PLACE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9 JULY 2026

Present: Cllrs Nocturin Lacey-Clarke (Chair), Craig Monks (Vice-Chair), Alex Brenton and Jack Jeanes

Apologies: Cllrs Barrie Cooper, Alex Fuhrmann, Louie O'Leary, David Shortell and David Tooke

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):
Jan Britton (Executive Director - Economy and Environment), Jonathan Mair (Director - Assurance (Monitoring Officer)), Lisa Cotton (Interim Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery), Antony Nash (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer), Nina Coakley (Head of Transformation and Design), Liz Crocker (Head of Strategy) and Michael O'Donovan (Senior Corproate Performance Analyst)

Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):

10. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings on 30 April 2026 and 25 May 2026 were agreed and signed the Chair.

11. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

12. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

13. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from councillors.

14. **Transformation update, 25/06/2026 Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee**

The Head of Transformation and design introduced the item and the key points from the report sharing the key actions and changes over the first year and the savings realised.

The Committee considered the update on the Council's transformation programme, including progress made during the first year of delivery and plans for the next phase of the programme. Discussion focused on how the programme had evolved since its launch and how lessons learned had shaped the current approach. The Committee examined the decision to move away from earlier proposals for large-scale workforce reductions and towards a more phased approach to service redesign. It was noted that the original pace of change had been reassessed after concerns emerged around the potential impact on service stability and organisational resilience. Members discussed the balance between delivering financial savings and ensuring services remained sustainable and effective. Consideration was given to the delivery of savings targets and the extent to which alternative approaches were now being used to achieve transformation objectives. Discussion focused on service redesign, organisational efficiency and the use of technology rather than workforce reductions as the primary driver of change.

The Committee discussed how lessons from the first year of the programme had informed the development of a more structured "test and learn" approach. Members welcomed the emphasis on piloting changes, learning from outcomes and implementing improvements incrementally rather than pursuing large-scale organisational changes in a single phase. Workforce impacts also formed part of the discussion. The Committee explored how the Council was maintaining organisational knowledge and skills, particularly within specialist service areas. Assurance was given that by working alongside people and workforce and services using a deliberate approach using skills assessments, workforce plans, succession planning and staff development the organisation avoided the loss of critical expertise.

The role of digital technology, automation and artificial intelligence was discussed in detail. The Committee considered how these technologies were being used to improve efficiency and customer service, whilst also discussing governance arrangements, quality assurance processes, ethical oversight and information security. Members recognised the opportunities presented by technology but also sought assurance regarding safeguards, accountability and future adaptability given the rapid pace of technological change.

Discussion also focused on how the success of the programme would be measured. Members highlighted the importance of reporting not only financial benefits but also improvements for customers, service users and staff. There was support for the development of a clear benefits framework that could demonstrate the impact of transformation activity over time.

The Committee noted report and recognised the increased emphasis on collaboration across services and welcomed efforts to reduce silo working and create a more joined-up approach to organisational transformation.

Recommendations

The Place and resources Scrutiny Committee considered, noted and provided comment on the report and agreed to continue with 6 monthly updates.

The committee requested the inclusion of the climate wheel and climate impact consideration within the increased use of AI and digital tools to be included in the next update.

15. **Place and Resources Q4 25-26 Performance update, 25/06/2026 Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee reviewed the Quarter 4 performance report and considered areas where performance had improved as well as those where challenges remained. Members noted examples of strong performance across several operational areas while focusing discussion on indicators that had remained below target or were showing a worsening trend.

A significant area of discussion related to household waste collection performance. Members noted that missed collection performance continued to deteriorate and expressed concern that the accompanying narrative focused on the existence of the issue rather than the actions being taken to address it. The Committee agreed that this matter would be examined further through the forthcoming Waste Deep Dive.

The Committee also discussed employee health and safety performance, particularly the increase in reportable workplace incidents. Members considered whether the available information provided sufficient insight into the underlying causes of the increase and whether future reporting should include greater detail regarding the type and nature of incidents being recorded. There was a view that better analysis would help determine whether performance issues reflected genuine increases in incidents or improvements in reporting and compliance.

Discussion took place regarding workforce-related indicators, including long-term sickness absence. Members explored whether broader organisational factors could be influencing performance and agreed that further examination of workforce issues would be undertaken through the planned People and Workforce Deep Dive.

The Committee considered the delivery of rights of way improvements and noted that progress appeared significantly behind the level required to achieve longer-term targets. Members discussed whether additional scrutiny of the wider Rights of Way Improvement Plan would be beneficial and whether further work should be undertaken jointly with the relevant overview committee.

Climate-related performance indicators were also discussed. Members considered the target relating to staff travel emissions and noted that work was underway to develop a broader approach that considered the Council's overall transport demand rather than focusing solely on mileage claimed through employee vehicles. The Committee recognised that this work could lead to a review of how future targets were defined and measured.

Cyber security training compliance was discussed positively, with Members welcoming recent improvements in completion rates. The discussion broadened to include the completion of training by councillors and the importance of maintaining strong information security awareness across the organisation.

The Committee also discussed performance targets more generally and sought a better understanding of how targets were set, reviewed and adjusted over time. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring targets remained meaningful, ambitious and clearly understood.

16. **Emergency Response to Flooding Incidents in Dorset (Storm Chandra)**

Item Deferred.

17. **Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

The committee reviewed the work programme and the current ways of working. Future additional items were discussed around the rights of way improvement plan and the potential of deep dive around emergency planning and community resilience.

18. **Executive Arrangements Forward Plans**

The forward plans were noted.

19. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

20. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 8.05 pm

Chairman

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