



Dorset Council Transformation Plan 2025 to 2029

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1. Purpose

The Dorset Council transformation plan 2025-29 builds on the foundations of our successful transformative approach since 2019 and the inception of Dorset Council.

Our plan launches our whole council transformation ambitions and seeks to revolutionise our operations, technology, processes and structures to better serve our customers. It will develop closer, inclusive collaboration with our communities, towns, parishes and partners ensuring through preventative practice everyone has an opportunity to thrive.

Over the life of this plan our aim is to radically transform the way the council works, and this plan sets out the intent and commitment of the council to do this.

In so doing, we will further enable the delivery of the Dorset Council Plan 2024-29 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

“Working together to create a fairer, more prosperous and more sustainable Dorset for current and future generations”

- provide high quality and affordable housing
- grow our economy
- communities for all
- respond to the climate and nature crisis

Figure 1. Dorset Council vision, priorities and values



The transformation plan is focused on changing the state of the future organisation to enable the council to deliver its priorities more effectively with our communities and partners and at a cost that increases value for money for Dorset residents. Whilst this aligns to all priorities, there is a specific focus on “communities for all” that is implicit throughout the plan.

The objective of the plan is to improve service delivery and to aid the council to become financially sustainable over the next 4 years as we deliver our new council plan. We will invest in our capacity and capability for change and establish robust governance and delivery framework that continually looks to meet and deliver against the challenges set out in the medium-term financial strategy.

2. Vision for whole council transformation

Our ambitions continue to grow for Dorset. We are passionate that we continue to improve how we deliver services through innovative approaches despite increasing financial pressures due to rising costs and increasing demands.

The council has a committed and valued workforce delivering a broad range of over 450 services across Dorset.

To further enable our workforce and improve experiences for residents, we have launched a whole council review of our operating model that will:

- transform how we engage with residents and communities, building trust and promoting independence
- provide an improved customer experience, so that interacting with the council is easier and we can respond to customer need more efficiently
- significantly reduce our operating costs over the next four years by modernising our technology systems and driving out efficiencies in the way we work and manage our business processes

Transformation can be defined as fundamentally changing the systems, processes, people and technology across a whole organisation to achieve measurable improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and stakeholder satisfaction.

For Dorset Council this means changing the way we deliver our services and the way we operate, to achieve our council priorities within our financial constraints.

It means approaching this as a whole system change, applying solutions that meet the needs of our residents as a community. Driving change within and across services underpins the delivery of our council plan and helps to frame how the council will need to adapt to remain relevant, fit for purpose, financially stable and maintain strong service delivery in a changing landscape.

3. Why we need to transform

We know from our 2023-24 residents survey that 85% of our customers say that they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. However, only 34% believe that the council provides value for money and 54% of customers report that they trust the council.

The council is recognised as being high performing in many areas of service delivery, and for our many achievements since we formed in 2019. Yet our residents and customers tell us that contacting and doing business with the council can also be disjointed and frustrating. There are opportunities to work more efficiently, by bringing activity together, redesigning processes and ways of working, adopting new technology and by supporting and empowering employees to develop the right skills for the future.

The council does not yet operate in a way that maximises the benefits of unitarisation, with duplication of some functions across departments causing a fragmented and sometimes slower response for customers.

Current political, socio-economic and financial pressures are having a significant impact on the way that all local authorities operate. These external factors are bringing pressure to bear through increased demand, rising costs and complexity, in addition to reducing funding.

In the medium term, the predicted budget gap by 2029/30 is £84.2M. There is recognition that transformation alone is not going to solve the financial and budget position, but it should be recognised as one of the ways which the council is able to address financial challenges in a more sustainable way.

The 2025/6 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Strategy Report identifies a savings requirement of £44.5M to set a balanced budget. This will be achieved through two mechanisms - the delivery of transformation savings through the Our Future Council (OFC) programme and through the delivery of Service review savings. The 2025/6 budget sets OFC a savings target of £10M to be achieved during the 25/26 financial year.

The updated medium-term financial plan will be recommended to Cabinet on 28 January and Full Council on 11 February 2025.

We recognise that addressing financial pressures can be completed in several ways including the reduction of public services as demand increases. However, this is not aligned to our council vision and our aim to keep our customers and communities at the heart of what we do.

We are committed to ensuring that all our customers, whatever their needs, have a good experience when they use or interact with Dorset Council services. This reflects our Council Plan priority of “communities for all”.

Whilst we strive to provide good quality services across the council at all times, there are currently varied levels of customer experience within the range of services delivered by the council. As a result, fundamental review of the council’s operating model is required to continue to deliver improved services and financial sustainability. This will deliver efficient, customer-focused services at a reduced cost, ensuring financial resilience now and in the future.

4. Our transformation journey to now

We set out significant convergence and transformation ambitions following the council’s launch in April 2019. This reflected the need for convergence and adaptation of the way that we operate to reflect the change environment around us.

The changes and progress that the council has both experienced and delivered during this time have been significant, multifaceted and have involved service specific and council-wide changes. The pace of this work was affected by the global pandemic.

Through our first transformation plan 2021-25 and a range of programmes across several services, including children's, adults and place, we have established the foundations for this plan. This has involved working with residents to improve outcomes through a strengths-based approach, improving efficiency and reducing costs.

This has included:

- launching a **place-based model through the opening of family hubs**, providing a single space for different services to work together with families. Where children couldn't stay within their homes, networks for foster carers were embedded to improve support and friendship for carers and children across placements.
- **providing more residential placements** for care experienced children and those with additional needs means that more of our children and young people stay nearer to their families and the places they knew.
- **opening a new school** and developing other settings for children with special educational needs and disabilities and investing £40 million to initiate a sustainable increase longer-term.
- **establishing Care Dorset** which has helped twice as many residents to be remain living independently at home. This included setting up new reablement beds within months of the company's founding.
- **transforming our relationship with the homecare market**, and together with changes in our internal systems, greatly improving waiting times for care packages, with people waiting less than 5 days for this care to commence.
- **increasing the number of homes being built** or acquired through positive partnerships; and improved prevention services which has reduced the number of those experiencing homelessness by almost 50 per cent.
- successfully **bringing together planning services** enabled Dorset to be at the forefront as a single planning authority. This reduced waiting times for residents and businesses.
- developing and launching a **new library strategy** and operating model to inspire, connect and enable our communities at the heart of where they live, supporting them where there is most need and delivering essential services that align with council and partner priorities.
- recognising that customers often find it difficult to navigate accessing services across such a large organisation, work was started to make this easier, increasing and **improving online services**. This resulted in the reduction in waiting times for customers of those services in early pilots. This has set the framework for much bigger transformation across the council. Further improving the way that customers access **help out of office hours** resulted in all calls being answered and responded to immediately.
- setting up a **joint venture recruitment agency** to reduce cost of employing temporary staff

Since the council was formed in 2019, £123m of savings and cost avoidance have been achieved as a direct result of the convergence of systems and processes and the transformation of some services. This was the planned outcome of the reorganisation and the move to a unitary authority model. These savings and cost avoidance have enabled the council to mitigate pressures resulting from inflation and increases in demand and to maintain services following reductions in funding from

central Government. Consequently, all funding has been reinvested in front line services.

5. Target operating model

The purpose of a target operating model (TOM) is to translate the vision, objectives and strategy of the council as set out in the Dorset Council Plan into set of ways of working that apply across the council.

This helps to inform whole organisation change as it creates a common understanding of how the council will operate in the future, both within and across functions.

This enables decisions about what to change more effectively as impacts can be better understood, planned for and sequenced. This makes change management more efficient and often more successful in delivering the improvements required.

It focuses on **how** we can achieve the future council we want to see and enables our employees, residents, business, communities and partners understand what we are seeking to change. The target operating model can therefore help tell the story of the council's transformative journey, describing how services will be delivered and might be experienced in the future. This includes describing how we are achieving our four Council Plan priorities.

The target operating model:

- sets out how to transform the council's ways of working and culture, and redesigns how services are delivered with customer experience at its core
- brings together the transformation business cases, creates cross-organisation working and aligns them to a consistent future state
- enhances financial benefits by creating more consistent approach to the use of technology, consolidation of activities, reduction in duplication and economies of scale

The council will embed this revised target operating model through the delivery of this transformation plan.

The model shows the key functions that make up the future way of working for the council:

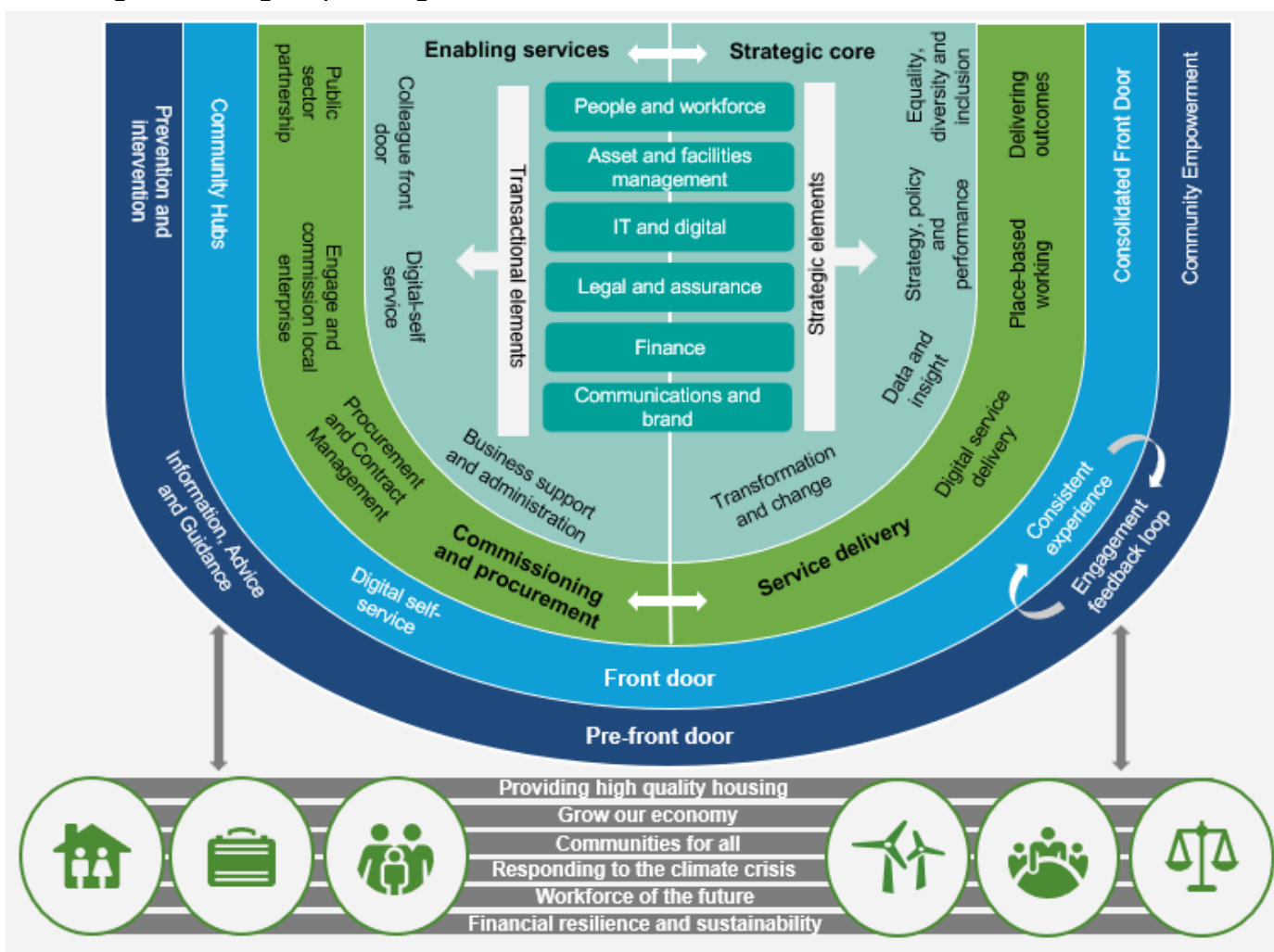
- **pre-front door:** a pre-front door that focuses on prevention and intervention, community empowerment, community engagement and the proactive provision of information advice and guidance.
- **front door:** a consolidated front door and set of community hubs that provide a consistent customer experience. Customers are enabled to access the council and complete requests via digital self-service where they can and want to.
- **commissioning and procurement:** a focus on engaging and commissioning local enterprise and partnering with the wider public sector, whilst also ensuring effective and compliance procurement and contract management to manage third party spend and financial resilience.

- **service delivery:** digital service delivery that focuses on effectively delivering the outcomes most important to residents, working with them in their communities and places where possible.
- **enabling services:** a consolidated front door for colleagues needing transactional processes, enabled by digital self-serve options and standardised business administration and support.
- **strategic core:** a strategic core that drives a culture of insight-led decision making, performance and productivity and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Each of these operating layers perform a specific function and must work in harmony to enable the council to deliver the vision of “Working together to create a fairer, more prosperous and more sustainable Dorset for current and future generations”

Figure 2 demonstrates the target operating model in a graphical format. Development of this will include a narrative description of the model as the council sets out to describe the future state it is transforming to.

Figure 2. Target operating model



In addition to the target operating model, the council has a set of organisation-wide design principles that are used to shape and test all activity across the transformation programme. The principles are applied during business case development and inform recommendations and decision making.

- **Inclusive services**, co-designed with our customers: design and delivery easy to navigate and inclusive services for and with our customers. Ensuring accessibility is considered throughout.
- **Insight and data-led**: use and share data and insights, across the Council and with partners to inform, deliver and improve how we work, as we respond to customers and manage our resources and performance.
- **Resolved at earliest opportunity**: work with our partners and community to give early help enabling customers to help themselves where they can and providing services that are customer-centred and continually improving.
- **Maximise impact with what we have**: strategically allocate our resources to achieve the most that we can for Dorset, being honest about what we can and can't do. Ensure we are financially sustainable.
- **Environmentally aware, operating sustainably**: working to be environmentally sustainable, considering the impact of our assets, services and ways we work.
- **Thriving people ready for the future**: build a resilient, skilled and adaptable workforce, working together to deliver the council's vision for Dorset and ready for the future.
- **Commitment and alignment to deliver the vision**: work in a way that enables everyone to commit to shared priorities aligned to the council's ambitions and objectives.
- **Build on the good, innovate for the better**: a balanced approach which uses the good systems, people and processes we have in place, but also explores and leverages new opportunities.
- **Make us safe and secure**: manage risk to ensure that customers and employees are safe. Put appropriate legal, privacy and security measures in place so that we are compliant, and data is secure.

6. Transformation priorities

The transformation plan to deliver our target operating model is centred around the following five priorities:

Automation and technology enablement

- We will implement a centralised customer relationship management solution and develop a comprehensive channel strategy to enhance our telephony systems, including voice automation and interactive voice response.
- By integrating robotic process automation (RPA) with line of business systems and incorporating voice-to-text capabilities, we aim to streamline operations. Automated contract reviews, spend categorisation, and the automation of key procurement documents will further improve efficiency.
- The use of generative artificial intelligence will support these initiatives, enabling staff to self-serve internal processes through the customer relationship management solution. Additionally, RPA will be utilised for transactional processes and reporting.
- Finally, we will conduct a thorough review of our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to ensure it meets our evolving needs.

Consolidation and standardisation

- We will design and implement a whole organisation customer experience model, streamlining, standardising, and ensuring seamless integration between processes in a consolidated customer front door and the services. This includes establishing a standardised purchase-to-pay process and consolidating commissioning activities into an agreed functional model.
- Necessary changes to systems will be made to strategic and enabling services to reflect the new single target operating model.
- A consolidated model for business support will be developed, along with a single front door for strategic and enabling services. We will review the role of business partners and key enterprise-wide processes, ensuring an enterprise-wide design.
- Finally, we will establish a transformation management office to oversee these initiatives.

Demand management

- To enhance our customer service operations, we will streamline and signpost rules-based demand away from the customer contact centre to self-serve customer access channels and community support. This reflects our Council Plan priority of “communities for all”.
- Regular demand insight analysis will be incorporated to understand themes and identify improvement opportunities for ways of working in the customer contact centre. We will provide improved information, advice, and guidance online, and develop demand management strategies for key areas.
- Integrating the commissioning cycle into business planning and delivering in partnership with the local community and partners are essential steps.
- Additionally, we will offer improved information, advice, and guidance for colleagues, adopting an enterprise service management approach

Ways of working

- We will be intentional about the changes we make as we redesign services to meet the changing needs of our residents. This reflects our Council Plan priority of “communities for all”.
- To further utilise Dorset’s community assets, we aim to deliver a coordinated, embedded shared services model in partnership with the local community. By partnering with local groups organisations, we will build community assets, providing enhanced prevention initiatives.
- This will likely involve a thorough review of our service level agreements and the implementation of a new model of working across the council. Critical to success will be the effective use and sharing of data and engaging providers and partners in positive joint working relationships.
- The organisation will build its strategic core to drive these efforts with the role of the manager as pivotal in embedding data-led decision-making and individual performance management.

Spend reduction and income generation

- To maximise savings opportunities, particularly in the front-door space, we will review and reallocate spend where necessary. Targeted skills development will be implemented to build a diverse and agile consolidated customer front door.
- Adjustments to the contact centre and boosting revenue by promoting customer relationship management driven services are key initiatives.

- We will review our commercial strategy and enhance the purchasing control environment, including third-party spend controls.
- A review of service levels will be conducted, and we will stop any that are no longer necessary. The business planning process will be redesigned, and we will explore delivery model options for shared strategic functions.
- Additionally, we will continue to review the use of assets through our strategic asset management plan and establish technology architecture controls and a roadmap.
- As we implement more efficient processes, remove duplication and consolidate our approach, we will reduce the size of the organisation.

To successfully achieve this future state, the council has committed to delivering five key areas of change:

- **Customer Experience:** improving customer interactions and ensuring that services are accessible and responsive to the public's needs. By enhancing customer management and assessment processes, the council aims to deliver a higher level of service satisfaction and efficiency.
- **Commissioning and Procurement:** strategic planning and procurement of services to meet the community's needs. The goal is to ensure that services are delivered effectively and that partnerships with external providers are managed efficiently.
- **Business Management:** optimising internal processes and providing the necessary support to frontline services. By improving business support functions, the council can enhance overall operational efficiency and service delivery.
- **Strategic and Enabling Services:** these services provide the necessary support and information to maximise internal processes and strategic decision-making. This includes process improvement, enhanced digital systems, and the provision of intelligence and insights to various stakeholders.
- **Community facilitation:** working alongside communities, including town and parish councils and VCS organisations, to develop new models of service delivery that better meet local needs and help to prevent people reaching crisis point. Partnership working with statutory organisations including the NHS and Police is also vital to this approach

7. Delivery timescales and phasing

Subject to change as full business case is refined during January. Subsequent to this, programme PIDs will be developed along with detailed implementation plans and dependency mapping. **There are significant dependencies that will be identified and managed across these programmes of work that will be complex and detailed. The transformation office will prioritise the management of these along with the sequencing of the delivery plan as it is developed post business case.**

	Year 1 January 2025 - December 2025	Year 2 January 2026 - December 2026	Year 3 January 2027 - December 2027	
Customer	Technology architecture, roadmap and channel strategy	Ongoing build of CRM (agile - sprint based approach based on blocks of design, build and release)		
	Customer model refinement and build	CRM mobilisation IS1 Contact Centre build Go-live IS1 Contact Centre	IS2 Contact Centre build Go-live IS2 Contact Centre	
	Voice automation and initial RPA work			
	Assessment of customer journey opportunities	Multiple phases of Customer journey delivery		
		Develop communities for all strategy	Implement communities for all strategy	Development/implementation of operational excellence capability
Commissioning and Procurement		Identification of RPA and GenAI use cases	Targeted process improvement activity & RPA/ Gen AI implementation	
	Overarching model construct	People construct Commissioning Hub construct	Place construct Go-Live C+P IS 2	
		Go-Live C+P IS 1	Establish operational excellence programme	
			Implement any changes identified in the Communities for All strategy	
Business Support	Third party spend controls and governance			
	GenAI and RPA use case development	Phase 1 automation rollout	Continued automation rollout, change capacity supporting adoption of GenAI tools and insights	
	Business support model construct and build	Go-Live Business Support IS 1	Continued development of Business Support Hub	
	Targeted process improvement		Establish operational excellence programme	
Strategic and Enabling	TMO Implementation	S+E Model Construct	Go-live IS 1	
	Tech and Data strategy	Licenses and application rationalisation		
	OD & Workforce Principles	Data infrastructure changes		
	Asset review - acceleration of disposals and repurposing		Agree changes needed to improve IAG	Delivery of changes to IAG to help colleagues self serve
	ERP mobilisation	ERP implementation		ERP Go live Feb 2027
	GenAI and RPA use case identification		GenAI, RPA and End-to-End Process Improvement activity	

8. Programmes and enabling workstreams

The transformation plan is arranged into a portfolio of five strategic whole council programmes, which are a combination of specific business area redesign and commercial opportunities, and four enabling workstreams:

Programmes:

- strategic and enabling services
- commissioning and procurement
- customer experience
- business support and ways of working
- community partnership

Enabling workstreams:

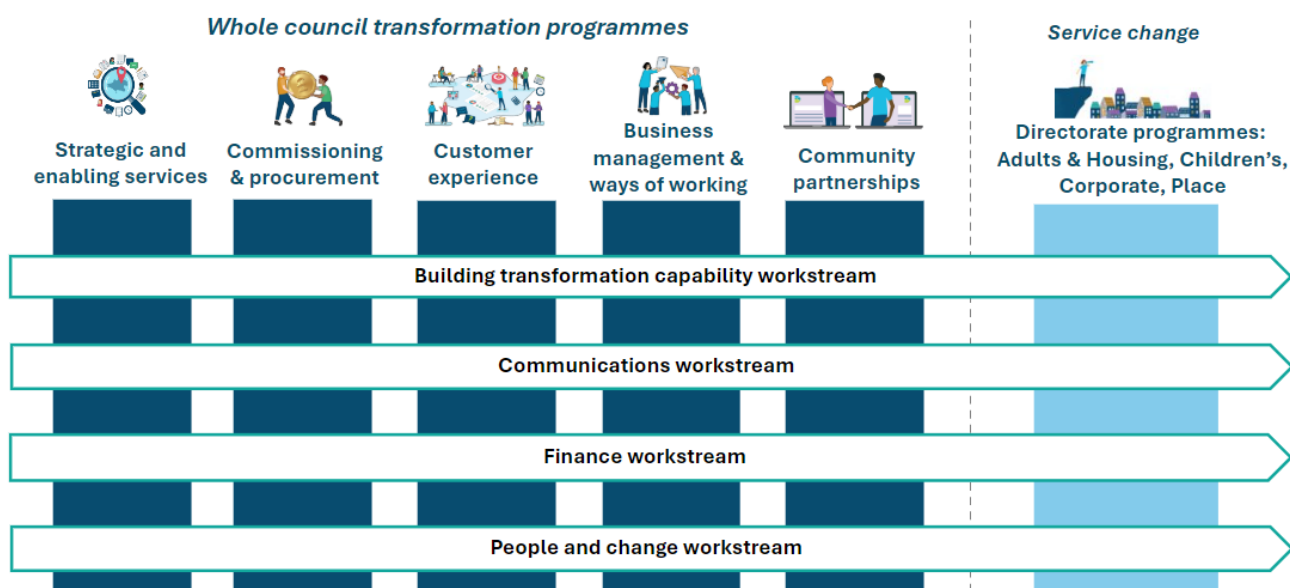
- building transformation capability
- communications
- finance
- people and change

A whole-council programme is a collection of related projects that will deliver beneficial change on a particular theme or subject. This grouping enables all parts of the organisation (all directorates) to work together on the changes to be made and provides clearer oversight, prioritisation of resources, management of dependencies and co-ordination of stakeholders. These transformation programmes require a 'managed change' offer from the Transformation Office.

An enabling workstream provides a functional set of activities related to a particular subject area or process. They have a unique set of tasks (rather than change projects) that enable the programmes to deliver the changes set out in their scope.

Whole council transformation will drive fundamental changes in organisational operations, including activities, skills, technology, information, and people. This is large-scale and more complex than other types of change.

Figure 3. Transformation structure



- 1. Strategic and enabling services:** this programme is looking at the things we need to have in place to make better decisions and to work more effectively across the council. Its scope covers all aspects of technology and the way the council is organised.

 - **target operating model (TOM):** this work aims to describe the structure, processes and resources needed to support the council to deliver financially sustainable services into the future.
 - **technology and data:** this refers to the overall design and structure of our IT systems, applications, and processes. It aims to document what we have now, what we need for the future and to map how we will move towards the technology set up we will need in future.
- 2. Commissioning and procurement:** this programme is looking for ways we can streamline the way we commission and procure services and products across the council. It aims to make sure we get the best outcomes and value for money and ensure that our commissioning and procurement systems are robust, safe and adaptable so they can meet present and future demands. This reflects our Council Plan priority of “communities for all”.
- 3. Customer experience:** this programme aims to make our service delivery to customers (residents, families, partners) more consistent, cost effective and responsive to changing needs. We will achieve this by adopting a whole-council approach and applying automation, artificial intelligence and other technology-led solutions where appropriate. Our future services will be designed with customers in mind, ensuring that customer insight, feedback, and user experience are embedded throughout. This includes further engagement and testing of future solutions with customers and community groups, supported by equality impact assessments.
- 4. Business management and ways of working:** the focus of this programme is on joining up our approach to managing the business of the council so we

can provide consistent service levels using common technology solutions across the council. It seeks to make our ways of working attractive to employees and responsive to our customers.

5. **Community partnerships:** working alongside communities, including town and parish councils and VCS organisations, to develop new models of service delivery that better meet local needs and help to prevent people reaching crisis point. Partnership working with statutory organisations including the NHS and Police is also vital to this approach

Table 1

Programme	Projects
Customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced and integrated ‘one council’ customer operating model (the council’s front door) • Customer relationship management system • Voice automation • Process redesign • Online content review • Standards – enquire, register, apply, book, pay • Customer strategy • Contact centre technology requirements • Workforce design and skills development • Corporate booking solution • Debt management • Online payments • Connecting Communities • Family hubs • Prevention, Early Intervention and Assessment • Translation
Community partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community facilitation strategy • Integrated neighbourhood teams and place-based partnership • Heart of Wessex
Business management and ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automation of processes including email • Streamlining and redesigning of all processes • Enhanced and integrated business management model
Strategic and enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licences and applications rationalisation • Enhanced strategic and enabling model • Colleague self-serve model • Enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementation • Inclusion • SEND Case Management • Application Portfolio Management (APM) • Records management • Corporate directory solution • Hedge to Hedge • Effective property services • Dorset travel software
Commissioning and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of commissioning and procurement model • Automation of processes • Review of third party spend

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Level Decision Making • Brokerage, Quality, Contracting Transformation • Enhanced community reablement • Home First Accelerator • Reablement Centres • Working Age Accelerator • Enhanced shared lives • Market Management (including Dorset Care Framework) • Day opportunities • Commissioned community care • Recommissioning of highways contract (mixed commissioning model) • SEND transport commissioning and procurement
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These programmes are supported by four enabling workstreams:

1. **Building transformation capability:** delivering and managing transformation is complex so this workstream aims to make sure we have the right people, skills, tools and frameworks in place.
2. **Communications:** the aim of this workstream is to raise awareness and understanding of the transformation activities, and what these mean for us as a whole council, as teams and as individuals.
3. **People and change:** this workstream aims to make Dorset Council a great place to work, especially during transformation and change. It will focus on preparing and equipping our people to thrive in uncertain times, and on designing a workforce and organisational structure that will enable the delivery of our council plan/transformation objectives.
4. **Finance:** ensuring we deliver financially sustainable services is vital. This workstream looks at how we manage our money, how we invest and protect our funds so we can continue meeting the needs of our communities now and into the future.

Service change will continue alongside whole council transformation activity to embed new ways of working in local teams, driven by operational leadership to keep services fit for purpose. These specific changes often respond to policy updates or process requirements.

Service change programmes:

Adults and Housing

- housing / accommodation support
- operations redesign
- commissioning programme

Children's

- social care sufficiency

Corporate

- climate and nature
- public health disaggregation

Place

- strategic asset management programme
- planning system and Local Plan
- Weymouth 2040
- modernising waste operations

The delivery of transformational change will always be flexible depending on the changing demand and delivery of the desired benefits. Therefore, as we move through the years, projects will be delivered, the scope of them may change, and new projects will be commissioned and added to the programme.

Anticipated outcomes from the transformation programmes:

- improvements in service quality and value for money
- consistently good standards of customer care
- more cost-efficient services
- purposeful, responsive, customer focused services
- a highly trained, flexible workforce
- a more engaged, motivated workforce and improved change culture
- delivery of financial savings
- environmental savings and benefits
- increases in the level of income generated
- modern and efficient work processes

The information we will use to baseline our position and measure success includes:

- customer satisfaction: regular customer surveys and feedback are used to help us learn and further improve customer experience. This includes the council resident survey.
- efficiency: reducing time taken to respond to customers, (processing times) will deliver cost savings, and maximise how we use our resources. Quality measures are also included in employee surveys.
- digital: measuring the increase in the number of customers using online services
- early Intervention: early help initiatives will reduce the number of cases escalating to crisis.
- financial: tracking our delivery to ensure that investment leads to long-term savings. This is monitored through the medium-term financial plan and benchmarked costs against other councils.

9. Financial implications

Whilst this Transformation Plan is focused on improving services for residents and customers, addressing the growing financial gap is an essential component to securing a sustainable financial future in Dorset.

The council is facing real-terms reductions in funding, increasing demand for services, a challenging economic environment, and increasingly frequent financial failures across the local government sector.

Transformation benefits will be realised through delivery of the target operating model and the whole organisation approach to transformation. There are key mechanisms available to the council to reduce cost and spend or increase income:

- reviewing levels of service provision and activities and assessing impact of potential changes on staffing costs, third party spend and income generation opportunities
- review of utilisation of all corporate properties or facilities to identify short term opportunities to reduce running costs (utilities etc)
- reviewing delivery models to consider in house vs. external provision unit cost comparison
- reviewing areas of high demand in a continued prevention and early intervention approach e.g. pre-front door, robust triage, channel shift, self-service, failure demand
- automating processes to reduce manual input and administration, streamlined through fewer steps and consistent enterprise-wide processes
- identifying contracts that can be stopped or allowed to expire
- reviewing fees and charges to compare service cost recovery with other local authorities
- manage vacancies and agency spend and apply establishment controls
- implement immediate spend controls around discretionary spend

The case for change through delivery of an enhanced target operating model (TOM) identified that, through addressing these opportunities, the council could achieve between **£16.6 to £33.8m** in savings made up of the following:

- **Spend on council employees**
Savings between £6.2m and £18.8m against a baseline of £150.6m/3800 full time equivalent employees in FY23/24
The programme will seek to deliver a reduction of spend by £9m in year 1 2025/26
This will be achieved through vacancy management, management of turnover, service reviews and structural change.
- **Commissioned spend**
Savings between £1.1 to £5.7m against a baseline of £182.3m on third party spend in FY23/24.
The programme will seek to deliver a reduction on in commissioned spend of £1m in year 1 2025/26
This will be achieved through a review of contract spend
- **Service income**
£9.3m in additional income against a baseline of £93.8m on service income in FY22/23.

A total financial benefit of £10m recurring revenue saving is required for delivery in year 1 2025/26.

Specific changes and the budget-line benefits will be detailed in the individual programme definition documents set out within the transformation delivery plan. These benefits continue to be dependent on the appetite and ambitions of the council for whole council organisational redesign.

All transformation savings once the business case(s) is approved will be included and monitored within the council's medium-term financial plan.

The council continues to be committed to an invest to save approach for transformation, we recognise that some change requires upfront investment and takes several years to achieve. So, we plan not just for the year ahead, but for the next five to ten years.

The Dorset Council Cabinet has invested £3m of reserves to enable this invest to save approach. This funding has been delegated for use to the Transformation Steering Group and the Transformation Board. Further investment requirements will be identified through strategic business cases to Cabinet, this is particularly pertinent to the investment that is expected to be required in technology and application architecture over the next 4 years.

10. Delivering the portfolio

As the council commits to transformation, effective governance is crucial to achieving strategic goals, efficient resource utilisation and responsible risk, data and portfolio management. Effective governance drives the organisation and is integral to council performance.

Having an effective well-structured governance model provides key benefits:

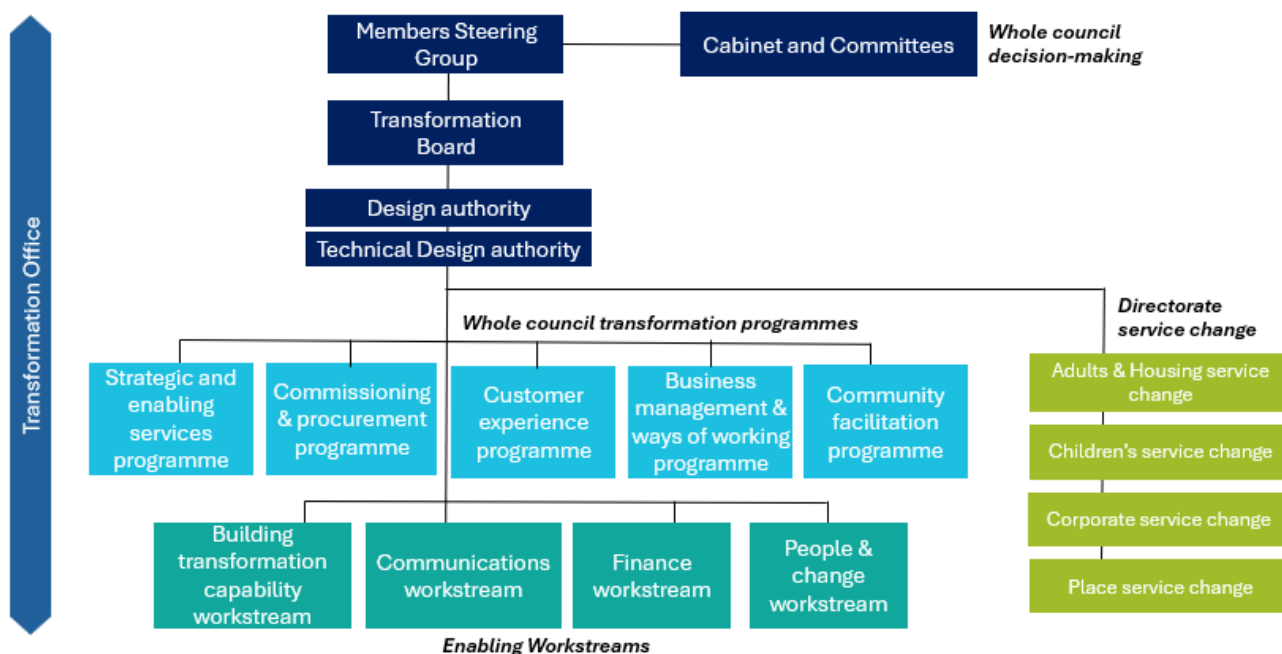
- leadership of whole council transformation: through setting the culture and demonstrating decision making which drive and inspire large scale transformation across all council areas.
- enhanced accountability: holding decision-makers responsible for evidence-based decisions, promoting transparency and building trust among stakeholders
- consistency with the Dorset Council Plan priorities: ensuring that transformation and change initiatives are prioritised and delivered in line with the council's strategic goals and design principles.
- delivery of value: ensuring that initiatives deliver value to customers and communities.

The transformation plan is governed by a core group of councillors through a members transformation steering group, and an officer transformation board led by the organisation's senior leadership team.

Focused delivery teams are already in place for each programme and workstream. These drive the implementation of the transformation priorities and are each led by a director. Each delivery team produces monthly reports and will provide an end of year summary before agreeing a new delivery plan for the following year taking into account the priorities, as agreed at Transformation Board.

Monthly progress meetings will be held with the Councillor Steering Group and annual updates will be reported to Cabinet.

Figure 4. Transformation governance model



The successful outcomes delivered since 2019 have demonstrated the importance of having dedicated skills and capacity to deliver an effective organisational transformation plan. This capacity allows programmes to be developed and delivered in a structured and timely way and to drive actions, oversee progress and to support an effective monitoring and reporting framework. This will be overseen by an enhanced transformation office at the strategic core of the organisation.

The transformation plan is supported by a governance framework that:

- sets direction of travel and clarity on roles and responsibilities, including who is responsible and accountable for elements of delivery and decision-making.
- drives delivery at pace by enabling decisive decision-making and reprioritisation by the right person at the right time, in line with supporting parameters, evidence and resources.
- provides oversight, transparency and scrutiny by creating visibility of progress, performance and challenges, which can be addressed with the right support.
- effectively manages risk and issues, mitigating any potential impact on timely delivery, benefits realisation or the wider organisation.
- provides a clear view of change activity happening across the Council, including, continuous improvement, service change and transformation
- enables effective prioritisation and management of resources, duplication and interdependencies

Within this framework, the plan will be monitored at least annually to ensure delivery through Audit and Governance and Place and Resources Scrutiny Committees.

A common experience in transformation is for disparate projects to be looking for the same resources, often resulting in slow and ineffective delivery. Therefore, through this transformation plan, the council has reinvigorated the drive to maintain a single view of all change and transformation across the organisation through the creation of a design authority and technical design authority.

A design authority and technical design authority are key governance vehicles that manage and inform decision-making for change and transformation activities. This provides services with clarity on what they need to work on and how to progress their change to maximise success. This makes the organisation more effective and efficient at achieving outcomes.

The design authority is an officer board responsible for reviewing proposals for whole council transformation and directorate service change. They ensure that proposals:

- Reflect political steer as set out in the Council Plan vision and priorities
- align to the target operating model and design standards
- don't duplicate work already in flight elsewhere
- align to other activities in terms of sequencing
- are in line with resource availability and priority of other deliverables within the portfolio
- are made for services that are ready for the change
- identify benefits that are quantifiable with milestones aligned to MTFP
- align to the capital programme delivery as required
- propose decisions that are evidence based, and set out risks that are being actively managed

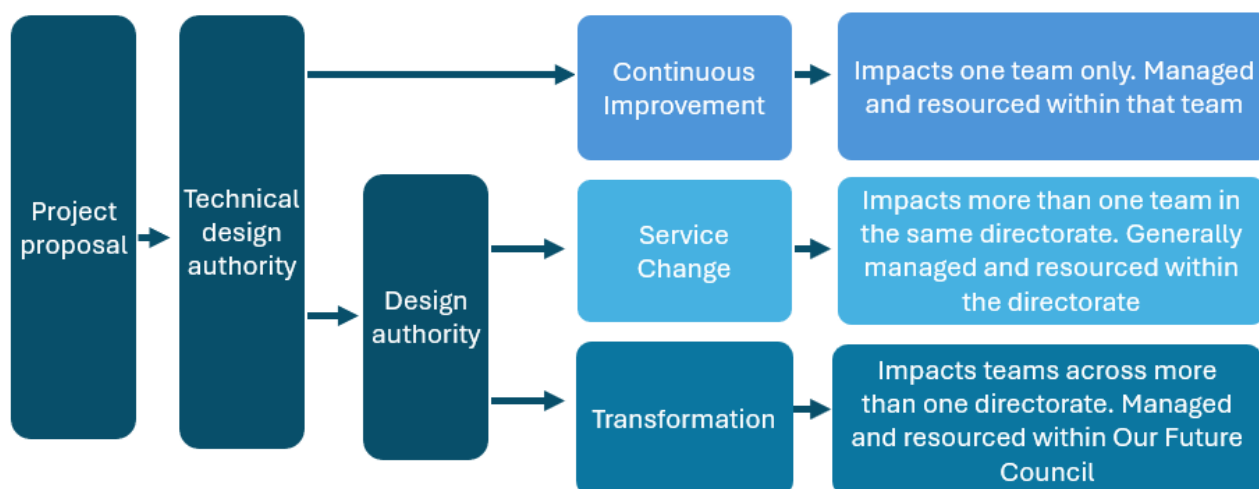
The design authority takes decisions on the changes that will be made taking into consideration all the factors above. They also manage change requests by operating a change control function.

The design authority is supported by a technical design authority which is responsible for ensuring that any changes that have an impact on the council's data or technology architecture are reviewed and assessed appropriately. They are responsible for:

- managing the council's data, application and technology architecture
- ensuring alignment of technology and data changes to the target operating model
- ensuring digital agility is built into the way we operate in the future. This includes ensuring that architecture is interoperable enabling the council to be more responsive to change, and deliver consistent services
- reusing and scaling what we already have, where it is right to do so.
- cost effectiveness – not just the purchase price, a total cost of ownership view.
- ensuring that changes to technology consider risk to cyber and data security

The technical design authority does not take decisions directly but is responsible for making recommendations and escalating risk and issues to the design authority to enable them to make informed decisions.

Figure 5. Flow of decision making



To deliver successfully, the council has developed an internal framework that sets out more detail on how change and transformation is governed.

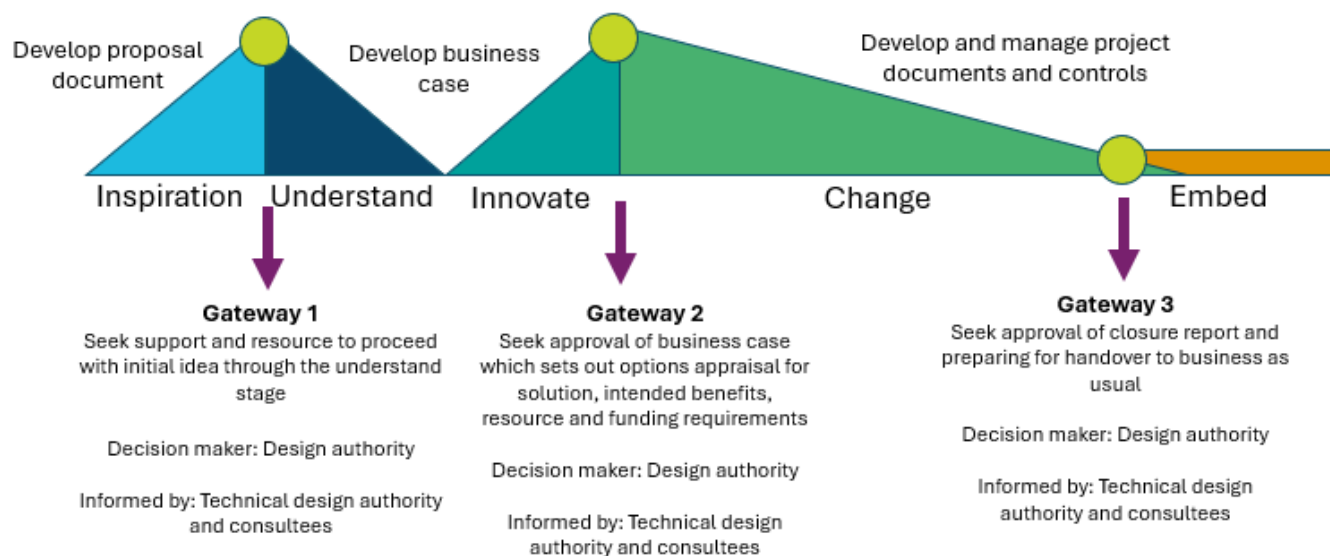
This governance framework is supported by an implementation methodology that is designed as a staged gateway approach for change and transformation. This provides a consistent and effective delivery framework across the organisation. As best practice, all transformation and change projects are implemented using this approach.

Working across five stages, certain activities should be undertaken within a stage and approval sought from the relevant individual group or board at each stage-gate. These stage-gates reflect a decision point:

These stage-gates reflect key decision points:

- Stage 1: Inspiration leading to gateway 1, early proposal
- Stage 2 and 3: Understand and innovate leading to gateway 2, business case
- Stage 4: Implement the change leading to gateway 3, closure report following delivery
- Stage 5: Embed – realising the benefit and handing to business as usual

Figure 6. Transformation gateways



11. Change management approach

People are at the heart of the process of delivering change and transformation across the council. Growing the culture of the organisation to respond to the pace of change will be imperative to ensure the delivery of an ambitious programme that will improve services, as well as making better use of resources.

We have established our people and change workstream which is being led by a member of the senior leadership team and our head of human resources. It brings our specialist people together to ensure we have the resources available to grow and adapt our culture and change capability to deliver transformation at pace. The workstream aims to work alongside the organisation to both drive change and to aspire to be a great place to work, ensuring decisions are made in line with our organisation's values and with our employees' wellbeing in mind.

The workstream's principles are:

- to ensure transparent and consistent communication about the changes, including the reasons behind them and the expected outcomes
- to involve employees in the change process by seeking their input and feedback
- to provide training and resources to help employees adapt to new systems or processes, as well as manage their wellbeing through change
- to ensure managers and leaders have the capability, tools and frameworks to lead their teams through change in an inclusive way
- to regularly review and adjust the change management strategies based on feedback and outcomes to ensure a positive employee experience

We will make sure our people have timely, relevant information to help them make informed decisions about their future. We will be guided by our employment policies

and when we do say goodbye to colleagues as a result of transformation activity, we do it well, understanding how we can continue to make improvements.

We will continue to demonstrate a culture that embodies who we are as an organisation. People will be empowered to be advocates of and involved in change, to innovate and be creative with new ideas, and demonstrate our organisational values: Respect, Openness, Together, Curiosity and Accountability. These values reinforce a shared culture that celebrates a fresh approach to public service. By delivering better outcomes in line with our values, we can help provide the best possible service to our communities. This is explored further in our Council Plan 2024-2029 and our People and Culture Strategy.

Ensuring our employees can access opportunities to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours that support the type of change required will be key to our success. This includes access to personal development resources enabling them to self-manage their physical and mental wellbeing. This is coupled with a transformation communications plan that will ensure that information is shared with the right people at the right time as the programme evolves, and an engagement plan that seeks the input and views of all stakeholders.

The transformation programme itself also has a role to play in supporting the development of these skills and behaviours, by actively engaging employees in the work of the programme.

The council has been engaging with Trade Unions colleagues since 2023 as the plans for this business case have been developed. This has included engagement through discovery work and sharing the findings as the council has developed its baseline for change. We are committed to engagement with the Trade Unions in the development of the full business case and this will take place through formal monthly meetings alongside more regular engagement in the people and change workstream.