

Cabinet

15 October 2024

Dorset Council - Strategic Asset Management Plan 2024-2030

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr R Biggs, Property & Assets and Economic Growth

Local Councillor(s):

All

Executive Director:

Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

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

Brief Summary: Cabinet is asked to approve a new Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP). The SAMP is a key enabler of the Council's corporate plan and designed to ensure that the Council's large and diverse estate helps establish the future Dorset we want to see.

The SAMP marks a new chapter in how we manage the Council asset portfolio and covers the period from 2024-2030, replacing the previous Property Strategy and Asset Management Plan 2020-2024.

By moving the Council away from being traditional property managers to placemakers, the SAMP provides a strategic framework and a clear set of principles through which the future use of land and property assets, as a platform for change and growth, will be based.

Recommendation: Cabinet is recommended to approve the Strategic Asset Management Plan 2024-2030.

Reason for Recommendation: The new SAMP replaces the previous Property Strategy and Asset Management Plan 2020-2024 and strongly underpins the emerging Council plan. This includes driving economic regeneration and growth in Dorset as well as strongly enabling the further transformation of Council services and maximising the financial return from its commercial assets in the context of the financial challenges the Council faces to 2030

Its purpose is to establish a land and property portfolio which supports the Council's Vision, ensuring value for money and a commitment to become carbon net zero, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The SAMP must be fit for purpose, support inclusivity and green growth, empower our communities and provide opportunities for proactive working with partners for the benefit of Dorset.

1. **Strategic Asset Management Plan 2024-2030**

- 1.1 The new SAMP proposes a new way of working whereby the Council commits to the provision of a Council property and asset base that works for everyone, delivering better public services, value for money, enhanced placemaking and fairer sustainable local economies.
- 1.2 The SAMP for 2024-2030 includes a number of linked policies and several key themes which relate to and deliver wider corporate priorities and new ways of working and these are set out below:
 - That our land and property assets are a corporate resource and asset management and decision making need to take account of corporate priorities alongside service priorities.
 - A desire to use assets to stimulate and support economic regeneration and growth, and contribute to the shaping of Dorset as a place, through enabling cultural, commercial and employment opportunities as well as housing development
 - An aim to use our assets to deliver Council priorities and create environments which address the challenges our communities face. Through our strategic asset review process, we will provide assets

which seek to improve social mobility, reduce health inequalities, support vulnerable people and drive community cohesion.

- A commitment to become carbon net zero, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The SAMP must be fit for purpose, support inclusivity and green growth.
- Recognition of the need to rationalise the operational estate to reduce costs and liabilities and realise a financial return from the disposal of surplus assets
- A desire to explore commercial opportunities from our assets, including through acquisition, with a change in the organisational risk appetite and an agile approach, to achieve commercial advantage where appropriate.
- That the competing demands and pressures on our assets require a balanced strategic asset review approach including the development of options appraisals and business cases which in turn, enable evaluation of social, financial and economic value.
- The need for an improved understanding of the condition liability across the estate and a risk-based approach to prioritising limited funding to meet health and safety, statutory compliance and critical business continuity needs
- The use of external, private sector agents and consultants, alongside internal expertise, to test, challenge and validate asset proposals.
- The importance of good asset data and systems to support an evidence-based approach to decision making and to inform and optimise management and maintenance of the estate

1.3 The operational action plan and key performance indicators remain to be confirmed and will be developed as the targets and objectives of the new Council plan emerge.

1.4 This document has had extensive internal consultation and received significant support and endorsement. However, it is important to remember that any asset strategy can only work if it is corporately supported and recognised by all parties as the governing process for decision making and implementation.

- 1.5 In terms of the process to support the implementation of the SAMP, it describes strategic option reviews of assets and a comprehensive appraisal of the options before making any recommendations.
- 1.6 The environmental and sustainability considerations will be high profile throughout the policies and the processes.
- 1.7 One of the key organisational benefits of this approach is that by diligent adherence to the process a planned pipeline of key projects and a phased financial commitment and return can be achieved.

2. **Overview**

- 2.1 The SAMP was considered by Place and Resources Overview Committee at its meeting on 12th September.
- 2.2 The minutes are available at appendix 2 but in summary the Committee was:
 - Broadly supportive of the SAMP and its direction
 - Recommended further linkage to the Council Plan
 - Noted the need for definition of key performance indicators in due course.

3. **Financial Implications**

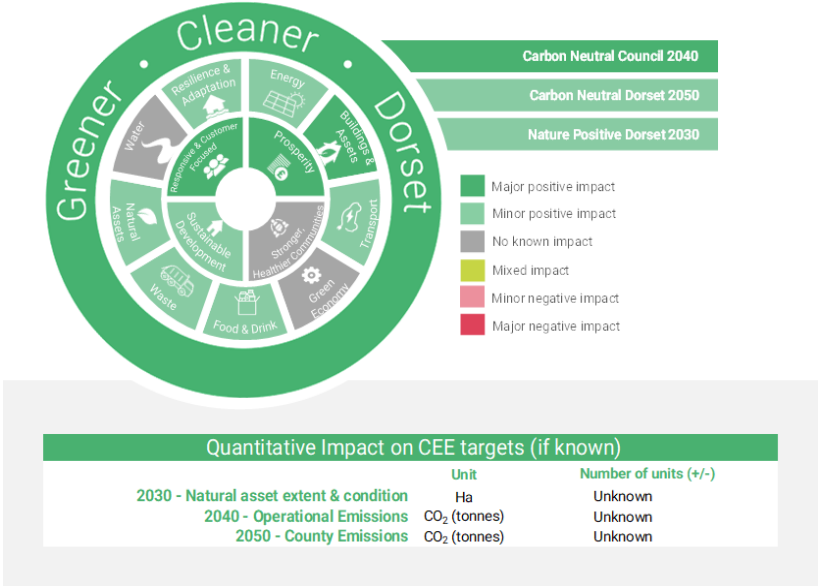
This a policy document which sets out key principles and as such it is premature to assess detailed financial implications. In the context of the financial challenges the Council faces to 2030, the SAMP will strongly support further transformation of Council services and help maximise the financial return from its commercial assets

The implementation of the SAMP does not of itself require additional resources, but a reinforcement of the use of effective resources and collaboration which all Councils would seek.

4. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

The SAMP plays a critical role in the delivery of the council's [Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy](#) (as noted in action E3 of its action plan) – and linked strategies like our emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy and refreshed Waste Strategy. Our operational buildings constitute ~27% of our operational carbon footprint, whilst our

infrastructure and the siting of assets has implications for the footprint of staff and customer travel. Our commercial assets – especially our farmed estate – and our land also have a central role in our scope 3 footprint, and for our broader facilitation role on climate and nature. As such, the SAMP will be key to ensuring that our estate is supporting the provision of low carbon energy; optimizing energy efficiency and waste minimization; facilitating low carbon travel; supporting sustainable land management and nature-based solutions; and ensuring the climate resilience of our assets. The SAMP accordingly (a) identifies climate and nature as one of its core priorities and in Principle 7; (b) includes climate and nature as one of its core KPIs; (c) embeds it within our asset review process; and (d) notes in the action plan the intent to produce supporting strategies. Moreover, the broader ambitions of the SAMP (such as enabling multi-functional spaces or embedding our Effective Property Services approach) will further support our climate and nature ambitions.



5. Well-being and Health Implications

By improving places, and contributing to improving local economies, the new SAMP will help foster a culture of working together to create a fairer, more prosperous and more sustainable Dorset for current and future generations. At this stage quantification of the direct health benefits is not

6. Other Implications

None at this stage

7. **Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

8. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

At this stage the potential equalities impacts are assessed as positive due to the principals proposed, particularly to support front line services, to improve buildings, economies and neighbourhoods and to create better places. However, the high-level principles of this approach preclude detailed and meaningful assessment.

Each detailed strategy and key decisions on asset use will require a specific equalities impact assessment considering in detail the impact on groups with protected characteristics.

9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Dorset Council SAMP 2024-2030.

Appendix 2 Extract minutes of the Place & Resources Overview Committee of 12 September 2024.

10. **Background Papers**

N/a

11. **Report Sign Off**

10.1 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)