Health and Wellbeing Board
18 November 2026
Health and Wellbeing Strategy
For Decision

Cabinet Member:
Cllr S Robinson, Adult Social Care & Health

Local Councillor(s): **All**

Senior Leadership Team:
S Crowe - Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities

Report author and job title: Sam Crowe, Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities
Email: sam.crowe@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority:

Report status: Public Choose an item.

1. **Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)**

1.1 A new strategy for the Health and Wellbeing Board has been developed this year, following agreement of the approach and aims of the strategy at the March meeting. Development has been carried out with the engagement of partners and stakeholders, and updating this Board with regular progress.

1.2 The strategy is framed around four strategic outcomes which are based on Start Well, Live Well, Age Well and Healthy Places. This structure allows the Board to focus on broad strategic priorities relevant to residents and partners.

1.3 Delivery of the strategy will be overseen by delivery groups and a joint commissioning partnership, aligned to these strategic outcomes, where the detailed programmes can be managed, and partners come together at a place-based level. There is a separate paper on the partnership being considered by this Board meeting.

1.4 The Board will review progress at its quarterly meetings. It will review and update the strategy and outcomes annually to reflect changing priorities and local need.

1.5 The final draft of this strategy was presented to the People and Health Overview Committee on 2nd November, a summary of their feedback will be provided verbally at the meeting because this report was submitted for clearance before the committee took place.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 That the Board approves the strategy, supports the approach of four strategic outcomes as the framework, and the mechanism of delivery groups and joint commissioning partnership to oversee programmes and progress towards the outcomes.

2.2 That the Board confirms the appointment of chairs of the delivery groups and that they start work as set out in the strategy.

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

3.1 Having an approved strategy will enable the Health and Wellbeing Board to act effectively as the partnership space for prevention focused integrated health and care in Dorset. The outcomes framework provides a structure and focus to manage priorities and coordination of effort across the partner organisations. The delivery groups will manage the detailed programmes making sure that delivery supports the outcomes, work is coordinated and priorities are aligned.

3.2 Final publication of the strategy will incorporate feedback from the board.

4. The report

Introduction

4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory partnership board, responsible for promoting prevention focused integrated care in Dorset. Statutory functions include undertaking a joint strategic needs assessment, developing a strategy, undertaking a needs assessment for pharmacy services, oversight of the Better Care Fund, and ensuring the work of the Safeguarding boards is considered.

4.2 The strategy for the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board was due to be refreshed earlier this year. This comes at a time when the Integrated Care Board (ICB) is changing to a cluster arrangement covering six unitary authority places, and Dorset Council is focusing heavily on prevention and working more closely with communities. This provided an opportunity to update the approach and priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Board to improve place-based partnership working and

support the left shift on prevention, including from hospital to communities. It supports the council plan priorities of Communities for All in line with partnership working.

4.3 The strategy reinforces the principle of the Health and Wellbeing board incorporating the emerging neighbourhood health work, with NHS partners. The NHS is developing clear plans for supporting the 20% of the population most in need of health care services. The focus for the health and wellbeing strategy is broader, supporting the remaining 80% of the population to live well and independently. The two plans overseen together allows connectivity and alignment of priorities and partnerships.

4.4 This refresh of the strategy and the work of the Board comes at a time when there is an opportunity to look at joint commissioning with partners, especially the ICB and Dorset Council. There is a separate paper to this Board meeting proposing a partnership approach including a new joint commissioning forum. This will oversee the main commissioning fund of the Board, the Better Care Fund, and provide opportunities for a more effective partnership as it takes on responsibility for devolved funding from the ICB.

Timeline

4.5 The emerging strategy has been developed through these meetings for input and approval:

- December 2025 Green Paper to Dorset Council Senior Leadership Team setting out the opportunity for the Health and Wellbeing Board to work collaboratively within the partnership.
- 2nd February 2026 People & Health Overview Committee. Set out the approach to building the strategy with full engagement of partners and stakeholders.
- 18th March 2026 Health and Wellbeing Board. Setting out the approach and timeline for refreshing the strategy and developing an outcomes framework.
- 17th June 2026 Health and Wellbeing Board. Presentation on developing the board and its purpose under the emerging strategy, with delivery groups overseeing the programmes.
- 16th September 2026 Health and Wellbeing Board. Progress update for the refreshed strategy and outcomes framework.
- 2nd November 2026 People and Health Overview Committee. Review of final draft strategy.

Engagement sessions

4.6 Four stakeholder engagement sessions were planned as part of the development of the strategy. Attendees included representatives for Dorset Council, health services, voluntary and community sector and wider system partners.

4.7 The sessions held were:

- 24th February 2026 – developing an outcomes based strategy
- 21st May 2026 – developing a vision for Dorset
- 16th July 2026 – delivering the priorities
- 15th October 2026 – adding value with meaning and purpose

4.8 There was a clear and consistent message from stakeholders, that improving health and wellbeing in Dorset requires a greater focus on prevention, early intervention and the wider determinants of health (such as housing, employment and access to green space). Stakeholders highlighted the importance of designing services around what matters most to residents, strengthening communities and the voluntary sector, and creating simpler, more integrated systems with shared outcomes and accountability.

Overall, there was a clear message that delivery should build on existing programmes that share common characteristics: prevention, community-based support, holistic approaches and trusted local relationships. Participants also highlighted the need for stronger governance, better data sharing, improved collaboration across organisations, and success measures that focus on outcomes such as quality of life, belonging, purpose and community connection.

Development of the strategy

4.9 The approach taken in developing this strategy was to focus on priorities and strategic outcomes, with the aim of enabling the Board to work at a strategic level across the partnership. This will be an evolving strategy that will reflect progress and emerging priorities and is relevant to residents.

4.10 An internal officer group for Dorset Council was established to ensure a whole council approach was taken, with directorates working together on prevention, avoiding silos and duplication. The engagement with partners and stakeholders, together with progress updates to the Board during development, supported an iterative process with feedback being incorporated during the process.

4.11 Refreshing the strategy allowed the Board to consider its purpose driving integration, prevention and place-based leadership. This means a strategic focus on priorities and outcomes at Board, and detailed oversight of programmes through the delivery groups.

Outcomes Framework

4.12 An outcomes framework provides a structured approach to cover broad outcomes across multiple partners. It focuses on the real-world impact for Dorset residents and provides a common language and structure for measuring progress. It

is better to focus on a few priority outcomes well, instead of trying to track lots of outcomes ineffectively.

It focuses on top priorities at a strategic level, with measures that are already available to monitor progress. It allows detailed delivery work to be organised under the strategic outcomes where place-based delivery can happen.

4.13 The strategic outcomes in the strategy are as follows:

- **Start Well**: Children, young people and their families are healthy, thriving and resilient. They feel safe and connected to their community.
- **Live Well**: People can live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives, with support in the community to improve wellbeing.
- **Age Well**: Older people live independently, with dignity and choice, supported to stay well in their own homes and communities
- **Healthy Places**: Our neighbourhoods are safe, inclusive and connected, with access to nature, making healthy living easier for everyone.

Delivery groups

4.14 The concept of delivery groups led by senior officers and partners enables strong leadership of the work and will provide assurance back to the board. They will provide clear updates to the Board on progress and issues for escalation.

4.15 Major programmes will be grouped by outcome, to manage the connections and shared achievements. This will show the added value of aligning partnership work, connection to related work managed elsewhere in the system and will help see the bigger picture. An example of this would be the Healthy Places delivery group overseeing a new partnership programme for rough sleeping, reflecting national policy direction for partnerships and providers to work together.

4.16 Focusing on the detail here will allow the Health and Wellbeing board to remain strategic. The delivery groups will have space to focus on the main programmes linked with outcomes in the strategy. It helps simplify where the work in the partnership happens. The groups will advocate for the move to prevention, to avoid demand, and prevent ill health. They will review and develop detailed metrics as programmes develop

4.17 The establishment of these delivery groups will facilitate connections with the Dorset Council delivery boards and will strengthen their shared purpose. This alignment will make the Health and Wellbeing Board stronger by strengthening the focus on partnership working which adds more value than organisations working in silos.

4.18 This table show the initial view of current programmes aligned to the strategic outcomes

	Start well	Live well	Age well	Healthy places
Best start in life	✓	✓	✓	✓
LiveWell Dorset		✓	✓	✓
Neighbourhood Health	✓	✓	✓	✓
Age Friendly Dorset	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Care		✓	✓	✓
Better Care Fund		✓	✓	✓
Thriving Communities		✓	✓	✓
Physical Activity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rough sleeping		✓		✓

4.19 The delivery programmes, overseen by the delivery groups, will provide some proxy measures as an additional way of checking progress towards the strategic outcomes. There will not necessarily be a one-to-one map of measure to outcome, rather a mix of measures to outcomes as illustrated in the table above.

4.20 The Health and Wellbeing Board will hold an annual review of the strategy and outcomes, which will allow assessment of progress, celebrate success and identify where further attention is needed for the following year. The annual review process

will also enable the strategic outcomes to be adapted to meet changes in context and goals.

The review process will include learning and innovating from good practice elsewhere to enhance the target outcomes and continue to improve the means of achieving them for Dorset residents.

Next Steps

4.21 Work is underway to appoint chairs of the delivery groups and core members. They will define the full membership of the individual groups based on the initial work programmes, and agree the scope of these programmes. They will clarify relationships and connections with the other delivery groups as well as other relevant boards to ensure effective coordination of plans, focus on partnership work coming under the remit of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and alignment of work to strategic outcomes.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 Not having a strategy – this option is dismissed as it is a statutory requirement of the board.

5.2 Using a previous approach of drafting by professionals, sharing with the board for consultation. Discounted as experience shows this is not an effective way of building engagement around the importance of the work.

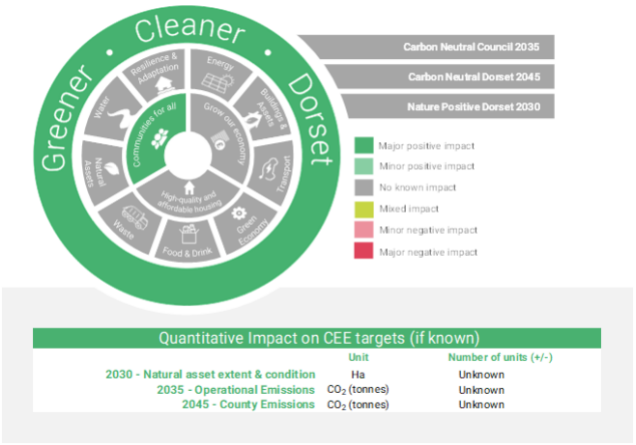
6. Legal considerations

6.1 Developing a local Health and Wellbeing Strategy is a legal requirement for the board under the 2012 and 2022 Health and Social Care Acts.

7. Financial implications

7.1 The strategy and supporting work on community needs and the outcomes framework will be essential in the ambitions of Dorset Council to develop its prevention approach, working with communities. An effective prevention approach at scale, through this strategy, should support the council to be financially sustainable, through meeting needs earlier.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

8.1 

9. Wellbeing and health implications

9.1 Having a clear strategy that is owned and supported by partners and communities will be essential in focusing work to improve wellbeing and health of residents and continue to tackle inequalities in health.

10. Other implications

10.1 The approach may need to evolve as the Neighbourhood health plan and the ICB Cluster further develops in 2027, and the Health Bill is passed.

11. Risk implications

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

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

12. Equalities

12.1 Equality impact assessments are provided for individual programmes within the emerging delivery groups.

13. Appendices

13.1 The draft strategy is circulated as a separate document

14. Background papers

14.1 Health and Wellbeing board reports 18th March, 17th June, 16th September 2026

15. Report sign-off

15.1 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)