

Shadow Dorset Council

Date of Meeting	14 January 2019
Officer	Keith Cheesman, Programme Director
Subject of Report	Programme Highlight Report
Executive Summary	This report provides an update on progress since the last Shadow Executive Committee meeting on 17 December 2018.
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>None in relation to this report.</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>This report has been written in consultation with Project Managers, Subject Matter Experts and other members of the Programme Team.</p>
	<p>Budget:</p> <p>The revised programme budget was approved at the 17 December 2018 meeting.</p>
	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the LGR approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as Amber.</p>
	<p>Other Implications:</p> <p>None identified.</p>
Recommendation	<p>That the Shadow Executive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Notes the progress made since the last Shadow Executive Committee meeting

Reason for Recommendation	No decisions are required at this time in connection with this report.
Appendices	1. Programme Highlight Report
Background Papers	none
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Date agreed by Lead Member	n/a
Date agreed by Statutory Officers	n/a

1. Summary and Progress

1.1 The full highlight report is attached at Appendix 1. At the time of writing, overall progress remains at Amber.

1.2 Key achievements in the last period include:

- Draft constitution nearing completion following Member review, pending final minor outstanding items
- Finance Order now 'made' in law from 2/1/2019
- Transitional Structures plan ready to be launched into consultation in January
- A balanced budget proposal reviewed by Budget Working Group
- Council Tax Harmonisation approach agreed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Branding ready to launch
- Service delivery approach for eastern Dorset agreed
- 'Master list' of Dorset Council policies complete
- The senior leadership recruitment process is nearing completion.

1.3 There are challenges around the Data Disaggregation work which seeks to identify, prepare and pass the case data and associated files from Dorset Council to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Work in this area is increasing in intensity to agree plans and approaches with the BCP Programme but there is an issue with the availability of the detailed plans required by Dorset Council. This is being escalated within the programme structure to resolve urgently.

2. Risks and Issues

2.1 The key programme issue remains around the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has not increased to allow for additional responsibilities for children when the 16-25 yr age group were added. Numbers of Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP, previously SEN) pupils have been steadily rising with no sign of this levelling out, as funding has seen minimal increase. Recharges from the DCC to DSG of about £1m have already been included as a potential issue in the 19/20 budget calculations and contribute towards the overall estimated £15.5m budget gap to be addressed in the 20/2/19 Shadow Council meeting.

There is a possible way to help manage the DSG deficit in 2019-20 by shifting funds between the different blocks the funding is supplied in, but this must be approved by the Schools Forum and the Secretary of State if over 0.5% of the Schools' Block. The Schools Forum have not approved the movement of moneys between the blocks and so this has been referred to the Secretary of State. The Finance Settlement provided some funding towards this issue which is a national one, but not sufficient to remove the issue at this stage. Further representations will be made to address this issue; the net value of the approval sought is around £2.7m.

- 2.2 The key programme risk is currently around the data disaggregation plan for social care data described above.
- 2.3 The process of creating the risk log for the new council is being led by the Intelligence, Insight and Performance Team at Dorset County Council.