# Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee
# 20 November 2025
# Our Future Council – update and review
# For Review and Consultation

**Cabinet Member:**
Cllr B Wilson, Corporate Development and Transformation

**Local Councillor(s):**
All
**Senior Leadership Team:**
C Howe, Chief Executive

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**Statutory Authority:**

**Report status:** Public Choose an item.

**Executive summary**

This paper gives an update on Dorset Council's transformation programme, Our Future Council (OFC). This programme is essential for delivering the changes required to ensure that we become a technology-enabled, customer-focused, and financially sustainable council with a workforce equipped with the right skills to adapt to a rapidly changing working environment We are delivering our first phase and aligning this transformation programme with other change programmes across the council to ensure a strategic view of their combined impact.

The transformation programme is integral to delivering the priorities of the Council Plan for 2024–2029 through delivering a sharper focus on how resources are matched to these priorities. The four main priorities and some of the impacts of the transformation programme are as follows:

**Grow our economy:** we are making our services more modern and digital, which helps local businesses connect with us easily and creates roles with future skills.

**Provide high-quality and affordable housing:** we are improving how we work together on housing, planning, and support services. We use data to make sure people get the help they need.

**Communities for all:** we are making our services easier to use and making sure everyone can get help early. We work with other groups and listen to our communities.

**Respond to the climate and nature crisis:** we are making our services and buildings more environmentally friendly. We use technology and data to help Dorset reach its climate goals and protect nature. OFC also has significant financial targets which are critical to the financial sustainability of Dorset Council over the course of the programme.

This paper explains what we have done so far, what we have learned, and what we plan to do next.

## 1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Consider the report and share your thoughts or questions on the information provided.

1.2 Note the progress so far in the Our Future Council programme, including the delivery plans and the new ways we are managing the programme.

1.3 Recognise the lessons we have learned and the changes we have made to how we manage and deliver the programme from 2025 onwards.

1.4 Note ongoing reporting to Audit and Governance Committee to review programme risks and governance and agree that the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee will review progress on the programme within the next 12 months and add this to the committee's forward plan.

## 2. Reason for the recommendation(s)

2.1 These recommendations are designed to help the committee understand our progress to date, and our future delivery plans and how we will approach change and transformation moving forward. By reviewing and discussing the report, members can share their views, raise any concerns, and ensure that decisions are based on clear evidence. Recognising the progress and the new way of managing the programme helps build trust and confidence, while acknowledging lessons learned shows a commitment to improvement and increases the likelihood of future success.

2.2 Supporting strong governance and regular oversight through the Member Steering Group and scheduled progress reviews, ensures the programme stays on track and councillors remain involved in guiding the work. Agreeing to ongoing scrutiny means the committee can keep a close eye on delivery, spot any issues early, and hold the programme to account for achieving its savings and improvement targets.

## 3. Background and context

3.1 The "Our Future Council" business case, approved in January 2025, set out an ambitious plan to modernise how we work, improve experiences for customers and staff, and strengthen our financial position. We've made strong early progress in the launch of a Customer Hub, Business Support Hub, and Transformation Management Office, but the journey has shown both the scale of opportunity and the complexity of the challenge.

3.2 Initially, we aimed to progress organisational redesign with the technology roll-out to align or follow as closely as possible, as agreed by Cabinet in January 2025, to deliver financial benefits through immediate workforce change aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Plan. What we've learned is that the operational pace and complexity of our services mean we don't have the capacity in services to add in the complexity and additional overhead of change activity at the same time as running them safely and effectively without the right technology in place. We're now taking a more integrated and incremental approach, which delivers technology and people changes in a more connected way with regular business cases to Cabinet every six months to ensure transparency, oversight, and continued alignment with our financial planning.

3.3 As set out in the latest Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget Strategy report to Cabinet (11 November 2025), the financial context is stark. Without action Dorset Council faces a projected £85 million budget gap by 2029/30. Transformation alone won't close this gap, but it is a vital enabler. We are making conscious, strategic choices to ensure every pound spent or saved delivers better outcomes for residents and a more sustainable future for the council. this means OFC is looking at all aspects of our finances and not just focusing on staffing changes to support long-term financial resilience.

3.4 To support this, we are accelerating reforms to how we commission and procure services. Our new Commercial Board and procurement model are driving down costs, challenging supplier increases and scrutinising all non-essential spend. We're using data and intelligence to target inefficiency and focus resources where they add most value.

3.5 This report gives the committee an update on our progress, and next steps. It shows how we're embedding our new operating model, developing enabling technologies, and aligning all change with our financial and service plans.

3.6 As we continue this transformation, it's important to reflect on what we've achieved, how our approach has evolved, and where we're heading next. The following sections set out our progress, lessons learned, and how we're embedding a "One Council" approach - aligning investment, savings, and outcomes so that all change is joined up and strategic. This structure is designed to give the committee a clear line of sight from context to action, supporting robust scrutiny and informed discussion about our future direction.

## 4. Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) – 2025 Programme Update

### Staffing reductions in 2025 (related to our future council)

4.1 The table below shows the staff reductions for Year 1 of the programme :

| | **Business case projected reductions (FTE)** | **Actual reduction (FTE)** |
|---|---:|---:|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Customer | 103 | 12.58 |
| Business support | 43.2 | 14.28 |
| Transformation Management Office | **N/A** | 8.35 |
| **Sub-Total** | **146.2** | **35.21** |
| Of which, posts in customer, business support and transformation office that were accepted as voluntary redundancy | **n/a** | 23 |
| Voluntary redundancy ***in addition to*** group 1 reductions | **n/a** | 14 |
| **Total workforce reduction – Year One** | **146.2** | **49.21** |

4.2 The difference between projected and realised reductions can be attributed to a number of factors:

- Dorset Council has reduced staff costs carefully as part of our transformation. We did not make quick or widespread cuts. Instead, we redesigned services first and made sure any reductions were safe and supported by our new ways of working. This was further supported by a review in approach in summer of this year to enable further phasing as set out in section 3.2. This approach followed a detailed review of the business case, especially around the risks and impact on service delivery. We also found that many roles were more complex than expected - people weren't just doing one job, but a mix of tasks across different areas. This means it will take longer to separate and reshape those roles properly
- We listened closely to staff, trade unions, and stakeholders throughout the process. Their feedback shaped our approach and helped us manage change responsibly.
- The council, like others across the country continue to respond to increased demand for services and this has been considered when proposing a reduction in capacity before technology is fully rolled out.

4.3 The consequence of this adjustment to the approach means that the design of workforce changes has been slowed to allow for technology to be implemented. Therefore, the workforce reductions are lower than first planned. By using voluntary redundancy, not filling vacancies, and changing how we work, we have forecast a part-year saving of £1.71 million from workforce savings in 2025/26. This will reduce our workforce by 49.21 FTE by January 2026 and deliver recurrent annual savings. Additional savings of £5 million of savings are on track for realisation from the commissioning and procurement workstream of OFC. This total of £6.71 million is on track to be released in 2025/26.

4.4 This £6.7 million delivery demonstrates strong progress toward our £10 million savings target for the year. We are actively building on this foundation through the ongoing budget process, continuing to identify further efficiencies and additional savings opportunities to ensure we achieve our overall organisational savings requirement.

4.5 Every change is checked to make sure it delivers value and does not harm services or staff wellbeing. This helps us keep the skills we need and supports better ways of working.

4.6 We are committed to balancing savings with staff engagement and service quality. Going forward, we will manage any further changes through careful planning and ongoing conversations with staff and unions, making sure reductions are sustainable and support our goal of a modern, resilient council.

## 5. Progress against original plan

5.1 We have made strong progress in delivering the first phase of our new operating model. We have followed our plans to establish the Customer Hub, Business Support Hub, and Transformation Management Office as the foundation for new ways of working across the organisation.

- The Customer Hub is a joined-up approach to handling customer enquiries, designed to provide residents with easy, consistent access to council services through multiple channels, online, by phone, and in-person, while aiming to resolve issues quickly and efficiently at the first point of contact.

- The Business Support Hub will enable a connected, professional service model that delivers streamlined, digitally enabled support across key internal functions, such as Adults, Children's Services, Finance, HR, and the Executive Support office. It aims to improve efficiency, reduce duplication, and enhance the internal customer experience by providing consistent, high-quality support to council teams and services.

- The new Transformation Management Office is the internal team responsible for leading, coordinating, and supporting the delivery of the council's transformation programme.

5.2 These hubs are now being implemented and will soon begin to shape how we deliver services, support internal teams, and manage change. Alongside this, we are developing our enabling technologies - this includes our new Finance, HR and Payroll system (known as ERP), and a new phone and messaging system to improve how residents contact us. These tools will support better outcomes for both residents and staff, and help drive wider transformation across the council.

**Customer Hub: Operating Model and Strategic Intent**

5.3 Following consultation, we have now finalised the operating model for our new Customer Hub - one of the cornerstone components of the Our Future Council transformation programme. The Customer Hub has been designed to connect specialist and general customer teams more effectively, enabling a joined-up approach to service delivery that is both responsive and resilient. We plan to launch our new transformation management office in December 2025 and our customer and business support teams at the beginning of February and are appointing to new structures imminently.

5.4 The model is structured around three service layers:

- **Digital Self-Service:** Empowering residents to access information, guidance, and complete transactions independently through enhanced online tools and website functionality.
- **Central Support Team:** Handling transactional activity in line with business rules, supported by improved technology and streamlined processes.
- **Specialist Teams:** Providing expert support for complex or high-impact customer needs, acting as the bridge between central support and service delivery teams.

5.5 This structure enables Dorset Council to deliver a more consistent and accessible customer experience, while maintaining the flexibility to support those with more complex needs. The integration of specialist knowledge closer to the front door ensures that customers receive timely, informed responses, and that staff are equipped to manage demand effectively.

5.6 We have now started to design ready for implementation of our new Digital Contact Centre, which will enhance customer accessibility through digital channels while sustaining human contact for those who need it most - particularly vulnerable residents. This dual approach ensures that Dorset Council can meet rising expectations for digital convenience without compromising its commitment to inclusive, person-centred service.

5.7 The Customer Hub will continue to evolve through co-designed service improvements, increased automation, and stronger connections between teams. As new technologies are introduced and processes are refined, the Hub will become a central driver of efficiency, resilience, and improved customer outcomes across the organisation.

**Business Support Hub: Operating Model and Strategic Intent**

5.8 The Business Support Hub has now completed its first phase of implementation, following extensive consultation and structural design. It is a key enabler within Dorset Council's new operating model, providing the capacity and skills needed to support operational and strategic delivery across the organisation.

5.9 The hub is structured around a hub-and-spoke model, with generalist and functional support centralised in the hub and specialist support retained in dedicated spokes. The initial iteration includes:

- Chief Executive Support
- Generalist Business Support
- Children’s Spoke Business Support

5.10 Future iterations will expand to include HR and Finance functional support and an Adults Spoke, ensuring that enabling activities are robust, resilient, and responsive to service needs.

5.11 This model brings together colleagues with complementary skills and experience, allowing for co-designed processes and improved service delivery. By consolidating dispersed business management activity, the hub eliminates duplication, enhances consistency, and supports a more agile and efficient organisation. It also introduces a career-graded job description for Business Support Officers, creating a recognised pathway for professional development and talent growth.

5.12 Technology plays a central role in the hub’s operating model, with automation and digital tools embedded to streamline transactional tasks and enable self-service. This allows business support teams to focus on higher-value activities and ensures that support is delivered in the right place, at the right time, using the right tools.

**Transformation Management Office - Operating Model and Strategic Intent**

5.13 The Transformation Management Office (TMO) has been established as a strategic function within Dorset Council’s new operating model, following Cabinet approval and consultation. It replaces the previous federated model of change delivery, which, while effective at the service level, lacked coherence and strategic alignment across the organisation. The TMO is designed to:

- **Align transformation efforts** with a consistent set of organisational design principles
- **Improve tracking and delivery** of financial efficiencies
- **Enable strategic and cohesive change** across the council
- **Maximise specialist resources** and reduce duplication

5.14 It acts as a single point of accountability for transformation, connecting portfolios of change and ensuring that all initiatives are coordinated under the “One Council” framework. This approach supports a culture of shared ownership, strategic alignment, and transparent decision-making.

5.15 The TMO also plays a critical role in embedding new ways of working, supporting the delivery of the Target Operating Model (TOM), and ensuring that transformation is collaborative, responsive to feedback, and grounded in organisational learning. It is responsible for prioritising change activity, managing interdependencies, and ensuring that every pound spent or saved contributes to Dorset Council’s corporate priorities and outcomes for residents.

## 6. Total cost to organisation so far in comparison to budgeted

6.1 Dorset Council continues to invest in change, transformation, and improvement to deliver its strategic priorities and meet the challenges of financial sustainability.

6.2 As set out in the business case, this investment is made through a combination of reserves, flexible use of capital receipts, and revenue budget allocations - with a clear expectation that all spending must deliver financial, organisational, business, and customer benefits.

Our investment covers a range of costs, including:

- Internal and external resources (e.g. additional transformation resource or fixed term roles)
- Commissioning of external contractors
- Redundancy and workforce transition costs
- Implementation of new systems and technologies (software and delivery)

6.3 It is important to recognise that the cost of delivering major technologies, such as our main Finance, HR and Payroll platforms (ERP) and digital contact centres - is significant. These are essential investments that may not always deliver direct financial savings but are critical enablers of efficiency, accessibility, and essential service improvement. Wherever possible, we will embed automation and AI to streamline processes, reduce repeat contact, and improve customer experience.

6.4 We have provided a breakdown of investment to date, alongside the budget envelope we are working within. This includes the investment requirements presented to Cabinet in October 2025, which are now being reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. We are also refreshing our investment and savings profile for the next three years to ensure that all future transformation activity is aligned with our financial strategy and delivers a clear return on investment.

**Budget allocation and spend for our future council (January 2024 – October 2025)**

6.5 The investment profile approved by Cabinet in January totalled £22.23 million for 2025/26. While overall spend has been lower than projected, this reflects both efficiencies and under-resourcing in key areas such as change management and the capacity to plan for and deliver future technology, which has limited progress. We are now strengthening capability and using investment funding carefully to keep spending at a level that supports full delivery. Savings are welcome, but underspending on critical capacity can be equally problematic and will be addressed going forward.

| | Business case forecast spend 2025/26 £m | Actual spend April 2024 to October 2025 £m | Budget spend October 2025 – March 2026 (as per Cabinet report Oct 25) £m |
|---|---|---|---|
| Technology | 8.8 | 0.008 | 0.53 |
| Internal and external capacity | 7.28 | 3.85 | 4.9 |
| Redundancy costs | 6.15 | 1.44 | 2.5 |
| **Total** | **22.23** | **5.29** | **7.93** |

**Investment Plan for 2025/26**

6.7 For 2025/26, Dorset Council has approved a **£12.4 million investment plan**, released in stages every six months as delivery milestones are met. This funding supports:

- Implementation of enabling technologies Finance, HR and Payroll system (ERP), Phone and Messaging system (digital contact centre), automation platform, booking systems)
- Additional internal employee and external skilled capacity where required.
- Redundancy and transition costs

6.8 All spending is subject to regular review, with further releases contingent on demonstrable progress and savings. This ensures a disciplined, transparent, and accountable approach to investment, aligned with our Medium-Term Financial Plan and our commitment to delivering transformation that is both impactful and financially responsible.

6.9 We are forecasting £6.7 million of savings in 2025-26 with continued commitment to realise a cumulative, recurring annual benefit of £18.8 million by 2028 as outlined in the business case approved in January 2025.

**7. Safeguards in place to ensure service continuance**

7.1 Throughout our transformation journey, Dorset Council has prioritised service continuity and minimising disruption for both residents and staff. This risk based approach included risk and impact assessments of proposed changes and subsequent changed in approach to mitigate areas of high risk to service delivery. This included 'lift and shift' of functions to the new customer hub to reduce initial change and effectively position the service ready for future transformation.

7.2 The council, like others across the country continues to respond to increased demand for services and this has been considered when proposing a reduction in capacity before technology is fully rolled out. The consequence of this adjustment to the approach resulted in slower workforce changes to allow for technology to be implemented.

7.3 Our Design Authority, Programme Board, and Members Steering Group have provided rigorous oversight, ensuring that all risks are identified, assessed, and managed before any significant changes are made.

7.4 We have deliberately phased our changes, adjusting our original plans in response to consultation feedback and risk assessments. This has included slowing or sequencing some service redesigns to be more closely aligned with the delivery of enabling technologies - such as our new Finance, HR and Payroll system (ERP) and Phone and Messaging System (Digital Contact Centre) - so that teams have the tools and support they need to deliver change effectively and maintain high-quality services.

7.5 At every stage, we have engaged with service leaders and staff, inviting alternative proposals and ensuring that those closest to delivery are involved in shaping and leading change. Our Organisational Development team continues to work with managers to build confidence and capability, supporting business continuity as we move through each phase.

7.6 This approach means that every decision is made with service continuity in mind, balancing the pace of transformation with the need to safeguard our core services and support our workforce. Our governance framework ensures that we remain agile, responsive, and focused on delivering sustainable improvements for Dorset's residents.

7.7 Our focus remains on minimising disruption and maintaining high-quality services as we deliver change. We will keep reviewing risks, phasing changes, and accelerating enabling technologies so that teams are always equipped to deliver for Dorset's residents. Strategic risks are included in the Dorset Council Corporate Risk register.

## 8. Employee wellbeing data and additional support provided to support people through change

8.1 We recognise that the success of Our Future Council depends not only on the systems and structures we implement, but on the wellbeing, resilience, and engagement of our workforce. As we deliver significant organisational change, we remain committed to supporting our employees through a people-centred approach that prioritises inclusion, accessibility, transparency, and long-term sustainability

8.2 We have embedded regular HR updates, webinars, and feedback channels to ensure staff are informed, heard, and supported. Staff stories and lived experiences are actively shaping our transformation journey, and we continue to collaborate with Trade Unions, employee groups and employee networks to co-design change that reflects the needs and aspirations of our workforce. This has included all employee webinars on a regular basis across the last 12 months, internal and external wellbeing services such as steps to wellbeing and a coaching and mentoring offer for all employees.

8.3 Digital inclusion is a core principle of our strategy. We are equipping all employees with the tools, skills, and confidence needed to thrive in a modern workplace, ensuring that transformation supports wellbeing, flexibility, and collaboration. This includes tailored learning and development opportunities, targeted upskilling, apprenticeships, and leadership development in digital capability. We are integrating digital competencies into career development frameworks to unlock new pathways for growth and progression.

8.4 We understand that change can be challenging. That’s why we are taking a deliberate and inclusive approach, considering the impact of transformation on individuals and teams, and ensuring that culture, conditions, and policy help colleagues to thrive. Our phased delivery model allows us to embed organisational learning, respond to feedback, and adjust our approach to maintain a healthy and productive workforce.

8.5 Our strong and constructive relationships with Trade Unions remain central to our approach. We are committed to maintaining open dialogue, co-creating digital strategies, and ensuring transparency and fairness throughout the transformation process. This collaborative ethos ensures that change is not imposed but shaped together with equity and support at its heart.

8.6 As we move forward, employee wellbeing will continue to be a key measure of success. We are not only transforming how we work we are building a culture that empowers our people, strengthens our organisation, and delivers better outcomes for Dorset’s residents.

8.7 We will continue to prioritise staff wellbeing, embedding regular feedback, learning opportunities, and support throughout the transformation. Our commitment is to ensure every colleague feels valued, informed, and empowered to thrive in a changing organisation.

## 9. Digital Innovation & Solutions integrated to date

9.1 We have taken a 'test & learn' approach and have had a number of positive outcomes using Automation, AI and other Innovative tools in a variety of scenarios and have now started embedding them as core enablers of our transformation strategy. These technologies are not standalone tools - they are often multifaceted and integral to how we redesign services, improve efficiency, and deliver better outcomes for residents and staff.

9.2 Following successful pilots using UiPath's Robotic Process Automation (RPA) platform, we have begun automating repetitive, rule-based tasks across key service areas. Over 300 processes have been mapped, and we are now working with teams to optimize high-impact activities in customer services, business support, and central support functions.

9.3 Early automation use cases - such as managing care home vacancies, Freedom of Information requests, and climate impact workflows have already indicated we can deliver measurable improvements in speed, accuracy, compliance, and customer satisfaction. We will continue to build on these solutions ensuring we support the organisation to get the most out of the tools and capabilities available to them.

9.4 We are also introducing AI capabilities in social care, regulatory services, planning and business support, helping teams make faster, more informed decisions and freeing up staff time for more complex and human-centered work. Pilots run to date are demonstrating real value, and we will continue to expand across the organisation as we transition to new ways of working. Supporting Government initiative within the **Incubator for AI** (i.AI part of the Department for Science Innovation & Technology) on projects like 'Minute' in collaboration with other Local Authorities using AI to support Education, Health and Care Planning (EHCP) will now be moving forward into more formal pilots and finally into practice.

9.5 After several short pilots we are now increasing our use of "Internet of Things" smart sensor technology across a new Long-Range Network (LoRaWAN) to gather intelligence on how best to support services in public spaces. The use of AI is also applied when converting the vast amounts of data we gather, more specifically machine learning models to interpret patterns and trends into insights to inform data led decision making.

9.6 As part of our evolving technology architecture, we are implementing a single booking platform that will allow residents, customers, and employees to book services, spaces, and activities more easily. This will reduce duplication, streamline user experience, and enable us to rationalise legacy ICT tools - releasing financial benefits and improving service accessibility.

9.10 Our approach to innovative technologies like automation and AI is deliberate, inclusive and responsible with recommendations from a recent audit of our governance and protocols all now signed off. We are working closely with service teams, the Design Authority, and our transformation office to ensure that every implementation is aligned with our principles, operating model, supports staff wellbeing, and contributes to our strategic goals. These technologies are not just about cost savings - they are about building a modern, responsive council that uses data and innovation to deliver better public services.

9.11 As we move forward, we will expand the use of technology where it adds value, always ensuring that new tools are introduced safely, with staff involvement, and in ways that improve both customer and workforce experience.

## 10. Finance, HR and Payroll system (ERP) progress update

10.1 Dorset Council is aligning the implementation of our new Finance, HR and Payroll system (ERP) with the redesign of our core corporate, strategic, and enabling services. While some structural changes are being delivered ahead of ERP to maintain momentum and readiness, the rollout of the new system will enable further automation, simplification, and integration, supporting our ambition to work as One Council and deliver sustainable improvements for staff and residents.

10.2 We are now aligning the redesign of associated core services with the implementation of the new ERP. The reprofiled programme design and roadmap will be complete for our next performance update to Cabinet and aligned to the 2026/27 budget timeline.

10.3 We recognise that delivering a new ERP system is a complex and critical undertaking, so we are taking a thorough, phased approach to ensure success. We have completed a comprehensive procurement process and selected Oracle as our new ERP platform, which will replace our current system before support ends in 2027. The rollout is planned over the next two years and is carefully timed to align with the redesign of our core corporate, strategic, and enabling services including finance, HR, and payroll.

10.4 Now that Oracle has been confirmed as our partner and our preferred approach is aligned to the redesign of strategic and enabling services, detailed reprogramming work is already underway to ensure the system and service changes are fully integrated.

10.5 Alongside this, we are actively building internal capabilities not only to deliver the ERP programme successfully but also to establish our future strategic and enabling functions, for example, Information Technology, Strategic Communications, People and Workforce, Finance, Strategy, Performance and Policy. This will strengthen our ability to manage ongoing change delivery and digital transformation, ensuring Dorset Council has the skills and capacity to sustain improvements beyond the ERP rollout.

10.6 While we are progressing with the delivery of new organisational structures ahead of the ERP go-live, the redesign and transformation of these services will be closely integrated with the ERP implementation. This means that as the new system is introduced, we will further refine processes, automate tasks, and use AI within the ERP to simplify work and reduce duplication across the council.

10.7 A dedicated group is mapping business processes, reviewing data needs, and designing future ways of working to make sure we are not just swapping systems but improving how we operate. Our approach is to use the new HR and Finance system as it is designed, rather than customising it, so we can take full advantage of its standard features. This will help us deliver better efficiency, reliable data, and a simpler experience for everyone.

10.8 In summary, we are aligning the Strategic and Enabling programme and the implementation of the new HR and finance system (ERP) more closely, such that the redesign of our core services aligns with the technical enablers to successfully deliver the changes to our ways of working. Some structural changes will be delivered earlier to maintain momentum and readiness. The ERP rollout will enable further automation, simplification, and integration, supporting our ambition to work as One Council and deliver sustainable improvements for staff and residents.

10.9 As we look forward, our phased approach ensures that as the new ERP system is implemented, Dorset Council will be ready to fully integrate, automate, and continually improve our core services - delivering greater efficiency, resilience, and value for our staff and residents as One Council.

## 11 Summary

11.1 Dorset Council is ready for the next phase of transformation. We have learned from experience, listened to our workforce and communities, and put in place the governance, skills, and enabling technologies needed for success. With strong leadership, clear priorities, and a commitment to transparency and continuous improvement, we are confident in our ability to deliver sustainable change together, as One Council.

11.2 This report addresses the committee's key lines of enquiry. Officers are available to provide further information or respond to additional questions as needed.

## 12 Key deliverables and milestones: Staged Delivery Plan (2025–2028)

| Phase | Key Deliverables | Internal Capacity Focus | External Support | Savings/Benefits Realised | Next Investment Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H2 2025** | • Stand up Transformation Management Office<br>• Launch digital contact centre product team<br>• Begin ERP implementation (strategic partner onboarded)<br>• Redesign of customer, business support, and enabling services | • Core change team in place<br>• Product team established<br>• Internal ERP project roles filled | Digital partner for contact centre (short-term)<br><br>ERP implementation partner (strategic, time-limited) | • Initial process redesign savings<br>• Management of establishment<br>• Third-party spend controls | • Review delivery and savings at 6 months<br>• Reprofile investment for next phase |
| **H1 2026** | • Digital contact centre live<br>• ERP phase 1 live<br>• Further service redesign (Place, Housing, Adults, Childrens/Public Health & Prevention) | • Upskilling of internal teams<br>• Change and ICT roles embedded<br>• Begin transition of product/digital skills in-house | • Reduced digital partner input<br>• ERP partner focused on knowledge transfer | • Increased cashable savings<br>• Workforce and third-party spend reductions | • Review and adjust internal/external mix<br>• Trigger next investment if needed |
| **H2 2026** | • ERP phase 2 live<br>• Customer Hub model expanded<br>• Strategic and Enabling model foundations in place<br>• Commissioning/procurement model embedded<br>• Internal capability leads product/digital delivery | • Internal product and change teams lead delivery<br>• Ongoing upskilling | • Minimal external support<br>• Only for specialist skills | • Ongoing savings<br>• Reduced cost of delivery | • Confirm final phase investment<br>• Plan for business-as-usual transition |
| **2027–28** | • All significant technology in delivery or completed delivered<br>• Internal teams own and develop products | • Sustainable internal capacity | • External support only for exceptional needs | • Target £18.8m workforce savings achieved | • No further major investment required |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | • Continuous improvement embedded | • Change/ICT fully in-house | | • Ongoing efficiency gains | |

**13 Alternative options considered**
Not applicable – update report only.

**14 Legal considerations**
Not applicable – update report only.

**15 Financial implications**
Not applicable – update report only.

16 **Natural environment, climate & ecology implications**
Not applicable – update report only.

17 **Well-being and health implications**
Not applicable – update report only.

**18 Other implications**
None

**19. Risk implications**

19.1 The programme adopts a phased, risk-based approach to mitigate disruption and ensure service continuity. Risks are tracked through the Corporate Risk Register and reviewed regularly by governance bodies. The current risk level is moderate due to the complexity of transformation, with residual risk expected to reduce as enabling technologies and workforce adaptations are implemented. Strategic risks are included in the Dorset Council Corporate Risk register.

**20. Equalities**
Not applicable – update report only.

**21. Appendices**
None

**22. Background papers**
Cabinet report October 2025

**23. Report sign-off**

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)