

Cabinet

6 October 2026

Mampitts Community Hub Progress Update For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr S Bartlett, Planning & Planning Enforcement

Local Councillor(s):

Cllr Jeanes, Cllr Beer

Senior Leadership Team:

J Britton - Executive Director, Economy & Environment

J Mair - Director, Assurance and Governance

Report author and job title:

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Statutory Authority: Town and Country Planning Act 1990

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

1. Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the delivery of the Mampitts Green Community Hub – a project led by Shaftesbury Town Council providing café, flexible meeting space and a Dorset Council Family Hub uses alongside associated outdoor formal and informal open space. It follows two previous Cabinet reports setting out funding conditions and milestones associated with project delivery.
- 1.2 Dorset Council have recently acquired freehold ownership of the Mampitts Green land from developer Persimmon Homes, enabling delivery and operation of the hub through a lease arrangement with Shaftesbury Town Council.
- 1.3 The report seeks a decision from the Cabinet to regularise the use of Chief Officer urgency powers which have enabled the project to proceed to delivery stage avoiding financial risks.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Cabinet adopt as its own decision action taken under the Council's urgency powers to enable the project to proceed to the delivery stage.

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

- 3.1 To regularise a decision made under delegated powers to progress the delivery of this important community infrastructure project.

4. The report

- 4.1 Through items presented to Cabinet on the 15th October 2024 and 9th October 2025, Dorset Council agreed arrangements for the award of s106 funding and the transfer of land to Shaftesbury Town Council to deliver important community facilities required by planning obligation at Mampitts Green, Shaftesbury.

- 4.2 At its meeting on 15 October 2024 the Cabinet's resolution to award ringfenced s106 developer contributions to Shaftesbury Town Council was subject to the fulfilment of conditions including one requiring the provision of additional information within 6 months of the Cabinet decision. The Cabinet's resolution included that *'Failure to meet this condition would require the funding offer to be revisited by Dorset Council'*.

- 4.3 The timescale set by the Cabinet in its 15th October 2024 decision was not met and so in accordance with the previous decision the matter was revisited by the Cabinet. At its meeting on 9th October 2025. the Cabinet resolved to extend the previously set timescale milestone for the award of s106 funding to Shaftesbury Town Council as follows:

(a) That the timescale condition requiring the completion of all necessary information required by condition, extended to 9th June 2026.

(b) That the commencement of work on-site, extended to: 9th July 2026:

The Cabinet's resolution was specific that failure to comply with either milestone extension would result in referral to Cabinet for further consideration.

- 4.4 Ahead of the 9th June 2026 deadline, Dorset Council received a comprehensive package of information complying with part (a) of the Cabinet's 9th October 2025 decision. This included project costings, operating plan and risk register. The information was then appraised by officers with a recommendation that the project pass to delivery stage. That recommendation was properly agreed by the Corporate Director for Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning.

- 4.5 Although the Cabinet's 9th June 2026 deadline was satisfied, matters outside of the control of both Shaftesbury Town Council and Dorset Council meant that the 9th July 2026 deadline passed without work being commenced on site.
- 4.6 Given the express terms of the Cabinet's 9th October 2025 decision (that failure to comply with either milestone extension would result in referral to Cabinet for further consideration) the Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the matter should then have been referred to Cabinet for decision. Instead, reliance was placed upon Chief Officer powers to act in a case of urgency so that the Town Council could go ahead and contract with their procured builder. Works then commenced on site on 14th September, starting a build phase lasting up to 12 months.
- 4.7 Whilst understanding that the intention was to avoid delay, the Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the express requirement for a referral back to Cabinet meant that this was not an appropriate exercise of an officer delegation. Accordingly, the matter is being reported to Cabinet with a request that the Cabinet formally adopt as its own the decision made under delegated powers.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Given the requirements of the 9th October 2025 Cabinet decision, it is not an option to rely upon the use of officer delegated powers.

6. Legal considerations

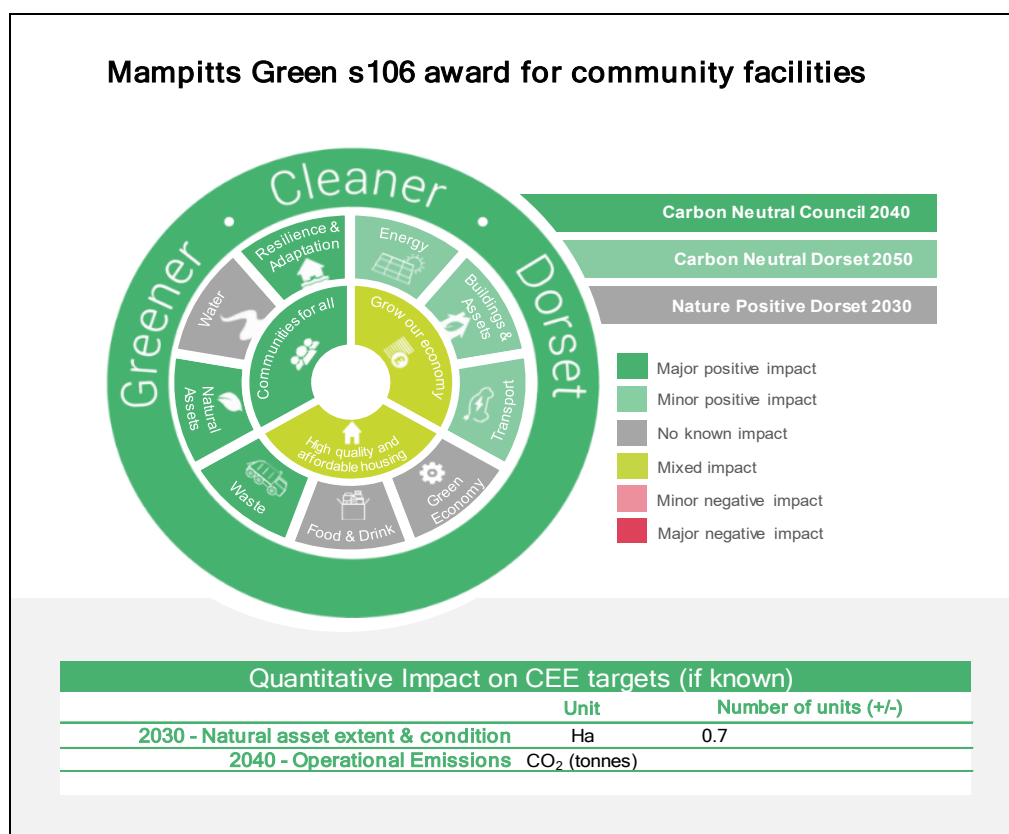
- 6.1 Adoption by the Cabinet will regularise the inappropriate use of delegated powers.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 Following the early drawdown of the s106 award to support project delivery, and a further application for s106 funding approved under delegated powers, the total balance of s106 funding available for this project stands at £1,107,910.03. Separate to s106, a grant of £187,200 is provided for the delivery of the Family Hub to provide integrated support services for children, young people and their families.
- 7.2 Both grants are managed under separate detailed grant agreements with Shaftesbury Town Council.

8. Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Considerations

- 8.1 It is considered that that long term effects of this proposal are positive in terms of impact on the environment. The construction materials and inclusion of renewable energy technology will reduce the requirement of external power sources.



9. Other implications

- 9.1 None.

10. Risk implications

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

11. Equalities

- 11.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. The proposal conforms to the requirements of planning policy providing a range of community facilities which meet the requirements for which associated planning obligations were established in 2007.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix A – Copy of Officer Delegated Decision

13. Background papers

13.1 Cabinet report dated 15th October 2024 - *Allocation s106 developer contribution funding for community facilities at Mampitts Green Shaftesbury*

13.2 Cabinet report dated 9th October 2025 - *Developer contribution funding for community facilities at Mampitts Green, Shaftesbury*

13.3 Dorset Council's protocol for Planning Obligation Funding Allocations – Community Schemes, agreed 18th May 2021

14. Report sign-off

14.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Assurance & Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Director for Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Cabinet Member(s)