and resilience. 3. If successful, this could be implemented at other sites. 4. Highly acceptable to the community as this is a community idea. 5. Highly innovative to involve the community in such a scheme.
14	Environmental and heritage reports / Adaptation	1. Potentially smooths the route to private stabilisation/drainage schemes. 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced assets, well-being and resilience. 3. If successful, the approach could be implemented at other sites. 4. This is a community idea that they are moderately keen to support. 5. Highly innovative.
15	Stakeholder steering group (e.g., coastal change or cliff management committee) / Community	1. Encourages cooperation and potentially smooths the route to private stabilisation/drainage schemes. <i>Although it is currently not possible to quantify benefits of the steering group, this option would have to achieve £69k losses avoided for the community themed Options to be value for money (see Appendix I)</i> 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced assets, well-being and resilience. 3. If successful, the approach could be implemented at other sites. 4. Highly acceptable to the community. 5. Moderately innovative.
16	Examination of alternative tourism revenues / Adaptation	1. N/A value at risk damages are not reduced by this option. 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced community assets and well-being. 3. If successful, the approach could be implemented at other sites. 4. Moderately acceptable to the community. 5. Moderately innovative.
17	Riverside path / Access	1. N/A value at risk damages are not reduced by this option. 2. Reasonable potential for enhanced community assets and well-being. 3. Potentially not applicable elsewhere. 4. Moderately acceptable to the community. 5. Moderately innovative

3.5.2 Assessment of costs

A high-level **cost estimate** has been provided for each Option in order to understand the number and range of options that can be supported by CTAP funding. The high-level cost estimates have been developed from consideration of similar projects/schemes undertaken in recent years in the UK. An estimate of cost uncertainty has also been made to identify and avoid the potential for significant cost escalation. This can also allow options with greater cost certainty to be prioritised as needed.

Table 10. Options Cost summary Swanage North Cliff.

Option No.	Option Name	Cost Estimate (£k)	Cost uncertainty
1	Cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments.	150	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
2	Planning and building control mapping and guidance.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
3	Adaptation plan.	100	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
4	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan and an awareness campaign.	100	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
5	Access improvements: Sheps Hollow.	N/A steps replaced	na steps replaced
6	Nature based solutions: Vegetated slopes.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
7	Surface and groundwater management.	250	High
8	National Coast Science Wardens.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
9	Environmental and heritage reports.	100	High (but potential to be moderate at OBC delivery)
10	Stakeholder steering group.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
11	Examination of alternative tourism revenues.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)

Table 11. Options Cost summary Charmouth.

Option No.	Option Name	Cost Estimate (£k)	Cost uncertainty
1	Beach, river, cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments.	150	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
2	Planning and building control mapping and guidance.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
3	Adaptation plan.	100	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
4	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan and an awareness campaign.	100	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
5	Access improvements: West Beach.	300	High
6	Nature based solutions: River flooding.	150	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
7	Nature based solutions: Vegetated slopes.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
8	Heritage Coast Centre (HCC) rollback and pop-up.	100	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
9	Defence adaptation.	100	High
10	Surface and groundwater management.	250	High
11	Improve HCC flood and erosion resilience.	150	High
12	Assess the risk to the sewage pumping station.	100	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
13	National Coast Science Wardens.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
14	Environmental and heritage reports.	100	High (but potential to be moderate at OBC delivery)
15	Stakeholder steering group.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)
16	Examination of alternative tourism revenues.	50	Moderate (but potential to be low at OBC delivery)

17	Riverside path.	200	Moderate
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A wide range of options has been presented with high level costs. This is due to the level of uncertainty at this stage with options dependent upon investigations and community support. The potential budget available for this project, subject to approval, is £3M. It may not be possible within this budget to carry forward all of the options presented. However, given the uncertainties mentioned, the preferred way forward is to keep all options on the table for further consideration during the next phase of delivery and then prioritise those which are determined to provide the greatest benefits within budget. A general summary of cost breakdown by programme activity is provided in Table 12 (cash costs) and Table 13 (PV costs).

Table 12. Summary of cost breakdown by programme activity (cash costs)

Element	Total Budget Estimate (k)	23/24 (k)	24/25 (k)	25/26 (k)	26/27 (k)
Pre-OBC	125	25	100	-	-
Preferred way forward options package	1,996	-	246	830	920
Project Management and Governance	190		38	76	76
Optimism Bias Contingency (30%)	656		85	272	299
Total	2,967	25	469	1,178	1,295

Table 13. Summary of cost breakdown by programme activity (PV costs)

Element	Total Budget Estimate (k)	23/24 (k)	24/25 (k)	25/26 (k)	26/27 (k)
Pre-OBC	125	25	100	-	-
Preferred way forward options package	1,907	-	246	802	859
Project Management and Governance	182	-	38	73	71
Optimism Bias Contingency (30%)	627	-	85.2	263	279

Total	2,841	25	469	1,138	1,209
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3.5.3 Value at risk losses and losses avoided, and value potential benefits

Where it is possible to do so the value at risk losses and losses avoided have been estimated. Appendix I provides a detailed account of the methods used to make these estimates.

3.5.4 Benefit-Cost Ratio

The assessment of losses avoided groups Options into adaptation, resilience, community, nature based and access themes. The objective within each themed group of Options is to achieve a BCR of 1 to demonstrate value for money. Where possible, the economic value of losses avoided by investing in an Option have been quantified. Where it is not possible to estimate the value of losses avoided by investing in an Option, estimates have been made on the duration of time over which the option would have to delay damage losses to achieve a BCR of 1. Table 14 summarises the losses avoided results.

Table 14. Summary of losses avoided and costs of each Option. BCR of themed groups of Options is presented and how any shortfall to a target of BCR=1 is achieved. Full results and methods are provided in Appendix I.

Option Theme	Option	Losses avoided value (£)	Option cost (£)
Adaptation	Beach, river, cliff monitoring and behaviour assessments	£50,268	£300,000
	Adaptation plan		£200,000
	Flood and cliff retreat warning system, emergency response plan, awareness campaign		£200,000
	Planning and building control mapping and guidance	£0.00	£100,000
	Heritage Centre rollback and popup	£1,955,909	£100,000
	Environmental and heritage reports	£0.00	£200,000
	Examination of alternative tourism revenues	£0.00	£100,000
	Total	£2,006,177	£1,200,000
	BCR		1.7
	Shortfall to BCR =1		£0
Resilience	Defence adaptation	£0	£100,000

	Surface and groundwater man- agement research	£0	£500,000
	Improve HC flood and erosion re- silience	£60,701	£150,000
	Assess the risk to sewage pump- ing station	£0	£100,000
	Total	£60,701	£850,000
	BCR		0.1
	Shortfall to BCR =1		£789,299
	The shortfall to BCR=1 is made up by estimating that a surface and groundwater management scheme would have to delay landsliding by 13 years to avoid £816k of losses (see Appendix I).		
Access	Access improvements: West Beach	£1,491,159	£300,000
	Riverside path	£0	£150,000
	Total	£1,491,159	£450,000
	BCR		3.3
	Shortfall to BCR =1		£0
Commu- nity	National Coast Science Wardens	£131,156	£100,000
	Stakeholder steering group	£0	£100,000
	Total	£131,156	£200,000
	BCR		0.7
	Shortfall to BCR =1		£68,844
	The shortfall to BCR=1 could be made up by the steering group op- tion which would have to achieve a £69k losses avoided for the com- munity themed options to be value for money (see Appendix I).		
Nature based	Nature based solutions: River flooding	£0.00	£150,000
	Nature based solutions: Vege- tated slopes	£0.00	£100,000
	Total	£0.00	£250,000
	BCR		0

	Shortfall to BCR =1	£250,000
	The shortfall to BCR=1 is made up by estimating that reopening natural flood zones would have to delay flooding by 7 years to avoid half of the £250k of losses and that vegetated slopes would have to delay landsliding by 2 years to avoid half of the £250k of losses (see Appendix I).	

Value potential and learning potential benefits are described qualitatively for each Option in Table 8 and Table 9.

3.6 Description of Invest more

As noted in 3.5.2, it may not be possible within the available budget to deliver all options identified. Prioritisation will likely be required; however, under a scenario of 50% more funding being available to Dorset CTAP, the following improvements could be delivered:

- A wider selection of the activities could be progressed during the OBC delivery phase.
- Increased scope for community engagement and development of options.
- Increased monitoring and evaluation to share learning more effectively with other coastal communities.

3.7 Other appraisals

3.7.1 Carbon appraisal

A range of carbon tools for the assessment of carbon costs and benefits have been developed and include the Environment Agency's range of existing tools such as ERIC used for the assessment of carbon in FCERM schemes. The application of these tools is focussed primarily on physical works with a focus on the sourcing of materials and construction impacts. Assessment of the types of options currently included in the proposed Dorset CTAP programme are currently not accommodated in these tools.

Therefore, carbon costs and benefits have not been appraised for this OBC.

However, Dorset Council understand that an early understanding of carbon impacts from proposed works is necessary to be able to drive carbon reduction throughout the development of the programme. Dorset Council will seek to develop systems of working and actions to minimise, avoid, capture and offset carbon. Once approval of the OBC has been received, a carbon baseline will be undertaken and ongoing assessment will be carried out as the project progresses to ensure carbon emissions are reduced where possible.

Learning from local authority projects has identified that carbon reduction must be incorporated into the beginning of projects in order to ensure all carbon minimisation and capture pathways are open and that carbon does not become locked into proposals or carbon mitigation becoming a latter ‘add on’.

3.8 Option Selection

Table 15 shows how well each option meets the appraisal criteria and the derivation of the selected option.

Table 15. Preferred option

Criteria	BAU	Preferred option	Do more	Do less
Question: Meets the Objectives?	N	Y	Y	Y
Question: Meets critical success factors?	N	Y	Y	Y
Technical matters:	4	2	1	3
Environmental impact:	4	2	1	3
Economic:	4	1	2	3
Carbon:	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Operational	4	2	1	3
Local preference	4	2	1	3
Conclusion and selection	4	1	2	3

4.0 Commercial Case

4.1 Procurement strategy and timescales

4.1.1 Introduction and Procurement Strategy

The nature of the CTAP is that it is innovative and is seeking new approaches and knowledge generation to assist with informing future local and national activities, policy and funding mechanisms. The nature of CTAP is that it will, through its initiation, development and delivery, need to be flexible in order to procure numerous goods and services, with a variety of contract values, all while utilising differing contract types. As such, there will be a number of different routes to market, contract type or risk allocation preference to provide all the needs of the programme. Consequently, as the programme progresses, the project team will identify the most efficient and effective procurement route according to the principles and options below. The potential to jointly procure goods and services and to bundle work packages where appropriate, will be explored. Should any procurement routes change during the delivery period, or if new opportunities are identified, these will also be considered.

Procurement processes will comply with all those required by local government. This also includes European Union directives and regulations (and any successive changes), Public Contract Regulations 2015 – or updated regulations (Procurement Act 2023) when introduced, individual local authority financial and contract procedures (including fraud and corruption policies, whistleblowing policies, and employee codes of conduct). Procurement at all stages will be carried out in partnership with the Dorset Council Commercial and Procurement team and will follow the Dorset Council scheme of delegation as outlined in the council's constitution.

Work packages will be managed using NEC4 short form contracts using the option most appropriate to the task. If appropriate, Dorset Council Terms & Conditions may be used. The appropriate form of contract will be informed by Dorset Councils legal and procurement teams.

It is considered that Dorset Council's contracting approach will include the use of in-house arrangements when they are fit for purpose as well as the procurement of external resource through the use of established frameworks where possible. Utilising Dorset Council's existing relationships with contractors allows an informed decision on the cost/quality and will enable the securing of services that balance optimum outcomes and cost.

4.1.2 Procurement Routes and Timeline

The following procurement options are open for the use of Dorset Council in the delivery of CTAP. These have been utilised successfully by the Council and its partners in recent operations and projects:

- Existing frameworks, for example we are already signed up to the following;
 - the Crown Commercial Services framework for Construction Professional Services (Framework Ref RM6165),
 - Southern Coastal Group Professional Services Framework
 - Southern Coastal Group Minor Works Framework (Construction)
 - Dorset Council's Transport & Engineering Professional Services Contract
 - Dorset Council's Managed Services Contract for Specialist Professional Services
 - Open tender or competitive flexible procedure, as described in the anticipated Procurement Act 2023.
 - Public Sector Cooperation Agreement with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Dorset Council have access to any Public Sector framework that has been set up for access to Local Authorities regionally or nationally. There is therefore also opportunity for exploring other frameworks and sign up to these where appropriate and possible; and where there are no limitations on Dorset Council to do so. The FCERM service has been successful in doing so for past projects.

In addition, there maybe opportunities for partnering, for example with other local authorities, universities, volunteering organisations or charities, e.g., Bournemouth University, Jurassic Coast Trust, etc. In such instances partnering / bespoke agreements maybe used.

There may also be opportunities to distribute additional grants and loans (for example, through private third parties and environmental bonds). This additional financing will be explored in the programme. Where funds are distributed through loan and grants schemes, further legal advice as to terms and conditions will be sought to supplement existing knowledge.

It is anticipated that the first works associated with the delivery of the CTAP programme will be awarded in 2024.

4.2 Efficiencies and commercial arrangements

4.2.1 Partnership Working

Dorset Council will continue to work with external partners as well as other internal Dorset Council departments to act on any additional partnership opportunities for contributions or delivery of efficiencies. This will include maximising opportunities to deliver parts of CTAP work/activities jointly with Cornwall District Council and other FCRIP and CTAP projects and potentially Wessex Water. The potential scope of this work is still being established.

Other opportunities may also exist with Bournemouth University who we are currently working closely with on a 5G cliff monitoring study, and the SCOPAC (Southern Coastal Group) research programme which we have utilised before and relationships are established.

Working with the Jurassic Coast Trust may also be beneficial, given their expertise along the World Heritage Site and we intend to work closely with our partners at Dorset Coast Forum who are the current comms and engagement leads for the project.

This will produce benefits in terms of value for money, efficiency and learning.

4.2.2 Project Efficiencies

The project will seek to generate efficiencies at each stage to ensure best value is achieved for the public purse.

Efficiencies arising from this CTAP programme will be recorded in a programme efficiency register to record efficiency made and value added. Potential efficiencies are expected to arise from the following:

- Pooling resources through the organisations involved in the project and the wider CTAP Programme, including council's and their contractors;
- Bundling the procurement of work packages, where appropriate;
- Data sharing;
- Adopting information/working practices from pioneering activities successfully developed under other CTAP or FCRIP projects and wider FCRIP programme ,(and conversely passing on efficiencies by providing information from pioneering projects undertaken under the Swanage North and Charmouth programme that have potential for national roll out);
- Capturing expertise and experience from other CTAP projects into a Lessons Learnt Register and build on findings to avoid repeating mistakes;
- Partnering with Universities/Colleges to support degree, masters or PhD projects whilst gaining free resource and data analysis services;
- Third party funding opportunities;
- Use of new technology to raise awareness and understanding among stakeholders and communities.

5.0 Financial Case

5.1 Summary of financial appraisal

Table 16 shows the Whole Life Cash Cost.

Table 16. Whole Life Cash Cost

Cost Heading	Whole-life (£K) cash cost See note 1
Cost up to OBC. See note 3	125
Preferred way forward options package	1,996
Project Management and Governance	190
Optimism Bias Contingency (30%)	656
Total	2,967

Table 17 shows the Total Value of the Project.

Table 17. Total Value of the Project

Cost Heading	Total value of project See note 2 (For approval)
Cost up to OBC. See note 3	Exclude previous applications
Preferred way forward options package	1,996
Project Management and Governance	190
Optimism Bias Contingency (30%)	656
Inflation (based on GDP deflator future rates)	158
Total	3,000

[Notes]

1. This column shows the cash, i.e., undiscounted, values and includes all future costs over the design life including study costs approved under an [FCERM7](#).
2. The costs in this column are cash values.
3. The whole life cash cost includes any study costs approved under an FCERM7 and the development cost of the OBC. The Total value of project does not

include study costs as these have already been approved under an FCERM7. It does include the OBC development cost.

4. The cost of environmental enhancement is contained within the other cost elements and not shown separately.

5. Add further rows as necessary for individual headings. A cumulative miscellaneous cost should not be more than 5% of the total.

6. Note that the allowance for risk and/or optimism bias is part of the project approval but must be claimed separately when needed using the [FCERM4](#) application. See supporting information for further explanation and refer to section 12 of the [Grant Memorandum](#) found on Gov.uk page: Flood and coastal defence: develop a project business case.

7. The allowance for risk and optimism bias applicable to future construction and maintenance is shown separately from current risk and optimism bias to account for uncertainty.

8. This is the total estimated costs shown in section A6 of the FCERM2. It is also the Total value of project referred to in section A4 of the Financial Scheme of Delegation.]

5.2 Funding sources

Table 18. Sources of funding

Source of Funding	£k
EA contribution (Grant in Aid)	£3,000 k
EA contribution (Grant in Aid) contingency (30%)	£900 k
Total funding	£3,000 k

5.3 Expenditure and income profile

Table 19. Income and Expenditure Profile

Income and Expenditure streams £k	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
Cost less contingency	25	384	906	996	2,311
Contingency	0	85	272	299	656

Income and Expenditure streams £k	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
Total cost	25	469	1,178	1,295	2,967
Grant in aid	25	469	1,178	1,295	2,967
Total income	25	469	1,178	1,295	2,967

6.0 Management Case

6.1 Project management

6.1.1 Project Structure and Governance

The development of the CTAP OBC is being led by Dorset Council and they will continue to act as lead during the development of the CTAP project working closely with wider community groups.

The project's governance structure is shown in Figure 4 below.

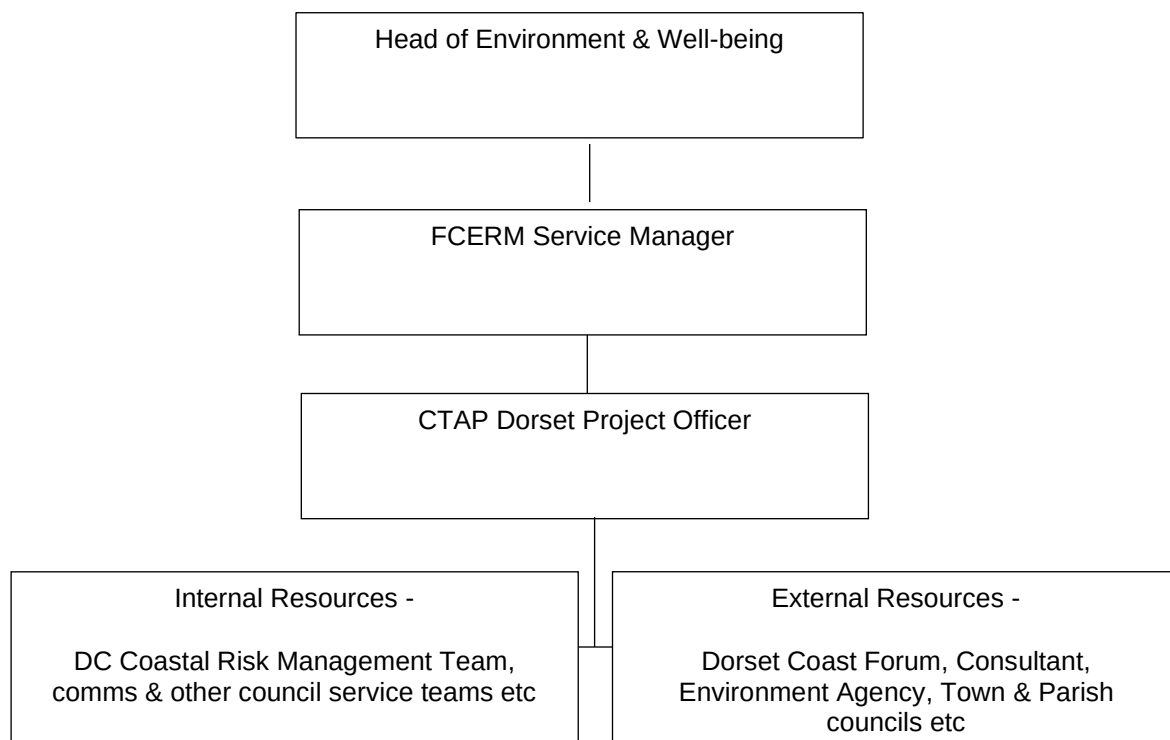


Figure 4. Swanage North & Charmouth CTAP Organogram

Head of Environment & Well-being:

Will provide a strategic oversight and act as project sponsor from the Council's perspective. This will ensure that the project is fully reflected within the Council's corporate reporting programme, and project progress is discussed at a senior level and with council members. This officer will chair the CTAP Dorset Steering Group Meetings.

FCERM Service Manager:

This officer will line manage the CTAP Project Officer and support the development of the project. They will ensure that adequate resources are committed to delivery of the proposed OBC outcomes and sit upon the CTAP Dorset Steering Group. This officer will also have overall responsibility for programme, budget management and internal assurance.

CTAP Dorset Project Officer:

Principle Duties include:

- Lead, drive and deliver Dorset Council's Coastal Transition Accelerator project.
- To liaise, engage and consult with coastal communities, businesses and commerce to help improve their ability to adapt to / mitigate the impacts of coastal change to achieve greater resilience and economic security, in accordance with current best practice.
- To monitor, review and report on the project , budget and associated action plans.

They are:

- Accountable to the FCERM Service Manager & Project Steering Group
- Prepares project management documents and reports, and ensures they are agreed by the Steering Group.
- Establish, manage, and maintain the project's risk management documents, issue and change control measures, information management and communication processes.
- Overseeing work required to progress the project in line with direction from, and within tolerances identified by the steering group.
- Commissioning work from council teams and external suppliers & ensuring that work is delivered within appropriate tolerances.
- Establishing and managing monitoring and reporting processes feeding into both Council lead project reporting as well as CTAP programme level reporting and the Defra Flood and Coastal Innovation Programme (FCIP) programme level evaluation
- Advising the steering group of any deviations from the project plans and recommending remedial action.

- Identifying opportunities for efficiencies within the program, either with time and/or cost saving.

CTAP Dorset Steering Group:

Chaired and led by Dorset Council's Head of Environment & Well-being, this group will provide advice, support & critical-friend analysis to the CTAP Dorset Programme Manager. Made-up of officers from organisations including Dorset Council and the Environment Agency, the group will help support delivery of the project outputs and achievement of the project outcomes by facilitation within respective organisations.

The Project Steering Group will include the following representatives:

Ken Buchan:	Head of Environment & Well Being, Dorset Council - Chair
Matthew Penny:	FCERM Service Manager, Dorset Council
Toni Powell:	Dorset Coast Forum Coordinator
Giles Nicholson:	Coast and Greenspace Service Manager, Dorset Council
Dave Picksley:	Senior Advisor, Environment Agency
Dan Williams:	Dorset Coast Forum Project Officer (comms lead Char-mouth)
Sara Parker:	Dorset Coast Forum Project Officer (comms lead Swanage)
Esmari Steenkamp:	Coastal Risk Manager, Dorset Council
Steve Boyt:	Senior Planning Policy Officer, Dorset Council
Bridget Betts:	Environment Policy Partnership Manager, Dorset Council
Alan Frampton:	SMP15 & 16 lead officer and FCERM Strategy, Policy & Environment Manager, BCP Council

In support of the CTAP Dorset Programme Manager, it is anticipated that additional specific expertise for the delivery of the programme will be drawn from teams across the Council including coastal engineering, flood and coastal risk management, forward planning and communications. Where specific work packages may require prolonged and intensive involvement from particular teams, service level agreements may be set up to ensure this resource is available when required.

To support project development and delivery it is essential that the project team also engages, interacts and collaborates with a broad range of partners and stakeholders. In order to achieve this effectively and efficiently it is expected that a number of existing groups and partnerships will be engaged, and where there are gaps in coverage it may be necessary to establish new ones.

For individual work packages, discrete project partners such as academic institutions and commercial operators, will be engaged to add value and expertise to the delivery of the Dorset CTAP.

We will also continue to engage with the national CTAP programme team to share resources and learning where possible and feed in to programme reporting requirements.

Funding for this project will be administered via the EA, using established grant-in-aid to draw down process (with any necessary and relevant adaptations to be agreed with Defra).

Any financial and political decisions will be made in line with the scheme of delegation as per the council's constitution.

6.2 Schedule

The project funding for Swanage North and Charmouth CTAP is expected to run from Nov 2024 to March 2027 although it is recognised that the realisation of some outcomes will extend beyond the funded work as learning is incorporated into discussions about improvements to policy and process.

The outline project programme is available in Appendix H. The outline programme is indicative at this stage, and will be dependent on third parties and stakeholder engagement. Primary focus has been given to early activities in the programme.

Table 20. Main Event Dates

Event	Date
CTAP funding awarded and commencement of work activities	Nov 24
Community Engagement and MEL	Throughout
Option Refinement	Nov 24 – May 25
Adaptation/ Access / Nature Based / Resilience solutions development	May 25 – March 26
Community solutions development	May 25 – Sept 25
Community solutions rollout	Oct 25 – March 27
Adaptation/ Access / Nature Based / Resilience solutions construction/delivery	Apr 26 - March 27
Adaptation Plans	Apr 26 – March 27
Project Completion	March 27

6.3 Risk, assumptions, issues and dependencies management

6.3.1 Risks

A risk register has been developed to identify and manage risks, refer to Appendix E. The top six key risks identified are included in Table 21.

Table 21. Top six key risks

Key Risk	Owner	Mitigation
Lack of engagement and understanding from communities, businesses, and other stakeholders. Community do not support adaptation options.	Dorset Council / Environment Agency	Communication and engagement plans in place - Coordinated message from DC, Defra and EA as to the need for adaptation. Adequate time built in for regular, open, honest and transparent communication with stakeholders using a range of traditional and digital methods. Consider engagement methods to minimise disruption from individuals. Community Steering Groups. Public consultations. Keep records of who is making contact with us in regard to which subject matters. Explanation of the risks posed by climate-driven coastal erosion and the need for coastal transition. Detailed member briefings. Respond to social media comments appropriately where necessary and include social media crisis plan as part of social media strategy. Updating social media ahead of time to keep everyone up to date with what is planned. Utilisation of local knowledge to identify key local contacts. Involvement of community in local decision making and identification of preferred transition options. Listen to individuals/pressure groups at the first instance to maintain an amicable relationship if possible. Attempt to understand the values and drivers of pressure groups to change opinion/stance.
Skills Gaps - Technical	Dorset Council	Ensure training is provided to upskill new and existing staff.

Expertise Resource availability		Considered resourcing approach. Utilisation of available routes to market. Further recruitment of resource where possible. Use of external suppliers/consultants. Use the expertise of associates to meet the deadlines and fill the gaps. Examine completing certain tasks through alternative routes to create efficiencies. Having an understanding of project timelines and requirements.
Lack of corporate / political buy-in.	Dorset Council	Regular contact with MPs and elected members to update them on the CTAP and to reinforce the need for the project. Involvement of members in decision making. Early engagement with MPs and elected members?
Lack of available land/unwillingness to sell land/unaffordable for rollback/relocation.	Dorset Council	Early assessment of land availability, identification, land allocation and acquisition options explored. Flexibility within project plan. Appropriate budget allocation and contingency within budgets.
Limitations and associated liabilities with CPA and LA Powers	Dorset Council	Legal and professional advice to work around and overcome challenges if faced.
Existing legislation unfit to support CTAP activities	Dorset Council / Environment Agency / other partners	Maintaining and updating any understanding of published guidance and legislation.

6.3.2 Assumptions

The following assumptions and their proposed management actions have been identified.

Table 22. Project Assumptions

Assumption	Proposed Management Action
Communities will engage with us	- Stakeholder engagement strategy and communications plan. - Dedicated communications and engagement leads within Dorset Coastal Forum.

	• Ensure early and ongoing consultation. Ensure adequate time for open, honest, and transparent communication. Provision of opportunities for ongoing discussion. • Use innovative engagement techniques and materials, supported by independent engagement specialists.
Funding is approved	• Collaborative authorship between Dorset Council and EA, and early draft submission for comments. • Ensure prompt response to LPRG comments to minimise LPRG review period. • Council members kept updated for required cabinet approval following LPRG assurance.
Correct resource is available to support the CTAP programme	• Early identification of skills gaps in CTAP team and with suppliers. • Proactive recruitment and resourcing, outsourcing and use of framework contractors if required.
Continued government support for coastal transition and the CTAP programme	• Raise the profile and the benefits delivered of the project at a national level, through existing mechanisms, such as FCRIP reporting, LGA Coastal SIG, National Coastal Networks Group. • Regular discussions with EA and DEFRA teams. • Positive engagement with communities, creating advocacy. • Proactive representation at national conferences. • Engagement with local MPs and all-party parliamentary group for the coast.
Continued local political support for coastal transition and the CTAP programme	• Raise the profile and the benefits delivered of the project at a local level. • Regular updates and briefings to elected members including relevant portfolio holder, ward members and the Environment and Regeneration Overview & Scrutiny Committee. • Site visits to relevant locations offered to support inauguration. • Monitor issues / potential changes to programme and manage expectations through open, honest, and transparent communications.

6.3.3 Issues

The following issues, their impacts and proposed mitigation actions have been identified.

Table 23. Project Issues

Issue	Proposed Action
Critical event, e.g., cliff collapse or erosion protection asset failure	• Ongoing regular inspections of assets and active cliffs. • Resource ongoing operations and incident response within Dorset Council.
Practical transition actions become economically or technically unfeasible, e.g., no room for roll back	• Early identification of projects constraints and limitations. • Open and honest engagement about unknowns and limitations.
Rates of erosion more rapid than planned for.	• Ensure flexibility in options for adapting to change in data and projections. • Flexibility in programme and spend budget.
Lack of community support	• Involvement of community in CTAP programme development and decision making. • Ensure early, ongoing, open and honest discussions with the community.
Loss of skills and resource	• Ensure diverse and multiskilled team through recruitment and partnership working. • Limit reliance of works on one or two key resources only.
External consents required for delivery of options., e.g., landowner permission, natural England consent.	• Early consultation with landowners and statutory consultees, thorough appraisal of options.

6.3.4 Dependencies

The following dependencies and their impacts on this project have been identified.

Table 24. Project Dependencies

Dependency	Project Impact
Political acceptability	• Key decisions are not supported. • Delays to approval

	• Inability to deliver CTAP
Available skills and resources	• Delays to delivery of project due to unavailability of correct resource or time required to recruit and train new staff. • Scope of CTAP could have to be scaled back.
Communities willing to engage and make decisions	• Delay to programme and increased costs due to further time required to engage with community and provide additional information to support decision making. • Lack of buy-in for coastal transition in community. • Community expectations are not met. • Risk of reputational damage.

6.4 Assurance

During the development of this OBC, interim feedback from the CTAP national programme team and members of the LPRG sub group on drafted sections of the document has been received and comments addressed. All steering group members have had the opportunity to comment upon the OBC document.

Cabinet approval by Dorset Council will be sought in October 2024 after submission of the OBC to NPAB.

No external approvals are needed to support the OBC. A review of the requirement for consents and licences related to the preferred options has been included as part of the proposed work programme for the next stage.

This project will follow the LPRG project assurance route (total project costs >£10m).

6.5 Engagement with Stakeholders and compliance with the Equality Act 2010

To ensure the smooth delivery of this project, consultation with key parties and engagement has been undertaken and will continue to be as the project progresses.

Dorset Coast Forum (DCF) have been the project's engagement lead and delivery partner organisation throughout the OBC process and will continue to lead engagement through future stages. DCF have extensive experience of engagement with both Swanage North and Charmouth communities and have

already established a rigorous engagement programme throughout the OBC and they will continue to help facilitate all the engagement requirements of the project. DCF's work will be overseen by the Dorset CTAP Project Officer.

A record of the community events and online engagement activities is summarised in Appendix G – Engagement Log. Also included is Appendix F – Dorset Coastal Forum Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan developed to inform the OBC engagement activities. This identifies relevant stakeholders, and an outline of the frequency and form of communications.

An Equality Impact Assessment to consider protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be completed at the next phase. It is considered different assessments may be required for different options. However, at this stage, no specific impacts have been identified. Further opportunities to explore the data available regarding project characteristics can be considered later to help inform detailed engagement planning.

7. List of Appendices.

A – Photos

B – Figures (including designation plans)

C – Coastal Change Risk Maps

D – Options Summary Tables

E – Risk Register

F – Dorset Coastal Forum Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan

G - Engagement Log

H - Programme

I – Assessment of losses and benefits

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Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the [Dorset Council style guide](#) and also use the [accessibility checker](#) to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

1. Initial information

Name of the policy, project, strategy, project or service being assessed:

Future Coast Charmouth (funded by the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme)

2. Is this a (please delete those not required):

Project

3. Is this (please delete those not required):

Both internal and external

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

The Dorset Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) will focus upon the areas of Swanage North and Charmouth – they are areas where proposed shoreline management plan policy will challenge each community to adapt to an eroding coastline.

The Dorset CTAP will undertake actions that support the communities in adapting to their changing coastlines and raise further awareness of the risk and need for community adaptation.

Objectives include such measures as improved coastal access, increased resilience of existing infrastructure, extensive community engagement plans, potential land purchase, ground & modelling investigations and adaptation planning

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

The coastal communities of Swanage North and Charmouth are being challenged to adapt to a changing landscape due to sea level rise and weather pattern changes accelerating the risk of coastal erosion and cliff destabilisation.

The Shoreline Management Plan preferred policy options for both frontages is No Active Intervention / Managed Realignment from 2025 and beyond.

The Swanage and Charmouth CTAP programme will support the Government's stated aim to manage down the risk to such coastal communities, and where they cannot be, support those communities to respond and adapt accordingly. The CTAP programme project will deliver a range of options at both Swanage and Charmouth to enable communities to adapt and thrive in the light of ongoing coastal change.

Dorset Council is the Coastal Protection Authority and manages the coastal path & rights of way that traverse each location.

The CTAP project provides an opportunity to develop, test and implement innovative coastal transition actions that are outside the scope of what central government usually funds and what local authorities are required to do.

The project has already engaged with the community, prior to the development of the Outline Business Case which has been approved. We worked with partners from Jacobs (specialist engineering consultant) and Dorset Coast Forum (specialist engagement team) to engage with the community, incorporate their views where possible, and develop the business case. The project is now at delivery stage, with Phase 1 beginning in April.

Evidence gathering and engagement

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

The outline business case (OBC) and its inherent objectives have been informed by many studies, plans and investigations that have been undertaken within the coastal environment at both locations, including the Coastal Pathfinder project from the 2010s.

To ensure the smooth delivery of this project, consultation with key parties and engagement has been undertaken and will continue to be as the project progresses. A minimum of 2 engagement rounds have been undertaken at both locations thus far.

Dorset Coast Forum (DCF) have been the project's engagement lead and delivery partner organisation throughout the OBC process and will continue to lead engagement through future stages. DCF have extensive experience of engagement with both Swanage North and Charmouth communities and have already established a rigorous engagement programme throughout the OBC and they will continue to help facilitate all the engagement requirements of the project.

A record of the community events and online engagement activities is summarised in Appendix G – Engagement Log. Also included is Appendix F – Dorset Coastal Forum Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan developed to inform the OBC engagement activities. This identifies relevant stakeholders, and an outline of the frequency and form of communications.

An Equality Impact Assessment to consider protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be completed for the delivery stage. It is considered different assessments may be required for different options.

7. What did this tell you?

- Beach access is very important to both communities.

- The funding needs to be used for practical applications as well as investigations and plans.
- Protection and increased resilience of existing infrastructure is important.
- Both communities are well engaged with the project subject matter.
- Community protection is preferred to adaptation (but that is largely out of scope of this project & funding).

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

The communities of Swanage and Charmouth including, the general public, parish and town councils, business owners, charity groups, residents, statutory stakeholders, ward members, beach hut owners and beach users.

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

No.

Is an EQIA required?

Yes, for some options (i.e, for replacing steps/beach access).

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Positive	With 45% of residents aged 65 and over, improved beach access (e.g.,

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		new steps) will benefit older adults by providing safer and more accessible routes. Engagement has already been successful in targeting this demographic. Adaptation planning will help future generations by making the community more resilient to coastal change – younger age groups will be engaged through schools and youth forums.
Disability	Unclear	Consideration of accessible routes will foster inclusivity and enhanced access features will improve usability; however, it is unclear whether provision for mobility impairments is affordable and therefore it is unclear if this is within scope of the beach access replacement option. 24% of residents in Charmouth identify as having a disability, which is significant, compared to the national average of 17%. Engaging with disability advocacy groups will ensure access needs are met where feasible. Clear communication about safe access routes will be provided in accessible formats.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	The project does not directly affect gender identity or reassignment. Outreach efforts will ensure that all consultation spaces are inclusive and welcoming, ensuring engagement materials use diverse representation.
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	The project does not directly affect marriage or civil partnership. Outreach efforts will ensure that all consultation spaces are inclusive and welcoming, ensuring engagement materials use diverse representation.
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	The project does not directly affect pregnancy or maternity. Outreach efforts will ensure that all consultation spaces are inclusive and welcoming, ensuring

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		engagement materials use diverse representation.
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral	With 95.4% of residents identifying as White British, no significant impact on racial or ethnic groups is anticipated. The project is open to all and does not disproportionately affect any ethnic groups. Outreach will include working with community leaders and representatives to identify hard-to-reach groups, ensuring broad community participation and representation.
Religion and belief	Neutral	While 52% of the community identify as Christian, the project does not directly affect religion or belief. Outreach efforts will ensure that all consultation spaces are inclusive and welcoming, ensuring engagement materials use diverse representation.
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral	The population is approximately 45% male and 55% female. Engagement efforts will ensure gender representation in community consultations. The project will benefit all.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	The project does not impact individuals based on sexual orientation. However, our engagement lead will ensure that the consultation materials used, use inclusive language and diverse imagery.
People with caring responsibilities	Neutral	10% of residents provide unpaid care, improved access may support caregivers by making access to the beach more practical.
Rural isolation	Positive	Charmouth is a rural coastal village, and adaptation planning will help preserve access to key areas. Engagement will include reaching out to residents through a range of accessible forums, ensuring isolated residents are engaged and their concerns are heard.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Socio-economic deprivation	Positive	Coastal adaptation planning will help protect homes and businesses. Engagement will include targeting a range of demographics through a variety of forums.
Single parents	Neutral	Not directly affected but improved access could benefit those with young children.
Armed forces communities	Neutral	No direct impacts identified. Engagement will include targeting a range of demographics through a variety of forums.

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

Future Coast Charmouth has a predominantly positive impact, especially for older adults, who make up a large portion of the population. There is also an indirect positive impact on socio-economic deprivation, through adaptation planning.

Improved access may benefit those with mobility issues but at this stage it is unclear. The project is neutral in its impact on gender identity, ethnicity, marital status, religion and sex.

Engagement strategies will focus on targeting a broad range of participants, including under presented groups – in Charmouth this includes Minority Backgrounds (based on Public Health census data definition) and young adults. It is worth noting that although underrepresented groups in this area have been identified, and inclusivity efforts should be proactive, they should also be realistic given the fact that Charmouth is a rural coastal community. Older residents will naturally be the dominant group; however, we should still ensure others are heard and use appropriate outreach methods to encourage broader participation and outreach, not assuming a one-size-fits all approach.

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Identify how to encourage participation from hard-to-reach groups.	Speak with Charmouth parish council for advice.	ES-C	1 st June 2025
Young People & Young Adults (16-34) may be underrepresented in Charmouth engagement sessions	Email Woodruff School Geography A Level Tutors to see if there is a potential to engage with students. Engage with Charmouth Youth Club. Mentimeter survey shared with schools to be promoted in tutor time.	Matthew Smith	1 st June 2025
Disability inclusion	Disability advocacy groups to be identified at early stages of project.	Elliott Saloman-Carter	1 st June 2025
Unequal civic voice due to time availability and life stage.	Diversify engagement channels – specifically use of online polls and offer of weekend and evening sessions.	Matthew Smith	1 st July 2025
Stronger project opposition from residents aged 60+, particularly 70+	Further engagement required in autumn. To consider intergenerational engagement event. ES-C to discuss with Matthew Smith.	Elliott Saloman-Carter	8 th September 2025

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqlA: Elliott Saloman-Carter

Officers involved in completing the EqlA: Elliott Saloman-Carter & Matthew Penny

Date of completion: 11th April 2025

Version Number: 1

EqlA review date: 01/09/2025

Equality Lead Sign Off:

Next Steps:

- the EqlA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqlA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqlA, to get a better understanding.
- EqlA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to [Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#)

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Cabinet

17 December 2024

Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Project Outline Business Case

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr J Andrews, Place Services

Local Councillor(s):

Cllr Belinda Bawden

Cllr Bill Trite

Cllr Gary Suttle

Executive Director:

Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

Report Author:

Job Title: Matthew Penny

Tel: 01305 252290

Email: matthew.penny@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Dorset Council have submitted a successful Outline Business Case to the Environment Agency to fund an adaptation and resilience project as part of the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme.

The coastal communities of Swanage North and Charmouth are being challenged to adapt to a changing landscape due to sea level rise and weather pattern changes accelerating the risk of coastal erosion and cliff destabilisation.

The Swanage and Charmouth Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) project will support the Government's stated aim to manage down the risk to such coastal communities, and where they cannot be, support those communities to respond and adapt accordingly.

The CTAP project, which runs until March 2027, will deliver a range of options at both Swanage and Charmouth to enable communities to adapt and thrive in light of ongoing coastal change.

This paper seeks endorsement of the outline business case for the proposed project within which £3m of Defra flood defence grant-in-aid funding has been approved to deliver its aims.

Recommendation:

1. Endorse the Dorset Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Project Outline Business Case (found in Appendix A).
2. Authorises the draw-down of the £3m grant funding, ongoing throughout the project.
3. Approve the procurement of the necessary materials, professional & other services and construction contractor(s) for the project and delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place Services in consultation with the Executive Director Corporate Development and the Cabinet Member for Place Services to award necessary contracts on appropriate terms and subject to a budget being identified and allocated, and that the total value of the contracts within the project should not exceed £3m.

Reason for Recommendation:

The £3m outline business case requires cabinet approval. The recommendations give officers the necessary authority to draw-down the external grant funding and progress the project to the delivery stage.

1. Report

1.1 Strategic Priority

(a) The Council Plan 2024-2029, which at the time of writing has been submitted for approval by Full Council on 5th December 2024 recognises that *‘our seaside communities are particularly exposed to rising sea levels which can lead to coastal erosion, flooding, and damage to infrastructure.’* In preparing for the challenges of climate change, *‘we are committed to helping our communities, ecosystems, and economies adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change’*, and states that *‘by taking the right actions now, we can help address climate change and ensure a safer, more resilient Dorset for future generations.’*

b) The Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology strategy also has climate adaptation and resilience as one of its 3 main pillars alongside climate emission mitigation and combatting the nature emergency. How we continue to adapt to a

changing climate will be a key strategic challenge over the coming years for Dorset Council that will require a systems-led approach bringing together partners, communities and businesses from across the county, the wider-region and nationally.

(b) The government policy statement on flooding and coastal erosion, published on 14 July 2020, sets out the government's long-term ambition to create a nation more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk. Alongside the policy statement, the Environment Agency published its new National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, which is also focussed on improving overall resilience to flooding and coastal change, adapting to climate change and provides a framework to guide the activities of those involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management.

1.2 Background

- (a) The Outline Business Case builds upon the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) Strategic Outline Business Case (SOC) that was submitted to the Environment Agency (EA) Large Project Review Group in February 2022. This OBC was approved by the EA in November 2024 for £3m to fund the Dorset CTAP project which is scheduled to run until March 2027.
- (b) The Dorset CTAP project focusses upon Swanage North and Charmouth where the nationally proposed shoreline management plan policies will challenge communities to adapt to an eroding coastline. The Council is the Coast Protection Authority and manages the coast path and rights of way that traverse each location.
- (c) The Dorset CTAP will undertake activities that raise awareness and deliver practical action related to the risks of coastal erosion and cliff retreat and support the communities in adapting to their changing coastlines. The project provides an opportunity to develop, test and implement innovative coastal transition actions that are outside the scope of what central government usually funds and what local authorities are required to do.

1.3 Objectives & Benefits

- (a) There are four key National Programme objectives:
 - Produce long-term sustainable strategic plans, by 2027, aligned with the Shoreline Management Plan, and embedded in existing local policy frameworks.

- Test and demonstrate innovative practical coastal transition actions. Practical coastal transition actions will be implemented in locations at significant risk of coastal change.
- The participating authorities will capture evidence, tools and learning from the implementation of innovative practical coastal transition actions and share this learning with other coastal authorities to support coastal transition activities in other locations across the country.
- By 2027, the participating authorities will have improved evidence on the effectiveness of innovative actions to achieve coastal transition, demonstrated by the embedding of learning and approaches in existing FCERM policy and investment decision-making, as well as local-development planning policies in the chosen locations.

(b) The main benefits of the projects include:

- Reduction in risk to life as a result of more proactive transition.
- Reduction in mental and physical health issues linked to residents staying in properties at high-risk from erosion.
- Increased health and wellbeing of coastal residents through retention of recreation and amenity assets.
- Retention and expansion of employment opportunities (direct and indirect) through preservation of businesses, particularly in the tourism sector.

1.4 Project Proposals

- The proposed aims and actions of the Dorset CTAP project include:
- Replacement or redesign of beach access.
- Improving resilience of the Charmouth Heritage Centre to reduce damage and flooding impacts, as well as investigation into the long-term viability of the Centre and proposals for longer term management.
- Undertake activities that support the rolling back of the Charmouth Heritage Centre car park.
- Regular engagement with the communities.
- Developing adaptation plans, including funding mechanisms.

- Build capacity to deliver coastal transition within Dorset in the long-term.
- Support the delivery of the Swanage & Durlston Cliff Management Strategy.

1.5 Consultation & Engagement

- (a) Stakeholder and community engagement are key themes of the Dorset CTAP project. The project has worked in partnership with the Charmouth and Swanage North communities to develop action plans and enhance their understanding of coastal change and increase community preparedness and resilience.
- (b) During the OBC development, collaborative workshops with the CTAP Steering Group, comprising Dorset Council, Dorset Coast Forum, Environment Agency and Jacobs have been held, in addition to stakeholder engagement events with the local communities at Charmouth and Swanage North Cliff.

1.6 Project Delivery

- (a) The development of the CTAP OBC was led by the Council and we will continue to act as lead during the development of the CTAP project working closely with wider community groups and key stakeholders.
- (b) The project will be managed by the Dorset CTAP Project Manager. A role funded by the project grant allocation. A project steering group was established during the development of the OBC. The steering is group will provide advice and support to the Project Manager.
- (c) To support project development and delivery it is essential that the project team also engages, interacts and collaborates with a broad range of internal teams, external partners and stakeholders.
- (d) Funding for this project will be administered via the established grant-in-aid draw down process. Any financial and procurement decisions will be made in line with the council's constitution.

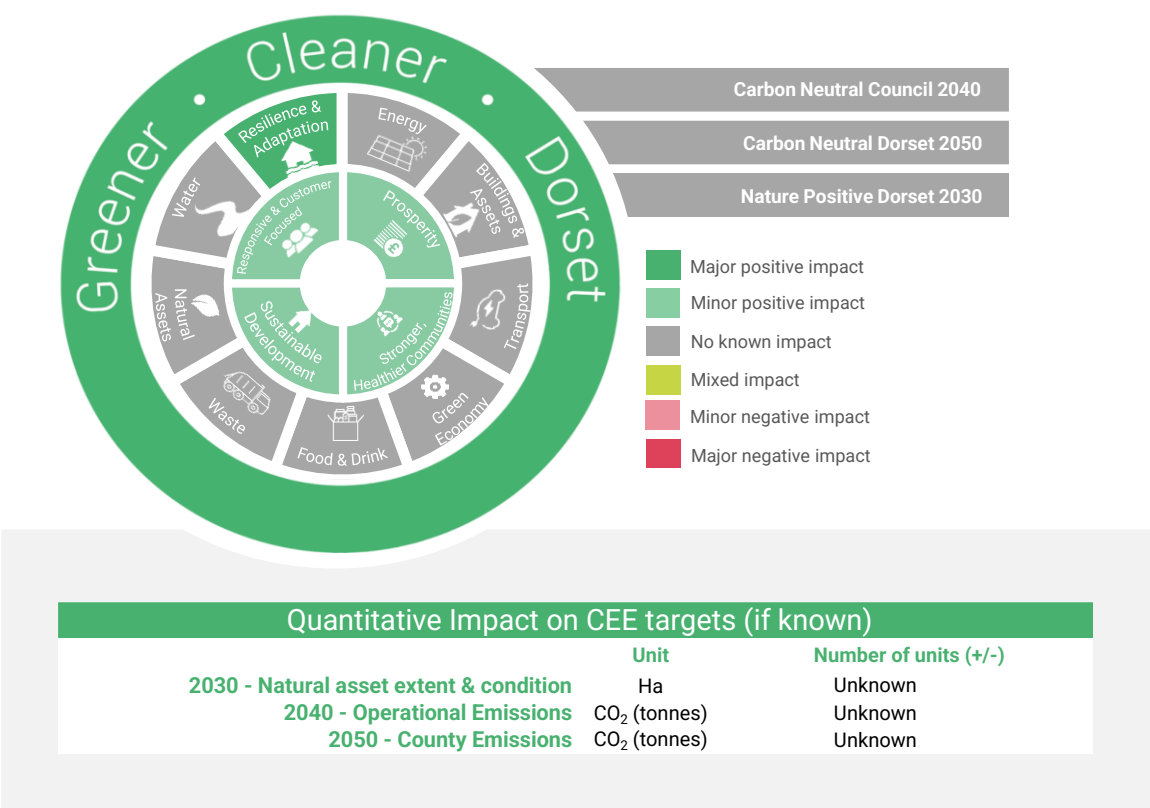
2. Financial Implications

- (a) A summary of the main financial details contained within the outline business case can be found below. For a more detailed assessment,

please refer to the business case contained within appendix A, sections 3 & 5.

- (b) The Outline Business Case proposes to the Environment Agency (EA) Large Project Review Group, that grant funding for the Dorset Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Project is approved at the sum of £3m.
- (c) No match or partnership funding from Dorset Council is expected for this project. The project is wholly externally funded by the £3m grant.
- (d) The £3m of grant funding must be spent by March 31st, 2027, and includes 30% contingency.
- (e) Project spend is forecast to be largely spread over financial years 2025/26 & 2026/27, with a higher level of spend forecast in the latter.

3. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications



4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

(a) Part of the intention of the CTAP project is to improve the health and well-being of those living in vulnerable coastal locations through resilient physical access improvements enabling greater use of coastal areas. But also, through a greater understanding of adaptation opportunities it is hoped that this may reduce the potential mental health issues that could be linked to uncertainty of the future impact of coastal erosion on these communities.

5. **Other Implications**

None

6. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

(a) An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EQiA) scoping assessment has been undertaken with agreement that project specific items, such as beach access improvements, will undertake their own full EQiA.

8. **Appendices**

Appendix A - Outline Business Case

Appendix B - Accessible Impact Assessment & Table of Recommendations

9. **Background Papers**

None

10. **Report Sign Off**

11.1 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)

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

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