Dorset Council

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2026

**Present:** Cllr Steve Robinson (Chair), Sarah Howard (Vice-Chair), Cllr Gill Taylor and Sam Crowe

**Present remotely:** Cllr Clare Sutton, Paula Bennetts and Margaret Guy

**Apologies:** Jan Britton, Paul Dempsey, Stewart Gates, Marc House and Jonathan Price

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):**
George Dare (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer), Alice Deacon (Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships), Sam Poole (Interim Corporate Director for Commissioning & Improvement), Rupert Lloyd (Senior Health Programme Advisor) and Sarah Longdon (Head of Service Planning)

**Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):**
Sarah Sewell (Head of Service - Commissioning for Older People and Home First), Iain Sim (Interim Corporate Director for Housing) and Natasha Morris (Team Leader Intelligence)

### 50. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jan Britton, Paul Dempsey, Stewart Gates, Marc House and Jonathan Price.

### 51. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2026 were confirmed and signed.

### 52. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

### 53. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

### 54. Councillor Questions

There were no questions from Councillors.

55. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

56. **Work Programme**

The Board noted its work programme and the need for the Neighbourhood Health Plan to be included in a future meeting.

57. **Better Care Fund: Quarter 3 Template 2025/26**

The Head of Commissioning for Older People introduced the Better Care Fund Quarter 3 Template. She gave a short presentation to outline the key parts of the template.

The Chair updated the Board that the FutureCare programme was delivering as expected and that discharge delays had improved compared to a year ago.

The Neighbourhood Health Framework encompassed the priorities of the Better Care Fund. Going forward, there would be a need to ensure the Better Care Fund had an overarching function of supporting all out of hospital care, as well as supporting hospital flow.

**Decision:** That the Better Care Fund Reporting Template for 2025/26 Quarter 3 be endorsed.

58. **Health and Wellbeing Strategy Development**

The Director of Public Health introduced the report. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was being linked to wider cross-council work and it would need wide engagement whilst the strategy is being shaped. With the Integrated Partnership being stood down, it enabled an effective place-based partnership under the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board may need to review its governance and terms of reference towards the end of the process, particularly if the Board would be receiving budgets in the future.

The Head of Service Planning outlined the outcomes from strategy development workshops and future planned work.

Members discussed the involvement of stakeholders in developing the strategy and ensuring that there would be alignment across the council, with involvement of external stakeholders.

Proposed by Sam Crowe, seconded by Sarah Howard.

**Decision:**
That the Health and Wellbeing Board approve the approach to develop an outcomes-based health and wellbeing strategy for the Dorset place system by September 2026, noting the work done to date and input from stakeholders and overview committee.

59. **Health Literacy: Update and Next Steps**

The Senior Health Programme Advisor introduced the report and shared a video on the importance of health literacy. Health literacy needed improvement in Dorset and the work on health literacy needed to be scaled.

Health literacy had been public health led, with Dorset Community Action having involvement. The workshop would include the council, NHS, and voluntary sector.

Members reinforced the need for plain language to be used in committee reports, to support clarity of information. A member gave an example on how information on accessing GP services online was rewritten, to enable people to access services easily.

**Decision:**
1. That organisational health literacy be confirmed as an important enabler for achieving system priorities, including improving access and experience of services and reducing health inequalities.
2. That the planned workshop (March 2026) to codesign a proposal for scaling up organisational health literacy across Dorset be supported.

60. **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Forward Plan**

The Team Leader – Intelligence introduced the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Forward Plan report. The JSNA was a statutory requirement for the Health and Wellbeing Board which helps to understand current and future health and wellbeing needs. A focussed insight would typically be produced twice a year. Areas of focus for 2027-28 needing further scoping before being confirmed.

The Director of Public Health and Prevention highlighted the forthcoming SEND and education reform. The JSNA work plan may need to be changed to ensure SEND and education is included, with the need for it to be developed on a short timescale.

The Board noted that there is need for flexibility in the JSNA work plan.

Proposed by Sam Crowe, seconded by Cllr Steve Robinson.

**Decision:**
That the forward work plan for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the annual narrative update be approved.

61. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Duration of meeting**: 2.00 - 3.06 pm

**Chairman**

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