

PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 6 JULY 2026

Present: Cllrs Louise Bown (Chair), Jindy Atwal (Vice-Chair), Beryl Ezzard, Ryan Holloway, Jon Orrell, Emma Parker, Andrew Parry and Byron Quayle

Apologies: Cllrs Will Chakawhata and Stella Jones

Also present: Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Matt Bell and Cllr Clare Sutton

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

George Dare (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer), Paula Golding (Corporate Director for Care and Protection), Laura Cornette (Business Partner - Communities and Partnerships), Lisa Cotton (Interim Executive Director - Modernisation and Customer Delivery), Katie Hale (Head of Revenues and Benefits) and David Webb (Head of Service - Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service)

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

Julia Ingram (Director - Adult Social Care)

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr W Chakawhata and Cllr S Jones.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes**

Proposed by Cllr L Bown, seconded by Cllr R Holloway.

Decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2026 be confirmed and signed.

4. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

5. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

6. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

7. **Crisis and Resilience Fund**

The Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention & Communities introduced the report. The Crisis and Resilience Fund had replaced the Household Support Fund. Support from the first day of this change had been agreed by Cabinet, however this report looked at the support in more detail going forward, to strengthen the council's resilience offer.

The Committee discussed the report and raised the following points:

- The £4.1 million allocation had clear guidance for the next 3 years, but was it able to cover inflationary or other external pressures? Officers responded that additional grants have been given from Government to respond to external pressures, and that as it was a single fund government could respond quicker.
- How would the council measure whether use of the Crisis and Resilience Fund is reducing demand for it? Officers responded that all crises would be assessed, whereas under the Household Support Fund everyone was given a voucher. Once someone has received a crisis payment, they would get more tailored support.
- A response and payment needed to be provided within 48 hours of being contacted and the council was meeting this requirement.

Committee members discussed how the committee could have more involvement in development of the Crisis and Resilience Fund policy.

During the discussion, Cllr Orrell declared that he was a trustee of the Lantern Trust and therefore did not take part in the discussion or vote.

Proposed by Cllr L Bown, seconded by Cllr J Atwal.

Decision:

To recommend to Cabinet that:

1. Interim governance of the Crisis and Resilience Fund programme is provided through the Communities and Prevention Delivery Board, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Prevention and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Housing.
2. An annual report on Crisis and Resilience Fund spend and impact is presented to the People and Health Scrutiny Committee.
3. The proposals set out in Appendix 2 for the allocation of Crisis and Resilience Fund funding to the resilience services and projects identified be agreed.

8. Youth Justice Plan

The Youth Justice Plan 2026-27 was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, and the Head of Service, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service. The Head of Service summarised the contents of the Youth Justice Plan and the service's priorities for the year.

Committee members discussed the report and asked questions of the officers. During the discussion the following points were made:

- There was a concern from members about funding for the Youth Justice Service and it would put additional pressure on the council to fund the service, because the Ministry of Justice has frozen funding until 2029.
- The Youth Justice Service has funded a speech and language project for some children at risk of exclusion and who may offend, to reduce their chances of offending. The project had been able to identify young people with severe communication needs.
- Challenges for the service included being able to strategically align proposals in the Youth Justice White Paper with Children's Services reform, and having resources to be able to provide more support to victims, particularly when victims are children.
- The Youth Justice White Paper was considering raising the age of criminal responsibility.
- The Youth Justice Service has supported parents with requests for assessments when they believe a young person has an unidentified need. The service also works with schools to ensure that children's needs were being met.
- There was overrepresentation of children with additional needs or children in care within the Youth Justice System. For children placed outside the Dorset Council area, there were not high numbers in the Youth Justice System. Officers were not aware of any unaccompanied asylum-seeking children being in the Youth Justice System.
- 40% of young people entering the Youth Justice System for the first time were aged 14 or younger. Children entering the system earlier means they could get more support; however, some would stay in the system.
- The Youth Justice Board would conduct a deep dive to see who the first-time entrants under 14s were, and what actions were needed to address these reasons for offending.
- An Expert at Hand offer was being rolled out to schools through SEND Reform which would have an expanded offer to schools for keeping children in education. Targeted youth work in schools had also helped to reduce exclusions.

Proposed by Cllr L Bown, seconded by Cllr R Holloway.

Decision:

To recommend to Cabinet that it recommends to Full Council that the Youth Justice Plan 2026/27 be approved.

9. **Committee's Work Programme and Executive Forward Plans**

The Committee noted its work programme and the Executive's forward plans.

10. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 7.43 pm

Chairman

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