

**Dorset Council Plan Priorities update – Value for Money
(Unitary Council benefits)**

Cabinet – 5 September 2023

Portfolio Holder update from Cllr Gary Suttle

Brief Summary: This report outlines some of the key financial achievements of Dorset Council since becoming a Unitary Council and improved value for money for the local tax payer.

1. Award of grants

1.1 One of the ways Councils can make limited resources go further and reduce the need for local taxation is through active pursuit of external funding opportunities. These opportunities are often competitive processes require bidders to put forward ambitious ideas and demonstrate a commitment to delivery in accordance with the scheme criteria. Successfully bidding helps to accelerate and unlock improved outcomes for those that live, work and invest in Dorset.

1.2 For the period 2020/21 to 2023/24 Dorset Council has received **£101.3m** of grant funding, rising to **£121.6m** based on future year commitments the life of the current grants.

1.3 Projects contained within this include:

- DSG Safety Valve **£42m**
- Levelling Up Fund (LUF) – Weymouth Regeneration **£19.5m**
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme - Main Grant **£18.8m**
- DfT Transforming Cities Fund **£14.2m**

1.4 More detail, including the profile of grant income is included in appendix 1.

2. Sustainable service delivery

2.1 Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires Council's to set a balanced budget each year. The Council's ability to set and deliver on a balanced budget each year demonstrates one of the ways Dorset Council meets the

principles set out in CIPFA's Financial management code and can demonstrate sustainable service planning and delivery.

- 2.2 Since becoming a unitary council in 2019, Dorset Council has made savings of £76.6m by restructuring staff, and re-designing how services are provided. This money has been reinvested into frontline services, including funding the growing need for adult social care due to our ageing population.
- 2.3 The total savings achieved rises to £96.4m when considering the savings identified as part of setting the budget for 2023/24.
- 2.4 The Council's budget setting process includes cross-party working groups to appraise the budget and identify new opportunities to improve value for money as well as public consultation and Political scrutiny of the draft budget.

3. Appendices

- 3.1 Appendix 1 – Grant income
- 3.2 Appendix 2 – Savings profile

Appendix 1 – Grant income

Type of grant funding	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Future year allocations	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
DSG Deficit Safety Valve agreement	0	17,500	6,250	6,250	12,000	42,000
New Burdens for New Statutory Domestic Abuse Duty	0	651	653	666	678	2,647
Homelessness Domestic Abuse New Burdens Funding	0	11	27	42	61	142
Private Rented Sector Compliance & Enforcement Competition - Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)	0	98	0	0	0	98
Capacity and Productivity				167		167
LGA Cyber Grant Fund	13	0	0	0	0	13
DLUHC Cyber Support Fund	0	100	0	0	0	100
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme - Skills Fund	209	71	0	0	0	280
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme - Main Grant	18,792	0	0	0	0	18,792
Low code digital waste services			350		0	350
Homes for Ukraine grant			9,352		0	9,352
Safer Streets 3		380			0	380
Safer Streets 4			186	61	0	247
Levelling Up Fund (LUF) - Weymouth Regeneration	0	0	3,948	8,010	7,510	19,468
DfT re Mini Holland	0	0	79	0	0	79
Active Travel (Capital)	351	0	225	0	0	576
Active Travel (Revenue)	88	35	0	0	0	123
DfT Capability Fund Award	0	69	0	0	0	69
DfT Capability Fund Award	0	15	0	0	0	15
DfT Capability Fund Award	0	35	0	0	0	35
LTP Capacity Grant	0	179	0	0	0	179
DfT Electric Vehicle Charging Points (ORCS)	0	0	94	0	0	94
DfT LEVI Capability Fund	0	0	68	0	0	68
DfT Bus Capacity Grant	0	0	171	0	0	171
OEZEV Levi Fund Local EV Infrastructure	0	0	0	1,020	0	1,020
Active Travel Capability	0	0	136	1,978	0	2,114
DfT Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)	1,453	5,501	3,425	3,866	0	14,245
DEFRA Local Nature Recovery Strategies Local Capacity Seed Funding	0	16	33	0	0	49
DEFRA S.31 Grant for Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain for England LPA's	0	20	43	0	0	64
Ukraine and Afghanistan Refugee Housing			0	4,571		4,571
Accommodation for Ex Offenders				60		60
ESFA - Home for Ukraine			2,090			2,090
Family Hubs			419	582		1,000
Digital Future Councils Grant			750			750
Changing Places Grant			184			184
Total	20,906	24,680	28,482	27,272	20,250	121,590

Appendix 2 – Savings profile

Savings	£m 2019/20	£m 2020/21	£m 2021/22	£m 2022/23	£m 2023/24	£m Total
Service Efficiencies - Adults	(4.5)	(1.2)	(7.5)	(3.4)	(6.8)	(23.4)
Service Efficiencies - Children's	(3.0)	(1.6)	(4.6)	(4.3)	(3.9)	(17.4)
Fees and Charges		(1.7)	(2.5)	(3.5)	(4.4)	(12.1)
Staffing & Organisation	(5.2)	(2.0)	(1.6)	(1.1)	(1.0)	(10.9)
Service Efficiencies - Central Finance			(6.0)	(2.5)	(1.9)	(10.4)
Service Efficiencies - Place	(1.4)	(1.1)	(3.6)	(1.2)	(1.8)	(9.1)
Service Efficiencies - Corporate Development & Legal	(2.5)	(0.8)	(1.6)	(1.3)		(6.1)
Transformation, Procurement and Contract Management		(6.0)				(6.0)
Internal/External Audit	(0.2)	(0.0)	(0.3)	(0.0)		(0.6)
Democratic Representation	(0.4)					(0.4)
TOTAL	(17.2)	(14.4)	(27.7)	(17.2)	(19.8)	(96.4)