

Place and Resources Overview Committee

11 July 2024

Cost of Living Support 2024-25

For Recommendation to the Portfolio Holder

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr R Hope, Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Executive Director:

A Dunn, Executive Director, Corporate Development

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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

In May 2024, Cabinet authorised a further £2m of spending from reserves to be allocated to a programme of activities that support Dorset residents with the continued cost of living challenge delivered by Dorset Council services and with our Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) partners.

This paper offers a programme of activities which has been developed to complement and enhance the existing support provided by central government and Dorset Council.

Recommendation:

Following agreement from 11 June Cabinet, Members of the Place and Resources Overview Committee consider and make recommendations on the proposed programme of funded activity to support those residents hit hardest by the ongoing cost of living challenge to enable the Cabinet Member for Culture, Customer Services and Communities and the Executive Director for Corporate Development (S151) to undertake their authority delegated by Cabinet.

Reason for Recommendation:

Extensive support has been provided to Dorset Council residents over the last 12-18 months as outlined in the earlier Cabinet reports of 28 February 2023 and 11 June 2024. However, the cost-of-living challenge is continuing to have a severely detrimental impact on our most vulnerable residents. A proactive, targeted, and flexible approach to supporting Dorset's communities with the cost-of-living challenge in both the short and medium term, based on evidence and data sets, will continue to enable Dorset Council to meet identified gaps in local and national support initiatives and provide support to our most vulnerable residents.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 Many Dorset Council residents have been directly affected by the cost-of-living challenge. In many ways, Dorset residents are facing the same issues as people across the country. However, our 2022 research data showed one factor affects Dorset Council residents more than elsewhere in the country: the high cost of housing relative to earnings. This has been felt in higher rental and mortgage payments, which lead to lower or, in some cases, no disposable income with which to absorb any price increases to fuel, energy bills and food.
- 1.2 Since mid-2022, Dorset Council has worked closely with our statutory and voluntary & community sector partners through the 'Dorset Together – Cost of Living' network to support residents with the challenges they are facing. This programme developed into four initial priority workstreams:
 - I. Keeping warm and well
 - II. Food security
 - III. Support to increase volunteering.
 - IV. Keeping homes warm and energy efficient.
- 1.3 The project team recognised the growing challenge around housing and homelessness and some funding was re-allocated to support this for the latter part of the year.
- 1.4 Proposals for various activities and schemes which could provide immediate and medium-term support to Dorset residents hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis, funded by £2 million (taken from the General Fund reserves) for the financial year 2023-24 were developed and approved by Cabinet in February 2023. The results of the first three quarters of 2024 were presented to People and Health Scrutiny Committee in March 2024 who recommended to Cabinet that funding for the cost-of-living support

should be extended and reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

- 1.5 Further support for an additional £2m was approved by Cabinet on 11 June 2024. All previous papers are available in the **background papers**.
- 1.6 Cabinet agreed that specific proposals for funding and activity should be discussed at Place and Resources Overview Committee, with final approval to be given subsequently by the Portfolio Holder for Customer, Culture and Community Engagement and the Executive Director Corporate Development (S151).
- 1.7 Cabinet requested that some programmes be developed to focus on supporting proactive measures to stop vulnerable residents from reaching crisis point and also more support for key voluntary community sector organisations (VCSO).
2. **Proposed programme of activities.**
- 2.1 The table below is a summary of the proposed programme of activity. A more detailed version is available in **appendix 1**.

No.	DC/ VCSO lead	Project Summary	Amount
1	Housing – Homelessness prevention	To continue the additional support provided in Q3&4 23-24 with 4 priority programmes of support : 1. Arrears/Rent in advance & deposit payments 2. Tenancy Sustainment 3. Media and information awareness 4. Emergency Food vouchers (for residents not valid for other schemes).	£177,500
2	Place - Economic Regeneration	To continue to invest in the Healthy Homes Dorset scheme , focusing on geographical locations of disadvantage.	£200,000
3	Citizens Advice	To extend the CoL caseworkers and adding a further 0.5FTE to assist with increased demand. Additional resource for volunteer training and supervision	£214,489
4	Corporate Services -	To continue to support the Discretionary Housing Payment Allowance . Payments often	£100,000

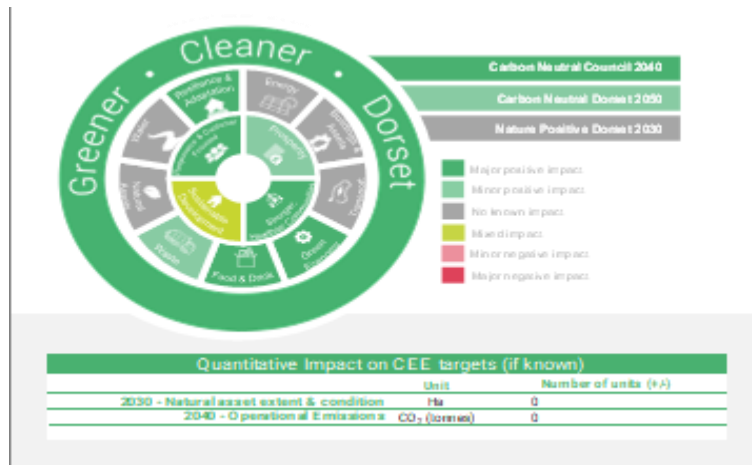
	Revenue and Benefits	prevent eviction and allow short term financial support regarding meeting costs in this area which can assist residents meet other financial demands.	
5	Adults Services - Housing	To continue to support the Disabilities Facilities Grant to enable energy efficient improvements to be included as part of their building adaptations	£150,000
6	Adults Services - Housing	Investment in Lendology . This SW Councils initiated scheme enables low income and disabled residents to get low interest loans for essential house repairs.	£50,000
7	Communities and Partnerships & VCISO	Continue to invest in emergency and affordable food security that has a referral system.	£100,000
8	Communities and Partnerships & VCISO	Invest in more VCS led sustainable and affordable food security projects in areas of most need.	£100,000
9	Children's Services & VCISO	Boost the Household Support Fund (HSF) targeted means tested energy support referral scheme	£100,000
10	People First Dorset	Invest in a targeted programme for Cost of Living advice, support and anti-scams for vulnerable residents with learning disabilities.	£25,000
11	Age UK NSW Dorset	Invest in their information, advice and guidance service for vulnerable older residents to ensure they are receiving all the income they are entitled to.	£50,000
12	Island Community Action	Invest in their Helping Hands programme that directly supports 1020+ vulnerable older/vulnerable people on Portland.	£50,000

13	Dorset Community Action	Support for village/community hall sustainability.	£30,000
14	Place – Community Transport & VCISO	Invest in the sustainability of Dorset’s community transport network.	£100,000
15	Customer Services - Libraries	Invest in the extension of the digital inclusion device loan scheme.	£10,000
16	Children’s Services & VCISO	To continue the additional 4 targeted priority programmes that support low-income families: 1. Increased food offer for children attending the holidays activities and food (HAF) programme (£20,000) 2. Additional hours for pre-school children commencing school in September 2024&25 enabling parents to work (£20,000) 3. Additional funding to the Local Alliance Groups to distribute to VCISO’s working with vulnerable families struggling with the cost of living. (£42,000) 4. Locality Family Help Teams to purchase essential starting school equipment for vulnerable families e.g. Shoes, bags, uniform. (£18,000).	£100,000
17	Economic Regeneration – Digital Place	Invest in the Digital Doorway device programme for vulnerable residents	£150,000
		Total:	<u>£1,706,989</u>
18+		Yet to be allocated for quarters 3 and 4 according to emerging trends.	£293,011
		Budget total:	£2,000,000

3. Financial Implications

Cabinet agreed that up to £2m can be utilised from Council reserves to support this programme. Cabinet agreed that future financial support of cost of living will be considered as part of the annual budget setting process, not part of general reserves.

4. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications



ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS

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

Corporate Plan Aims	Impact
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Prosperity	minor positive impact
Stronger healthier communities	strongly supports it
Sustainable Development & Housing	neutral
Responsive & Customer Focused	strongly supports it

5. Well-being and Health Implications

This programme of activities has been designed to positively support the well-being and health of Dorset Council's residents.

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: Medium

Although the previous £2 million has achieved its purpose and has significantly supported our vulnerable residents to weather the cost-of-living challenge, the challenge has not ended. Emerging trends throughout this financial year have shown that housing issues have become more prevalent. There is a risk that our residents, who may have been relying on some of the funded programmes, may not be able to bridge the financial gap now the funding support has ended. In addition, there remains only 6 months more of financial provision from the current Government under the Household Support Fund (HSF) which supports many vulnerable people including paying for free school meal vouchers in the school holidays, supermarket vouchers (to support with increased energy prices), and grants to foodbanks and social supermarkets.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

Proposals for the Cost-of-Living Challenge programme of activities continue to target our most vulnerable residents. Means testing will be used where possible to ensure the additional funding reaches those in greatest need.

In March 2023, our data and insights team undertook extensive data modelling to identify those households in greatest need. Using this data, we were able to identify gaps in national government and local support to date. We continue to work closely in partnership with our VCS partners such as Citizens Advice and the food security organisations.

8. **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Full programme detail

9. **Background Papers**

- [Cost of Living Challenge Cabinet paper 23rd February 2023](#)
- [Cost of Living Challenge People and Health Scrutiny paper 7th March 2024](#)
- [Cost of living Challenge Cabinet paper 11th June 2024](#)

Appendix 1 - £2m Cost of Living proposal for 24-25

Cabinet have given the steer to support proposals to proactively and reactively support the continued Cost of Living Challenge throughout 2024-25. They have requested some specific provision be made to support the VCS assisting our communities with the Cost of Living (CoL).

These are the first proposals to seek agreement, where stated some projects may still have the ability to be flexed financially. There is purposely an amount left unallocated to be able to support emerging trends as they appear in the Autumn/Winter.

Indicative numbers of beneficiaries have been included and a note of the degree of flexibility in the funding requested.

No.	DC Directorate /VCSO lead	Project detail	CoL Support Theme	Amount	Proactive / Reactive	Links with Council Plan Priorities
1	Adult Services - Housing – Homelessness prevention	<p>The Housing Options team has refocused its delivery to work on proactive prevention activities. With the help of the last financial year's funding alongside other funding, the team have become agile and responsive to households working with residents and landlords at earlier stages rather than working reactively once an eviction notice has been received. Last year, with support of the CoL payment it helped prevent 179 households either maintain their home or find suitable new accommodation and 63% of residents who contacted us about being made homeless, were able to stay in their homes with our support.</p> <p>1. Arrears/Rent in advance & deposit payments. This will support the team to negotiate with landlords to stop evictions from taking place or help to find new suitable accommodation. (£100,000)</p> <p>2. Tenancy Sustainment. To maintain existing capacity of one of the tenancy sustainment officers to keep proactive negotiations with landlords (£42,500)</p> <p>3. Media and information awareness – To run a media campaign to continue to raise awareness of the importance of asking for housing help earlier in the process with us and VCS agencies, before eviction (£10,000)</p> <p>4. Food vouchers – These will continue to be used for when a resident/s present with nothing and can immediately be given by members of the housing team whilst other emergency support can be prepared (£25,000)</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 500+</p>	Sustainable / Affordable Housing	£177,500	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Driving economic prosperity • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council

		<i>Funding request can be flexed with the non-acceptance of any of these options</i>				
2	Place - Economic Regeneration	<p>Invest in the Healthy Homes Dorset scheme.</p> <p>The £4m HUG2 funding we have been awarded has set criteria and will benefit residents who are off grid only. This extra funding will continue to complement this provision, offering opportunities for low income on-grid residents who meet the Healthy Homes Dorset requirements. Energy costs are rising, and while there is some support in place, investing in appropriate clean microgeneration schemes i.e., solar, can make a huge difference to people's lives. We have a readymade delivery portal (Healthy Homes Dorset) through which it will be administered.</p> <p>Following on from the success of the last year's spend, areas of disadvantage will be targeted for this support.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 50-100</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Sustainable / Affordable Housing	£200,000	Pro-active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating sustainable developments and housing • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Driving economic prosperity
3	Citizens Advice	<p>CA continue to support DC services with unprecedented increasing demand to their specialist services. Many residents are presenting to them with negative budgets. Specialist caseworkers are able to support them with income maximisation. The number of residents seeking help each month has increased by 10% in the last financial year. They helped 577 clients with 1900 issues and helped these clients secure £529,350 additional income.</p> <p>This programme of activities will extend the current specialised CoL caseworkers to keep delivering this additional service and add an additional 0.5 FTE caseworker for North Dorset area (where residents often struggle to access services due to the rurality), as well as provide some additional funding for training and management support for volunteer capacity so they can extend their remit on generalist advice.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 600+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed with non-acceptance of the 0.5 FTE post (£21,881)</i></p>	Access to CoL advice and Guidance	£214,489	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council • Creating stronger, healthier communities
4		Discretionary Housing Payment Allowance		£100,000		

	Corporate Services - Revenue and Benefits	<p>Dorset Council has a fixed annual funding budget from Government and this financial assistance supports those struggling to pay their rent within an eligibility framework. Revenues and Benefits colleagues work closely with our Housing needs team. Payments often prevent eviction and allow short term financial support regarding meeting costs in this area which can assist residents meet other financial demands. Additional funding in this area will directly support some of the most vulnerable within an already established legal framework and administration. Likely to prevent residents from being made homeless. Homelessness enquiries increased by 31% in the last financial year.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 50-100</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Sustainable / Affordable Housing		Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council
5	Adults Services - Housing	<p>Disabled facilities Grant</p> <p>This grant is given by Government each year to support adaptations to buildings for disabled residents. However, it does not include energy adaptations such as energy efficient boilers / heat pumps. This would support some of our most vulnerable residents reduce their bills by replacing old inefficient boilers / night storage heaters.</p> <p>They had £320K last FY and had evidenced really good proactive outcomes for some of our residents living independently with a disability.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 20-30</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Sustainable / Affordable Housing	£150,000	Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating sustainable developments and housing • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council
6	Adults Services – Housing Standards	<p>Investment in <u>Lendology</u></p> <p>Dorset Council is part of a consortia of councils which contribute to Lendology CIC (set up by SW Councils) which enabled low income and disabled residents to get low interest loans for essential house repairs. These residents can't get credit elsewhere but the scheme has less than a 0.1% default rate. DC gets all its own funding and interest back (4%). The money is recycled back into our 'pot'. DC currently has invested £900K and £820K is currently loaned out, further investment will enable our housing standards team to proactively support vulnerable low income and disabled residents to remain in their homes.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 5-10 (plus reinvestment value)</p>	Sustainable / Affordable Housing	£50,000	Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating sustainable developments and housing • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council

		<i>Funding request can be flexed but £50,000 is probably the minimum investment for impact.</i>				
7	Corporate Development - Communities and Partnerships & VCS	<p>Emergency and Affordable food security</p> <p>Demand for emergency and affordable food projects such as social supermarkets and foodbanks continues to increase beyond current capacity. This funding will allow 2 targeted rounds of support funding during this financial year.</p> <p>To ensure our limited funds are going to the most vulnerable people and not creating additional demand on the system, funding will only be awarded to food projects that work with system partners using a referral-based model. Currently there are only 3 who do not use a referral system. The Communities and Partnerships team will work with them to encourage and support them to adopt this model.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 16,000+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Sustainable / Affordable Access to Food	£100,000	Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Protecting our natural environment, climate and ecology
8	Corporate Development - Communities and Partnerships & VCS	<p>Food security – wider sustainable and affordable projects</p> <p>Work is currently underway to develop several projects with VCISO's to deliver longer term food sustainability and affordability projects which there are currently gaps in delivery. The aim of these projects will be to move vulnerable residents along the journey from long term foodbank usage. This potentially will include provision for basic food hygiene online courses for volunteers supporting these projects; tailored education sessions and potentially the development of a multi-agency social canteen in Weymouth which is reporting the greatest need.</p> <p>The request is for the amount of funding to be ear-marked to support this critical agenda. Proposals will be signed off by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Customer Service and S151 Officer and reported on, with impacts, at the appropriate scrutiny committee later in the year.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 1000+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Sustainable / Affordable Access to Food	£100,000	Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Protecting our natural environment, climate and ecology

9	Children's Services & VCISO	<p>The Household Support Fund (HSF) has been extended until 30th September 2024. Within this fund, there is a set amount of targeted energy support referral distribution model that has replaced the public application supermarket voucher scheme. £570,000 of HLF has been budgeted from this fund.</p> <p>In the last financial year, the CoL fund supported the public application fund which was highly successful, so it has been requested by members of the Cabinet that we continue to make additional support for this, scaled according to the shorter timeframe.</p> <p>Consideration will also be given for further support in the Autumn period if any further support is offered by the new national Government.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 666</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Access to CoL advice and Guidance	£100,000	Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities
10	People First Dorset	<p>People First Dorset (PFD) is a long-standing established organisation that work specifically with adults with learning disabilities to provide education, support and social activities for Dorset Council residents. These residents often have difficulty accessing information and advice; tend to have either fixed or low incomes; housing issues; low mental and physical health outcomes and therefore have become more vulnerable during the cost of living.</p> <p>It has been reported that there has been a significant increase in these residents being targeted for fraudulent financial scams and cybercrime.</p> <p>PFD have developed a project to run a series of accessible workshops and drop-in sessions for them and their carers across the Dorset Council area in partnership with specialist providers and our Day Centres to advise and educate in accessible formats on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fraudulent financial scams and cyber crime - Income maximisation - Housing and independent living support - Budgeting - Mental and physical health support <p>Potential beneficiaries: 50-100+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed a little</i></p>	Access to CoL advice and Guidance	£25,000	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities

11	Age UK NSW	<p>Age UK- North, South, West Dorset (Age NSW) support older people with information, advice, and guidance in their welfare benefits team. Dorset has the highest population of 85+ and 2nd highest population of 65+.</p> <p>The majority of this their work is assistance in completing applications for Attendance Allowance; Personal Independence Payments (PIP); Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Pension Credit. In the last financial year, this achieved an additional £2.2m in entitled benefits.</p> <p>This is not a regularly commissioned service by any of the statutory authorities and is currently a significant risk area for Age NSW. This funding will enable Age NSW to continue to support vulnerable older people, most of whom are on fixed budgets to ensure they are receiving the full benefits they are entitled to.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 100+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed.</i></p>	Access to CoL advice and Guidance	£50,000	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities
12	Island Community Action	<p>Helping Hands Support programme</p> <p>The Island Community Action (ICA) Helping Hands programme supports 1020 older, isolated and disabled people on Portland with a series of CoL support programmes including befriending, advice and benefits, lunch clubs, shopping and pharmacy collection, community transport to medical appointments and other mental and physical health support.</p> <p>This programme is not a commissioned service by any of the statutory authorities and is a significant risk area for ICA. Demand for this service is significantly increasing due to the cost-of-living challenge and ICA are currently at full capacity without investment.</p> <p>This is the only project being proposed to be geographically specific, however Portland does have many geographically specific challenges which ICA are experts in supporting and they offer a holistic support service.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 1020+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Access to CoL advice and Guidance	£50,000	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities

13	Dorset Community Action	<p>Support for village/community halls sustainability 60% of the Dorset Council area is rural. In rural communities the village/community halls are often the focal point and the key to delivering local services that support health and well-being and cost of living support.</p> <p>Dorset Community Action (DCA) are the Dorset Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) representative. They have a close working relationship with 192 village halls in the Dorset Council area.</p> <p>Funding for halls sustainability is scarce, however a 2024 research report from DCA identified 5 themes including good use of village/community halls in rural areas breaks down the need for often expensive transport to urban areas to access services; promotes social inclusion; supports mental and physical well-being; promote community connectivity. All of these themes link directly to supporting the cost of living agenda in rural communities.</p> <p>This funding will support DCA to run a programme to offer a series of additional advocacy, casework and workshop support to help to make these halls sustainable via funding, governance, volunteer advice, good practice and to link with other partners.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 192 Village Halls plus their local communities</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Access to CoL advice and Guidance	£30,000	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities
14	Place – Community Transport & VCISO	<p>Community Transport. Core budget for the Community Transport scheme in Dorset Council is well below national council average and predominately used to assist startup schemes with the expectation they are self-sustaining by the end of year one. Unlike most other council supported schemes, most of Dorset's are 100% volunteer led (apart for official bus route commissions) and often only have the capacity to support medical appointments.</p> <p>Unfortunately, with increased insurance, fuel and other costs many are not sustainable within this period, the HSF have given £20K to support with community transport schemes with immediate costs but only 15 of the 75 schemes have benefitted and there is now a waiting list for support.</p>	Sustainable / Affordable Transport	£100,000	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council

		<p>Affordable transport options are continually raised as a barrier for accessing local community support across the full VCS and has been added as a priority to support with the Cost-of-Living priorities for 2024-25.</p> <p>This funding would offer additional support to their identified priorities to supporting and developing the network to become more sustainable.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving financial support to schemes whose vehicles are at the end of their serviceable lives so that the schemes can continue to provide their service. 2. Increasing the contribution of the HSF to support some of the 60 schemes with core expenditure costs. 3. Financial support for journey planning software to increase efficiency and reduce admin time for the volunteer scheme co-ordinators 4. Setting up new car schemes in areas where transport is limited (based on mapping data). <p>Potential beneficiaries: 1000+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>				
15	Customer Services - Libraries	<p>In 2023 Dorset Library Service started running an iPad loan scheme seeking to reduce isolation and increase digital inclusion which has a direct positive impact on CoL support. Other targeted outcomes include improving health and wellbeing and increasing employment levels. The programme also includes 1:1 tuition with a DC volunteer Digital Champion to explain the use of technology in a jargon-free way.</p> <p>Currently iPads are available from 7 libraries (Blandford, Bridport, Dorchester, Ferndown, Sherborne, Swanage, Weymouth), however now the pilot programme has proven a success in its aims, there is a need to extend it further.</p> <p>This additional funding will provide 10 new Wi-Fi enabled devices; licenses; cases; sim cards; marketing and promotional materials.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 100+ (continuous reissue)</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Digital Inclusion	£10,000	Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council

16	Children's Services & VCSO	<p>The cost-of-living impact are continuing to affect Dorset's families with children, particularly those on low incomes. The funded projects from the past financial year evidenced the positive impact this funding has in supporting low income.</p> <p>1. Readiness for school in September 2024/25 (£20,000) - this is a proactive programme to support young children currently evidencing delays with language, social and emotional development as this will have a longer-term impact on their attainment in school. It will support parents to work as children will be in childcare. It will also support the sustainability of VCS childcare settings.</p> <p>2. Local Alliance Groups (£42,000) – This funding will be distributed to locality based VCSO's directly supporting low income and vulnerable families with the cost-of-living challenge including VCS childcare settings.</p> <p>3. Cost of Living for school readiness programmes (£18,000) – This funding will remove the pressures of low-income families to spend money on school readiness essential items such as book bags, uniform, shoes. The funding will be distributed via our Locality Family Help teams working with these families.</p> <p>4. Increased food offer for the holidays activities and food programme (HAF) (£20,000) - This will enable flexibility to support smaller local VCSO's to broaden their HAF offer in communities not currently delivering.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 200+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>	Access to CoL support	£100,000	Proactive & Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council
17	Economic Regeneration – Digital Place	<p>Digital Doorway Project</p> <p>In Dorset 11% of residents are completely offline and 20% lack some of the essential skills to get online. The digital doorway project has so far supported over 600 applications with remanufacturing used devices (475 laptops, 125 tablets) along with 200 dongles and 275 SIM cards, equating to over £200,000 of ICT equipment. The economic impact of this is potentially over £1m.</p> <p>Many recipients have been supported through the Dorset Council Digital Champion volunteers programme to improve their online skills which supports the cost-of-living support programme by enabling these vulnerable residents access to employment; online shopping and access to mental and physical health support.</p>	Digital Inclusion	£150,000	Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving economic prosperity • Creating stronger, healthier communities • Becoming a more responsive customer focused council • Protecting our natural environment, climate and ecology

	<p>Carbon savings to this programme also include 63,000KGs of sequestered carbon emissions and 38,000,000 litres of water.</p> <p>This funding will enable the project to continue and have the flexibility to source devices suitable to individuals' needs.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries: 600+</p> <p><i>Funding request can be flexed</i></p>				
		Total:	<u>£1,706,989</u>		
18+	Yet to be allocated for quarters 3 and 4 according to emerging trends		£293,011		
		Budget total:	£2,000,000		