

# Notice of Overview and Scrutiny Board

Date: Monday, 23 August 2021 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Committee Suite, Civic Centre, Poole BH15 2RU



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## Membership:

### Chairman:

Cllr S Bartlett

### Vice Chairman:

Cllr V Slade

Cllr L Allison

Cllr M Cox

Cllr L Dedman

Cllr B Dion

Cllr M Earl

Cllr J Edwards

Cllr D Farr

Cllr L Fear

Cllr S Gabriel

Cllr M Howell

Cllr D Kelsey

Cllr T O'Neill

Cllr C Rigby

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All Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=4869>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Claire Johnston - 01202 123663 or email [claire.johnston@bcpCouncil.gov.uk](mailto:claire.johnston@bcpCouncil.gov.uk)

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 454668 or email [press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk)

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at [democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk](https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk)

GRAHAM FARRANT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

13 August 2021



Available online and  
on the Mod.gov app



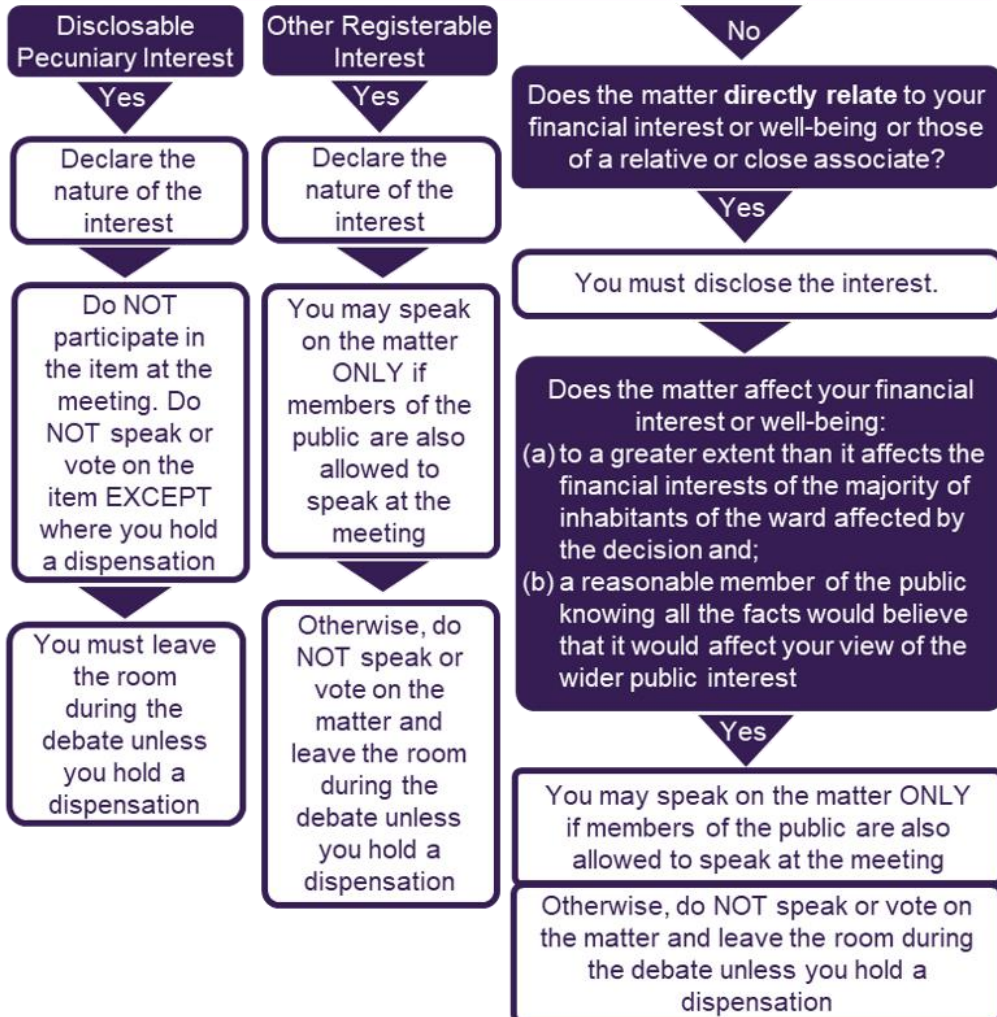
## Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

### Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

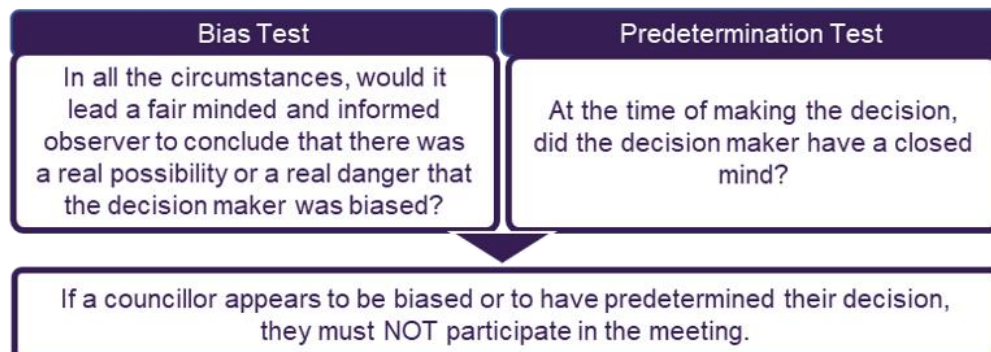
Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests

Do any matters being discussed at the meeting directly relate to your registered interests?



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.



For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer  
([susan.zeiss@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:susan.zeiss@bcpcouncil.gov.uk))

### Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

### Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

### Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

### Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

### Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

### Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

### Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

# AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

## 1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Members.

## 2. Substitute Members

To receive information on any changes in the membership of the Committee.

Note – When a member of a Committee is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader (or their nominated representative) may, by notice to the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated representative) prior to the meeting, appoint a substitute member from within the same Political Group. The contact details on the front of this agenda should be used for notifications.

## 3. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

## 4. Public Speaking

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution, which is available to view at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeID=151&Info=1&bcr=1>

The deadline for the submission of a public question is 4 clear working days before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a statement is midday the working day before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a petition is 10 working days before the meeting.

## 5. Scrutiny of Transport and Sustainability Related Cabinet Reports

To consider the following Transport and Sustainability related reports scheduled for Cabinet consideration on 1 September 2021:

- Bus Operator Enhanced Partnership (National Bus Strategy)

The O&S Board is asked to scrutinise and comment on the report and if required make recommendations or observations as appropriate.

The Cabinet report for this item is included with the agenda for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

**6. Officer Decision - Accessing requirements for minor transport schemes - Review**

15 - 36

To scrutinise the decision taken to approve the method of assessing minor transport scheme requests carried out by the Transport and Engineering Directorate, on the basis of Officer Guidance document and associated appendices.

This decision was taken by the Service Director for Transport and Engineering on 22 June 2021.

The published officer decision and Officer Guidance document is attached to this agenda. The appendices to the guidance can be found at the link below:

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=398>

Note: this decision is not subject to call-in and is listed for post decision scrutiny only.

**7. Scrutiny of Environment Cleansing and Waste Cabinet Reports**

37 - 44

To consider the following Transformation and Finance related reports scheduled for Cabinet consideration on 1 September 2021:

- **Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Service Structure**

The O&S Board is asked to scrutinise and comment on the report and if required make recommendations or observations as appropriate.

The Cabinet report for this item is included with the agenda for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

**8. Scrutiny of Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning Related Cabinet Reports**

To Follow

To consider the following Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning related reports scheduled for Cabinet consideration on 1 September 2021:

- **Carters Quay Build to Rent Opportunity, Poole**

The O&S Board is asked to scrutinise and comment on the report and if required make recommendations and observations as appropriate.

The Cabinet report for this item is included with the agenda for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

**9. Future Meeting Dates 2021/22**

To note the following proposed meeting dates and locations for the 2021/22 municipal year:



- 20 September 2021
- 18 October 2021
- 15 November 2021
- 6 December 2021
- 5 January 2022
- 31 January 2022
- 28 February 2022
- 4 April 2022

All meetings will be held via video conferencing until further notice.

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

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## CABINET



Report subject	<b>Bus Operator Enhanced Partnership (National Bus Strategy)</b>
Meeting date	1 September 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Cabinet is asked to note that the Service Director for Transport and Engineering has used delegated authority to indicate to the Department for Transport (DfT) that the Council intends to enter into a statutory Enhanced Partnership (EP) with the local bus service operators from 1 April 2022. Local Transport Authorities and bus operators were asked to commit to forming an EP by 30 June 2021 with the EP being operational from 1 April 2022.</p> <p>This report also seeks Cabinet approval to formally enter into the EP with the BCP local bus service operators under the Bus Services Act 2017 and in line with the National Bus Strategy for England.</p> <p>Failure to form an EP will result in no new sources of bus funding from the government's £3bn budget and cessation of the COVID-19 Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG).</p> <p>Robust and ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plans are required by 31 October 2021 setting out a roadmap to better services for passengers and communities, fully informed by local needs.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(a) Cabinet supports the formation of an Enhanced Partnership with the bus operators as a replacement to the existing voluntary Quality Bus Partnership.</b></li> <li><b>(b) Cabinet delegates authority to the Service Director for Transport and Engineering in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability to negotiate, seek stakeholder views and then publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) on behalf of the Council by the end of October 2021 in line with the requirements of the National Bus Strategy for England.</b></li> </ul>

Reason for recommendations	<p>The recently published National Bus Strategy for England sets out an ambition for every local transport authority and bus operator in England to be in a statutory Enhanced Partnership or a franchising arrangement (entering into an EP does not preclude franchising in the future, however, achieving franchising is lengthy and complex with significant financial risk).</p> <p>Improving bus services to attract more passengers is a joint aim of the bus operators and the Local Transport Authority (LTA).</p> <p>An Enhanced Partnership will build on the good work undertaken through the voluntary Quality Bus Partnership over the last two decades.</p> <p>Not entering into an Enhanced Partnership will result in a significant financial funding loss for the council and for the bus operators.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike Greene, Cabinet Member for Transport and Sustainability
Corporate Director	Kate Ryan, Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	<p>John McVey, Sustainable Transport Policy Manager</p> <p>Richard Pincroft, Head of Transportation including Sustainable Travel</p>
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. The local bus service industry has been deregulated (outside London) for 35 years and as a result the bus operators have largely determined the bus network. Bus operators have been free to operate routes wherever and whenever they consider there is a commercial case. They provide the vehicles, drivers and some of the infrastructure. Bus shelters, raised bus stop kerbs and bus priority measures are provided and funded by the LTA. Bus information (including Real Time), publicity and data provision are provided jointly.
2. The LTA has the power to provide non-commercial bus services considered 'socially necessary' and currently does so through its bus subsidy budget. These predominately operate in the evenings, on Sundays and away from the main routes outside the peak hours.
3. The Council, as the Travel Concession Authority, has the statutory duty to reimburse bus operators for journeys undertaken through the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. This is a subsidy to the passenger and not the bus operators. The intention is for the bus operators to be no better or worse off as a result of the concessionary travel scheme. This means that they are compensated for the loss of revenue sustained from passengers who would otherwise be paying the full fare and



for their costs associated with carrying the additional passengers generated by the scheme including extra buses where required.

4. BCP Council and its predecessor Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) formed the first non-statutory (voluntary) Quality Bus Partnership for South East Dorset in 1999. This helped deliver significant patronage growth and at one stage Poole and Bournemouth were recorded as having the biggest increases in passenger numbers in the country.
5. Bus patronage has been in general decline since the 1950s. Most recently in England it fell by 317m passenger journeys (6.9%) in the period between 2014/15 and 2018/19. The decline in the BCP area has been much less severe. In recognition of the importance of buses to address emissions levels and to reverse the decline in usage onto a sustainable footing, government has published its National Bus Strategy for England.
6. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on bus patronage. Journey numbers are increasing but remain at between a half and two-thirds of pre-pandemic levels. This is due to a number of factors including continuing anxiety over using public transport following government messaging at the start of the pandemic to avoid it; home-working; and, fewer shopping trips. Government has been supporting local bus operators through the Covid Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) on a not-for-profit basis but this is being phased out.
7. Greater emphasis will now be placed on partnership working, where LTAs and bus operators form statutory partnerships to define bus networks, service levels, and fares strategies. The government expects all LTAs to develop Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) and set up Enhanced Partnerships (EPs), as defined in the Bus Services Act 2017. The strategy represents the greatest change since 1985 and provides the opportunity to give LTAs more control.
8. Through the strategy, LTAs and bus operators are asked to commit to forming a statutory Enhanced Partnership (EP) if not already on the route to franchising and to jointly develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Dependent on how ambitious the BSIP is, LTAs and bus operators will benefit from £3bn of government funding over 5 years.
9. A number of bus services cross the council boundary to/from the Dorset Council area, with key bus passenger destinations in both areas. Dorset Council will therefore be invited to EP meetings to ensure standards are applied consistently and seamlessly when services cross into the neighbouring authority area. This aligns with the joint approach to the Transforming Cities Fund covering the South East Dorset journey-to-work area and the Councils' joint Local Transport Plan.
10. As an alternative to an EP and where partnership working has failed to achieve improvements in bus services, the legislation does permit London-style franchising to be considered. However, the route to franchising is complex and can take several years, particularly for LTAs that are not Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), and bus service franchising carries significant risk. Transport for Greater Manchester is the only city region outside London committed to bus service franchising. Forming an EP does not preclude franchising in the future should the statutory partnership not deliver the desired outcomes.
11. It is possible to continue with the existing voluntary partnership working and not enter into the statutory arrangement. However, government has made it clear that this would result in a significant loss of funding for LTAs and bus operators. It is

therefore strongly recommended that an Enhanced Partnership is formed. This is the preferred arrangement of the bus operators.

12. The required government timescales are ambitious and highly challenging as set out in a DfT announcement made on 15 March 2021 with the following milestones presented:

- i. **30 June 2021** – LTAs to commit to establishing Enhanced Partnerships across their entire areas under the Bus Services Act 2017, and all bus operators to co-operate with the LTA throughout the process. If this requirement is not met LTAs and operators will no longer receive Covid-19 Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG), Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) or any new sources of bus funding from the £3bn budget. (**Note:** Due to the DfT timescale this decision was delegated to the Service Director for Transport and Engineering in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transportation and Sustainability on 23 June 2021 and published on 29 June 2021).
- ii. **31 October 2021** – LTAs and bus operators to have jointly developed and published a robust and ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan setting out a roadmap to better services for passengers and communities, fully informed by local needs.
- iii. **1 April 2022** – Fully structured Enhanced Partnerships must be up and running.

#### Bus Service Improvement Plans

13. Plans must be developed in collaboration with local bus operators, community transport bodies and local businesses, services and people. These will be living, transparent documents, with targets. LTAs will need to routinely publish six-monthly progress reports against these targets. Plans will need to:
- i. Cover the LTA's full area, all local bus services within it, and the differing needs of any parts of that area (e.g. urban and rural elements).
  - ii. Consider how the network should serve school, health, social care, employment and other services.
  - iii. Drive improvement in accessibility for all.
  - iv. Set targets for journey times and reliability improvements (for the LTA as a whole and in each of the largest towns in its area) – to be reported against publicly at least every six months.
  - v. Identify where bus priority measures are needed, including consideration of Bus Rapid Transit routes to transform key corridors and how traffic management can be improved to benefit buses.
  - vi. Demonstrate how bus services are integrated with other types of transport in their area such as connectivity to train stations and cycling and walking schemes, complementing these forms of travel and not competing with them.

- vii. Focus on delivering the bus network that LTAs (in consultation with operators) want to see, including how to address the under provision and overprovision of bus services and buses integrating with other modes.
  - viii. Be updated annually and reflected in the authority's Local Transport Plan and in other relevant local plans such as Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).
  - ix. Set out pressures on the road network, air quality issues and carbon reduction targets which improved bus services could address.
  - x. Set targets for passenger growth and customer satisfaction.
  - xi. Set out plans and costs for fares, ticketing and modal integration. Ultimately the strategy aims to see multi-modal ticketing. It is a local ambition for TfL-style daily fares capping (subject to financial considerations).
  - xii. Set out how the objectives of the national strategy will be achieved, including growing bus use, and include a detailed plan for delivery.
14. **Note:** Changes to bus services that are **subsidised by the council** are **not** included within the BSIP. Any decisions relating to such services would be taken outside this process.

### Options Appraisal

15. The council has three potential options with regards to bus services and its relationship with the bus operators:
- i. **Continue with existing non-statutory Quality Bus Partnership (QBP)**  
**For:** The existing voluntary QBP has resulted in notable improvements for bus passengers and at one stage had the biggest increase in bus patronage in England.  
**Against:** Successful though not transformational. This route would not attract any new government funding and would result in the loss of some existing funding.  
**Not recommended**
  - ii. **Form a statutory Enhanced Partnership.**  
**For:** Provides opportunity for step change in bus patronage and mode share. Opens up future government funding opportunities and secures existing funding. Does not preclude consideration of franchising in the future should partnership working not deliver the desired outcomes.  
**Against:** None identified.  
**Recommended**
  - iii. **Commence proceedings towards franchising.**  
**For:** Would give the council complete control of bus routes, timetables, vehicle standards, fares/ticketing, information etc.  
**Against:** High risk (financial, passenger impact, reputational). Lengthy process requiring secondary legislation. No evidence that partnership

working cannot deliver the required outcomes. The council does not currently have the experience, resources or expertise to operate local bus services on the scale required. Would not meet government's National Bus Strategy timetable so not an immediate option.

### **Not Recommended**

#### **Summary of financial implications**

16. Failing to form an Enhanced Partnership with the bus operators will preclude the LTA and bus operators from receiving any new sources of bus funding including the £3bn budget announced by government earlier this year. It will also be an end to the annual ringfenced BSOG grant currently received by the Council for subsidised services of £294,368.
17. DfT provided funding (Capacity Grant) of £100k to BCP Council for developing local bus proposals as outlined in the National Bus Strategy (NBS). In particular, it is being offered to help LTAs towards the development of their Enhanced Partnership Scheme (or where appropriate franchising scheme), and Bus Service Improvement Plans work, and to meet the timescales that go alongside that work.
18. BCP Council is using the £100k grant to fund consultancy support as well as a temporary member of staff. The new staffing structure includes a Public Transport Officer post replacing a retiring member of staff.
19. A further £177,498 Capacity Grant funding has been allocated to BCP Council to support this process.
20. The Enhanced Partnership is a statutory version of the previous voluntary Quality Bus Partnership and it is not expected there will be any revenue pressures as a result of the change. Budgets are already in place to cover staffing, bus subsidy and concessionary fares reimbursement.
21. In terms of funding the initiatives that are developed through the partnership, government has announced £3bn for buses outside London. Initially this will be invested across the rest of England as follows (with details to follow):
  - Supporting new and increased services – with at least £300m of funding to support the sector recover from the pandemic in 2021/22.
  - Giving LTAs the skills and people they need to deliver this strategy – with £25m of the £300m allocated in 2021/22. £100k has already been offered to each LTA.
  - Bus priority schemes to speed up journeys – with the first schemes delivered in 2021/22.
  - Accelerating the delivery of zero emission buses with £120m in 2021/22.What we receive will depend on our ambition as shown by our Bus Service Improvement Plan (currently under development).
22. It is expected that some of the funding will continue to go to the bus companies direct as currently. For example, for the local bus services they operate commercially they are paid Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) which is a rebate of duty paid on fuel used. Other funding is expected to come via the Local

### **Summary of legal implications**

23. Enhanced Partnerships are statutory arrangements created by the Bus Services Act 2017. All parties have a stronger commitment to joint working than the voluntary Quality Bus Partnership arrangement previously in place.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

24. In recognition of the requirement for specialist knowledge and relevant experience to develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan and establish an Enhanced Partnership with the Bus Operators, the Department for Transport has made available to Local Transport Authorities grants of £100k. BCP has used some of this funding to cover the costs of a temporary Public Transport Officer as well as external consultancy support. Account has also been taken through the Smarter Structures project of the need to ensure adequate public transport professional expertise to continue to develop and deliver bus service initiatives and improvements.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

25. In its recently published Decarbonising Transport Plan, the government set out its vision for a net zero transport system which will benefit us all. In the plan, public transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for our daily activities. We will use our cars less and be able to rely on a convenient, cost-effective and coherent public transport network. The bus is the most efficient user of road space and a vital part of an environmentally friendly local sustainable transport system. Actions taken by the council that negatively impact on bus service provision will make it more difficult to achieve this vision. It would also be contrary to the Council's own 2030 zero carbon priority set out in the Corporate Strategy.

### **Summary of public health implications**

26. Urban traffic speeds are falling by on average 2% every year, causing NOx emissions to rise. Diesel cars are the single biggest contributor to NOx levels, responsible for 41% of all NOx emissions from road transport. Buses are amongst the cleanest vehicles on our roads with many now achieving Euro VI emissions standards.
27. An Expression of Interest in the government's zero-emission bus fund (ZEBRA) was submitted to DfT. £8.4m was requested to support the purchase by Go South Coast of 43 electric buses and associated charging infrastructure. Unfortunately this application was unsuccessful, however, a further submission will be made when the opportunity arises.

### **Summary of equality implications**

An EIA conversation/screening document has been completed on 8 June 2021 and been approved by the EIA panel.

EIA Summary:

The recommended decision to enter into an Enhanced Partnership between BCP Council and local bus operators is the first required step in our obligations under the government National Bus Strategy. The decision in itself has no specific impacts but the progression of the Enhanced Partnership from April 2022 as a result of the decision will have equality impacts. As the overall aim of entering into the partnership is to improve local bus services, when developed there are significant anticipated positive equality impacts – based on the profile of people that use bus services. These benefits will not just affect existing people who use buses but also potential users as the strategy aims to encourage people that have not necessarily used bus before to do so. The profile of people that use buses from both national and local evidence are groups the Equality Act is intended to benefit by advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Much older, much younger age groups, people with a disability, women, other ethnic groups, other religions, other sexual orientations and residents from more deprived areas are all more likely to use buses, compared to others in their protected groups. When the strategy is developed improved bus services will give wider transport choice to all, but notably improve opportunities for the groups listed above. Wider benefits to our communities through improved transport to access employment, education, healthcare, retail and leisure opportunities will also result in positive equality implications. Visitors to our area will also benefit from an enhanced public transport network. The initial intended recommendation to decide to enter into an Enhanced Partnership is the first stage in realising the equality benefits suggested above. Further assessment will be needed as the partnership formally starts and develops to determine equality impacts when specific actions are discussed, agreed and implemented.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

No hazards identified.

### **Background papers**

1. [Bus Back Better - A National Bus Strategy for England](#)
2. [Bus service improvement plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
3. [The National Bus Strategy Delivering Bus Service Improvement Plans using an Enhanced Partnership \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Appendices**

None





## OFFICER DECISION RECORD

This form should be used to record Executive decisions taken by Officers

<b>Decision Ref. No:</b>			
<b>Service Area:</b>	Operations	<b>Date:</b>	21/06/21
<b>Contact Name:</b>	Richard Pearson	<b>Tel No:</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	Richard.pearson@bcpcouncil.gov.uk		
<b>Subject:</b>	Assessing Requests for Minor Transport Schemes		
<b>Decision taken:</b> To approve the method of assessing minor transport scheme requests carried out by the Transport and Engineering Directorate, on the basis of Officer Guidance document and as shown in Appendices A to I referenced in that document.			
<b>Reasons for the decision:</b>  There is a requirement to amalgamate the minor transport scheme assessment processes previously adopted by the former legacy authorities for use across BCP Council as Officer Guidance.			
<b>Background:</b>  The Council receives numerous requests from residents for minor improvements to the highway network, including dropped kerbs at crossing points, controlled pedestrian and cycle crossings, traffic calming and road safety measures, 20mph zones and limits, improvements around schools, speed and vehicle activated signs, traffic regulation orders (such as double yellow lines), traffic signs and road safety audits. There is a need for harmonisation of the separate ranking processes applied by the former Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Councils. Once approved the Officer Guidance and prioritisation process will be fully aligned across the whole BCP area and provide for a consistent, proportionate and fair approach across the area.			
<b>Consultations undertaken:</b>  <b>Consultation:</b> Members consulted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Mike Greene Cabinet Member for Transport and Sustainability</li> </ul> Officers consulted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Julian McLaughlin – Service Director, Transport and Engineering</li> <li>• Richard Pincroft – Head of Service, Transportation</li> <li>• Martin Baker – Road Safety Team Leader</li> <li>• Andy Brown – Traffic Team Lead</li> </ul>			

**Note:** It is the responsibility of the 'Responsible Officer' – that is the Officer making the decision – to obtain the comments and signature of the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer **before** taking the decision and then send the completed record of the decision to Democratic Services for publication.

**Finance and Resourcing Implications:**

The projects implemented as a result of these assessments are funded through the annual capital improvement programme and that programme is approved separately on an annual basis. Schemes will only be implemented if there are sufficient funds within the Capital Programme.

**Name:** Adam Richens

**Date:** 21 June 2021

Redacted

**Signature (of Chief Finance Officer):**

**Legal Implications:**

Under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 Section 62 the Council as Highway Authority has the power to make improvements to the public highway.

**Name:** Susan Zeiss

**Date:** 22 June 2021

Redacted

**Signature (of Monitoring Officer):**

**Summary of Sustainability Impact**

Where schemes are assessed for delivery under this process they will help promote sustainable travel and only therefore have an overall positive environmental impact.

**Summary of Public Health Implications**

Where schemes are assessed for delivery under this process they will only have positive public health implications.

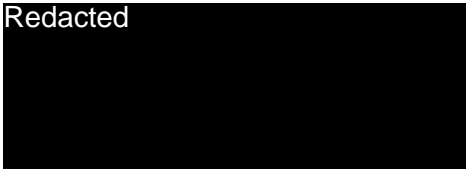
**Risk Assessment:**

There are no significant risks associated with these changes.

**Name:** Martin Baker

**Date:** 27 April 2021

**Signature (of Officer Completing Assessment):** *Martin Baker*

<b>Impact Assessments:</b>  There are no adverse Equalities impacts. The assessment process includes consideration of groups with protected characteristics, in particular age, disability, pregnancy and maternity. Where schemes are brought forward for implementation they only have positive impacts for these groups. The Equality Impact Assessment screening tool is included at Appendix J.			
<b>Information for publication / not for publication</b>  There are no reasons this decision should be withheld from publication.			
<b>Background Papers</b>  None			
Any declaration of interest by the Officer responsible for the decision		Nature of Interest	
No			
<b>Note:</b> No Officer having a personal financial interest in any matter should take a decision on that matter. Other interests of a non-disqualifying matter should be recorded here.			
Any conflict of interest declared by a Cabinet Member who is consulted by the Officer taking the decision	Name of Cabinet Member	Nature of interest	Details of any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer
No			
<b>Decision taken by:</b>  Julian McLaughlin – Service Director for Transport and Engineering  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 40%;"> <b>Signature:</b>  </div> <div style="width: 55%;"> <b>Date of Decision: 22/6/2021</b> </div> </div> <b>Date Decision Effective: 22/06/2021</b>  <b>Date of Publication of record of decision: (to be inserted by Democratic Services)</b>			

**Note: A record of this decision should be kept by the Service Area within which the decision falls.**

**Include additional guidance if considered appropriate**



# **Officer Guidance**

## **Assessing Requests for**

### **Minor Transport Schemes**



Version 2.0 June 2021

Transport and Engineering

# Contents Page

1. [Introduction](#)
  - 1.1 Contacts
2. [Pedestrian Crossing requests](#) - Description
  - 2.1 Dropped kerbs (Uncontrolled crossings)
  - 2.2 Informal (uncontrolled) and formal (controlled) crossings
    - 2.2.1 Informal crossings
    - 2.2.2 Formal crossings
  - 2.3 Crossing Requests – Assessment process
3. [Safer Routes to School](#) (SRTS) – Description and process
4. [Road safety improvement](#) requests – Description
  - 4.1 Road safety improvement requests – Assessment process
5. [‘SLOW DOWN’](#) signs, Speed Indicator Display (SIDs) and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) – Description
  - 5.1 ‘SLOW DOWN’ signs, Speed Indicator Display (SIDs) and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) – Assessment process
6. [20mph](#) zone and 20mph limits – Description
  - 6.1 20mph zone and 20mph limits – Assessment process
7. [Traffic Regulation Orders](#) (TROs) – Description
  - 7.1 Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) – Assessment process
8. [Non-TRO](#) traffic management requests – Description
  - 8.1 Non-TRO traffic management requests – Assessment process
9. [Low Traffic Neighbourhoods \(LTNs\)](#) – Description and assessment process
10. [Road Safety Audits](#) (RSAs) – Description and Brief
11. [Appendices](#)



# 1. Introduction

BCP Council receives many requests from a wide range of sources for Minor Traffic Schemes including residents, Councillors and local businesses. In the context of this guidance these are defined as minor alterations to the highway including signage, road markings, speed limits, crossing facilities or safety measures. The guidance describes a method of assessing and, where possible, ranking these requests to ensure that any Capital Programme funding is invested at locations where it is most needed.

- ❖ Requests include safety measures to address anti-social or illegal driving behaviour such as speeding, or interventions to treat locations where collisions are occurring. The Council also receives many requests from school communities, parents and residents for measures to improve safety outside schools or on the routes to school, particularly for children wishing to walk, scoot or cycle to and from school.
- ❖ In addition to the above, the Council receives numerous requests for crossing facilities to aid people who wish to walk or cycle across the Borough. These can take the form of simple dropped kerbs to assist wheelchair users across junctions, to more formal facilities such as pedestrian refuges, zebra crossings and controlled signalised crossings.
- ❖ The Council also receives requests for alterations to parking restrictions on the highway such as yellow lines, keep clear markings, speed limit changes and other signs and road markings. These types of request will usually require Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to be advertised, made or altered. Requests for these measures are covered under section 7.

It is appropriate to assess all these requests against the Council's Transportation aims so that schemes are only progressed if they support these aims. The officer guidelines contained within this report are designed to give officers the ability to fairly assess, rank and prioritise all these requests.

The assessment processes outlined in the report will cover the following requests:

- ❖ Dropped Kerbs/Pedestrian and Cycle Crossing Facilities
- ❖ Road Safety Improvements/Traffic Calming
- ❖ Safer Routes to School (SRTS) Improvements
- ❖ 'SLOW DOWN' signs, Speed Indicator Display (SID) and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)
- ❖ 20mph zones and limits
- ❖ Traffic Regulation Orders/Non-TRO

It is important that a robust assessment process is put in place for all six of these types of requests so that a clear explanation backed up with empirical evidence can be given as to why one request was ranked more highly for implementation over another. In addition, the assessments will explain the rationale behind the spending of the Local Transport Plan Funds for these measures.

## **Procedure**

On receipt of the request, a holding letter will be sent to the resident / Member and the request will be assessed under the appropriate process as outlined in the following appendices:

- Appendix A1 (Example of resident/Member request Holding Letter for crossing request)
- Appendix A2 (Example of resident/Member request Holding Letter for dropped kerb request)
- Appendix B1 (Pedestrian Crossing assessment process Part 1)
- Appendix B2 (Pedestrian Crossing assessment process Part 2)
- Appendix C (Safer Routes to School assessment process)
- Appendix D (Procedure for assessing Road Safety/Traffic Calming requests)
- Appendix E1 and E2 (Procedure for assessing static 'SLOW DOWN' signs, electronic SIDs and VAS requests)
- Appendix F1 and F2 (Procedure for assessing 20mph zone and limits requests)
- Appendix G (Procedure for Prioritising TRO requests)
- Appendix H (Procedure for Prioritising non-TRO traffic management requests)
- In addition to the above, there is officer guidance on how to issue a Road Safety Audit request/brief outlined in Appendix I1 and I2.

The purpose of the guidelines, as set out in the Appendices, is to formalise the way that minor traffic schemes are prioritised and allow officers to respond appropriately to public and Member requests for minor traffic measures. The guidelines will also allow officers to assess requests for minor traffic measures themselves and if appropriate proceed with schemes as the budget allows.

Although this guidance has been produced for officer use and (where published on the BCP website) wider public information, it is intended that assessments should only be carried out by nominated officers who are qualified and experienced in undertaking such evaluations in a consistent and standardised manner. They are not intended to be used by others not experienced in assessing schemes to gauge how a scheme might be ranked.

This procedure is to be used for all requests received into the Council for minor transport schemes regardless of where the request has come from.

**The process for assessing each of the above categories of requests is outlined in the following sections and the appropriate Appendices of this guidance**

### **1.1 Contacts**

For enquires about pedestrian crossings, safer routes to school, SID, VAS and SLOW DOWN signs, 20mph limits and zones, road safety audits and any other general road safety enquiries, please contact [roadsafety@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

For TRO and Non-TRO related enquiries, please contact [traffic@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:traffic@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

For Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) enquiries, please contact [activetravel@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:activetravel@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

[Back to Contents](#)

## **2. Pedestrian Crossing requests - Description**

The Council receives numerous requests for road crossing facilities. These range from dropped kerbs across minor side junctions to formal crossing facilities across busy main roads. In all cases, the purpose is to aid the safe passage of vulnerable pedestrians, mobility impaired users and cyclists across the road.

### **2.1 Dropped kerbs**

A dropped kerb involves installing kerbing that is flush with the carriageway on opposing sides of the carriageway and they must always be installed in pairs. The flush kerbs on either side of the road must be directly opposite each other. Buff coloured tactile paving slabs are also installed in the footway aligned with the set on the opposing path and leading up to the dropped kerb, to alert blind and partially sighted pedestrians both to the presence of the crossing point and the direction in which to cross. These crossing points are particularly beneficial to road users who are wheelchair bound and users of mobility scooters, buggies and prams. Care should be taken to ensure that residual footway gradients are DDA compliant.

### **2.2 Informal and formal crossings**

#### **2.2.1 Informal crossings - Description**

Informal crossing points are locations on the highway where there is no form of control for pedestrians to gain priority over motorised traffic although there is sometimes a central pedestrian refuge or traffic island so that the road can be crossed in stages. Dropped crossings are a simple type of informal crossing. Other examples include pedestrian refuges and traffic islands. In all cases there would be dropped kerbs and buff tactile paving as described in 2.1 above.

The presence of a pedestrian refuge or traffic island helps the pedestrians cross the road safely especially when the road is wide and traffic volumes are high because it means the pedestrians can cross one traffic lane at a time. Where these are likely to be used by cyclists then the central refuge must be wide enough to safely accommodate a cycle (typically 2 metres) but without compromising the safety of cyclists passing through the refuge on the road. The general rule is that gaps of between 2.75 metres and 3.25 metres through the narrowing should be avoided. If there is limited forward visibility for vehicles approaching the crossing point then consideration should be given to installing a pole with illuminated beacon within the central refuge.

#### **2.2.2 Formal controlled crossings - Description**

Formal controlled crossings are locations on the highway where pedestrians can exercise control over traffic thus giving them priority over motorised vehicles. Typical examples of these types of crossings include Zebras (and Parallel Crossings) and signalised crossings such as Puffins and Toucans or pedestrian facilities at traffic signal junctions. These will be provided with pink/red tactile paving covering the extent of the public footway to alert blind or partially sighted users both to their presence and the location of a pushbutton if provided.

In the case of a Zebra Crossing, if pedestrians step out onto the black and white stripes, then they have showed an intention to cross the road and the traffic must stop to allow the pedestrian to cross. In the case of Signalised Crossings, pedestrians have a push button facility or sensors, which when activated will instigate a 'demand' to the traffic signal controller which in time presents a red light to the oncoming motorised traffic, allowing the pedestrians (and, if appropriate, cyclists) to cross.

## 2.3 Crossing requests – Assessment process

Officers carrying out this assessment will log the request, separating the dropped kerb crossing requests from the others. The officer will then send the 'Requests Holding letter' response (see Appendix A1 and A2) to the Councillor, resident or business to acknowledge the request with a copy to the road safety team so that they are aware of the need for an assessment.

### 2.3.1 Crossing requests

As soon as possible after receipt of the request, the appropriate officer will carry out the required data collection for the assessment (see separate Assessment process spreadsheets Appendices B1 and B2) and calculate a final ranking score for the request from B2.

The score will then be added to the BCP Crossing requests spreadsheet, to enable the request to be ranked with all others based on the highest to lowest score. According to the funding (and design resources) available, the schemes at the top of the ranking list will be completed as soon as possible and then removed from the ranking list. Requests for crossing facility will be ordered by ranking score and not necessarily in chronological order.

### 2.3.2 Dropped kerbs

Dropped kerb requests typically need only have a general on-site confirmation that dropped kerbs are required, can be physically installed and that the facility would be safe to use. No other criteria need be assessed. If there are no other crossing facilities within a 50 metre radius of the request, approval can be given for the dropped kerbs. Once the assessment has been approved, the dropped kerb requests will simply be ranked in *chronological* order and issued to the Environment Team for implementation as and when programmes, resources and funding allows.

### 2.3.3 Request response

The appropriate officer should then respond to the resident or Councillor who made the initial request to advise them of the result of the assessment, the ranking and, if possible, an indication of when the scheme will be implemented.

#### NOTE:

***If there are absolutely no obvious provisions for disabled people the request should be issued for completion asap, without the need for any assessment except for a site visit to confirm the location is suitable and determine a genuine need for the crossing.***

[Back to Contents](#)

### 3. Safer Routes to School (SRTS) – Description and Process

The purpose of the SRTS programme is not primarily casualty reduction-led, although there are obvious benefits in for safety. It is directed by the School Travel Plan (STP) process as well as used for improvements to safety at School Crossing Patroller (SCP) sites. Projects which sit under the SRTS programme ‘umbrella’ will often overlap with other Minor Transport Scheme Request categories and are as follows:

- the installation of a 20mph, or School Zone, or School Streets around a school
- the installation of a Signalised or Zebra Crossing
- installation of additional warning signage, including flashing wig-wag signs at SCP sites
- the installation of coloured road surfacing and hatching to demarcate SCP and other sites
- installing parking restrictions and markings such as ‘School Keep Clear’ zig-zag markings
- other minor measures to improve access or safety.

The engineering works will be enhanced by education. Once the works are complete the education team will visit the nearby schools to teach the children about the improvements and how to use the features safely. Parking and traffic congestion is a problem around all schools as parking restrictions are often ignored and driveways blocked, but irresponsible behaviour can increase the risk of a child being injured. Leaflets are provided informing parents why they should only park where permitted and the possible effect it can have if they do not.

A priority ranking list has been produced for SRTS schemes. See Appendix C. This is based on several factors and fairly evaluates all locations through a seven stage process. Throughout the year, requests are made to the Council for measures outside schools. These requests might come from the school itself, parents, local residents or Councillors. The requests are initially discussed at regular SRTS meetings. If the members of the SRTS agree on the principle/practicality of the request, it is then put onto a request list for assessment and ranking against all other SRTS requests. A written response will be sent to the originator of the request explaining the outcome of the initial assessment.

Once a request has been approved for ranking, it will be added to the priority ranking list awaiting formal assessment. This process involves an assessment of how engaged the school have been in adopting and implementing a school travel plan, an analysis of the collision record near the school, an assessment of how many children currently walk or cycle to the school, an audit of the existing traffic calming measures outside the school, a record of specific requests from the school, the willingness of Councillors, parents and the school to participate in the road safety training such as STEPS and Bikeability offered by the Council. Once all this data has been gathered, each school is assessed, scored and a ranking list is drawn up. The only exception to this process is where a request is received, and the value of the request is below £5000. In these cases, the request will still be discussed by the SRTS group. If the request is approved in principle by the group it will not need to go through the formal assessment and ranking process and will be implemented as soon as possible.

School Streets are a relatively new way of managing access to the school and involves the temporary physical closure of the public highway to motorised traffic at the school gate at drop off or pick up times by either school staff, teachers or volunteers. This can be using collapsible bollards or barriers but must be capable of allowing people with a legitimate exemption through such as blue badge holders or those who live on the school street. These are at the development stage but will still follow the same general principles as all SRTS projects.

If the request is valid, it will be added it to the SRTS List. All requests on this list are assessed, scored and ranked for implementation. The assessment process for the SRTS schemes can be viewed in Appendix C.

[Back to Contents](#)



## **4. Road safety improvement requests - Description**

The Council frequently receives requests for physical measures to improve road safety and to reduce or calm traffic speeds or to stop crashes. Some of these requests relate to specific issues such as requests for a facility to enable pedestrians or cyclists to cross the road safely, or requests to travel sustainably to and from a workplace or school safely, or requests for lower speeds such as through the introduction of a 20mph zone / limit. The Council also receives requests for low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) (see Section 9) which can be considered as an option when developing a road safety scheme.

In this guidance these specific requests are dealt with in sections 2, 3, 5 and 9 of this officer guidance respectively. Other less specific road safety concerns include requests for measures to tackle anti-social driving behaviour or requests for traffic calming measures to reduce collisions. These are considered by the road safety team.

### **4.1 Road safety improvement requests – Assessment process**

The request should be considered in line with the road safety team's collision analysis and investigation procedure which is outlined in Appendix D.

[Back to Contents](#)

## **5. 'SLOW DOWN' signs, Speed Indicator Display (SIDs) and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) – Description**

The Council sometimes receives requests for measures to directly respond to areas where there is a speeding issue or perceived speeding issue. There are many options for tackling speeding traffic including traffic calming, and Police enforcement. Traffic calming can be expensive to install and maintain, and Police resources mean enforcement is not always available. Another option involves the use of signage to either remind motorists of the posted speed limit, or to alert them to the speed they are travelling at. Three options are available as discussed below.

The first involves using a sign which simply reads SLOW DOWN and is fixed to a lamp column. These can easily be moved around the borough to locations where there are speeding concerns or they can be fixed signs.

The second involves the use of SID signs. These tend to be portable, battery operated signs that alert a motorist to the speed they are travelling at (by using LEDs to indicate their speed electronically on the sign face). The signs notify the motorist of their speed when they are travelling in excess of the posted speed limit - the aim being that the motorist will then slow down to below the speed limit. They are fixed to lamp columns or posts installed for them, and can therefore be moved around the Borough in a similar way as the SLOW DOWN signs.

The third involves the use of VAS signs. These can be either portable, battery operated and moved around like the SLOW DOWN and SID signs, or are permanent, mains or solar powered. In either case they can flash up a variety of approved messages, typically a speed roundel indicating the posted speed limit on the road or sometimes a warning message or image such as crossroads ahead or pedestrians crossing. The electronic message will be triggered when a vehicle approaches the sign exceeding a set speed threshold. The permanent signs tend to be bigger than the portable signs, and are more expensive, and are therefore used at locations where there is a consistent speeding problem and usually where there is evidence of speed related collisions and injury.

### **5.1 'SLOW DOWN' signs, Speed Indicator Display (SIDs) and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) – Assessment process**

Appendices E1 and E2 shows how the assessment should be carried out for any requests for these signs.

[Back to Contents](#)

## **6. 20mph zone and 20mph limits - Description**

Changing the speed limit to 20mph on roads around the Authority is another request the Council receives quite regularly. The Department for Transport (DfT) issued revised guidance on Setting Local Speed Limits in January 2013, with the aim of increasing flexibility for local authorities in the area of implementing 20mph zones and limits. The only situations in which 20mph zones are likely to be considered in future is if there is a casualty hotspot and if a 20mph zone is the only appropriate solution to the road safety issues being experienced here. This is because there is insufficient evidence or research available to prove a definitive link between the introduction of 20mph limits and casualty reduction.

As a general rule, where free flowing average speeds are 24mph or less then it is confirmed that no physical traffic calming features are required; conversely if average speeds are above or significantly above this threshold then calming features must be installed prior to the limit being lowered.

If, however, speed surveys indicate that the recorded average speed is borderline compliant, say no more than 25/26 mph, then it may be possible to consider introducing a lower limit. That would depend if there are existing potentially speed-reducing characteristics such as junctions, bends or narrow carriageways, potentially introducing staggered vehicle parking bays, or perhaps evidence of a high proportion of vulnerable road users in the vicinity that would tend to indicate a lower limit would be beneficial and would not be abused. This would need to be agreed on a case by case basis and would also need the agreement of the Police with the aim of achieving an arrangement that was largely self enforcing.

### **6.1 20mph zone and 20mph limits – Assessment process**

The assessment process to identify whether a location is suitable for a 20mph zone or limit is outlined in Appendix F.

It is crucial that as part of this process speed surveys are carried out to determine average speeds and also that the Police are consulted about the proposals before any TRO is advertised.

[Back to Contents](#)

## **7. Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) - Description**

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are statutory instruments that place restrictions on the movement or parking of traffic using moving or static Orders. BCP Council is responsible for creating, maintaining and enforcing certain TROs within its boundaries and has developed this guidance to aid in this function.

The process of introducing or removing TROs is regulated through acts of highway and traffic law. The Traffic Management Team receives requests for TROs from various sources. The number of requests far outweighs the resources and budgets available and therefore a ranking criteria has been developed to enable the Council to prioritise those requests which have most benefits to the community.

### **7.1 Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) – Assessment process**

All requests for TROs should be emailed in to the Traffic Team using the following email address [traffic@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:traffic@bcpcouncil.gov.uk). Appendix G outlines the assessment process that should be followed where a request for a new (or change of existing) restriction requiring a TRO is made to the Council.

[Back to Contents](#)

## **8. Non-TRO traffic management requests - Description**

In addition to the TRO process outlined in section 7 above, the Traffic Team manage various other requests that do not require a TRO including:

- Traffic route direction signs
- Private signs
- Tourist destination signs
- Temporary event signs
- Temporary Development Signs
- Access protection markings
- Traffic restrictions that do not require a traffic regulation order

### **8.1 Non-TRO traffic management requests – Assessment process**

Appendix H outlines the qualifying criteria for the non-TRO traffic management requests explained in Section 8 above.

[Back to Contents](#)

## **9. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) – Description and assessment process**

The aim of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods is to alter the character of residential streets such that they become more pleasant, inclusive and safer places for people to walk and cycle. The key to creating LTNs is to reduce motor traffic in the area, and in so doing reduce air pollution, noise and road collisions.

Traffic volumes can be reduced by introducing temporary or permanent barriers such as bollards or planters. Residents and businesses in the area still have access by motor vehicle, but through traffic is greatly reduced.

Any requests for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are dealt with by BCP Walking and Cycling Officers as part of the Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). These requests shall be forwarded to [activetravel@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:activetravel@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) for consideration.

[Back to Contents](#)



## 10. Road Safety Audits (RSAs) - Description

The objective of the RSA process is to provide an effective, independent review of the road safety implications of engineering interventions for all road users. The Audit should be carried out by a minimum of two, qualified and experienced road safety engineers in the form of a Team Leader and Team member. There can be additions to this team such as an additional team member or observer. An audit should be carried out where physical changes to the highway have been carried out or are planned that will impact on road user behaviour or where a collision reduction scheme has been installed. A brief/request form should be prepared by the designer of the scheme and issued to the audit team leader before the audit is carried out. An example brief / request form template is attached in Appendix I1. Some guidance notes for designers requesting a Road Safety Audit is also attached in Appendix I2.

The audit process consists of four stages. The first stage is a review of the feasibility design of a scheme, which involves a check of feasibility drawings and a site visit. The second stage is a review of the detailed designs of the scheme, which involves a check of detailed drawings and a site visit. The third stage takes place once the scheme has been built (as soon as possible after the opening of the scheme). This is a review of the as built drawings and a site visit to which the Police should be invited. A night time visit should also be carried out. The fourth stage takes place 12 months after the scheme has been completed and is an investigation of any collisions that have occurred at the location of the scheme over the first 12 months. This may involve a site visit as well depending on the number (and pattern) of collisions that have occurred.

A final stage 4(a) audit may also be undertaken after 36 months if there were any identified issues at the first stage 4 audit. At the end of each stage a report should be prepared by the audit team and issued to the designer. The report should identify any safety concerns the audit team have identified. Once the audit has been completed and the report issued to the designer, the designer has 28 days to respond to the report findings.

The terms of reference of the Road Safety Audit are as described in [GG 119](#). The Overseeing Organisation considers this audit process to be applicable to BCP Council highway schemes where there are physical changes on all-purpose roads (i.e. not Motorways or Trunk Roads) with the following relaxations for locally adopted audit procedures:

An audit team may consist of:

- one trained/experienced auditor with a trained but inexperienced auditor;
- one trained/experienced auditor with an experienced designer with relevant specialisations (who is independent of the design team for the scheme being audited);
- a single, trained and experienced auditor (only recommended for small value, simple, minor improvements or safety checks);
- at the initial design stage, a site visit may not be required for minor schemes if current, internet streetview information is available (only recommended for small value, simple, minor improvements) and to help with social distancing;
- a night-time site visit may not be required if, during the daytime, site visit the auditors are satisfied that the street lighting arrangement is satisfactory and permission is sought from the Scheme Manager to omit the night visit;
- the post-construction (stage 3) audit may be carried out without representatives from the Police and maintenance representatives;
- the audit report may be presented using a spreadsheet format so that similar problems and recommendations can be grouped for convenience
- each problem and recommendation may be risk assessed using a suitable risk table
- only the audit team leader is required to sign the audit report via electronic signature;

- the audit report will be sent as a final version to the Scheme Manager rather than as a draft version;
- the audit team can consult directly with the design team during the audit rather than reporting through the Scheme Manager;
- the Scheme Manager is only sent the final version of the report once the audit team and design team have agreed on modifications required as a result of the audit, the Scheme Manager only then having to consider any outstanding problems and recommendations;
- an Exception Report is not required provided the Scheme Manager records on file the reasons for not accepting the auditor's recommendations.

[Back to Contents](#)

## **10. Appendices**

10.1 Appendix A1 (Example of resident/Member request Holding Letter for crossing request)

10.2 Appendix A2 (Example of resident/Member request Holding Letter for dropped kerb request)

10.3 Appendix B1 (Pedestrian Crossing assessment process Part 1)

10.4 Appendix B2 (Pedestrian Crossing assessment process Part 2)

10.5 Appendix C (Safer Routes to School assessment process)

10.6 Appendix D (Procedure for assessing road safety improvement and traffic calming requests)

10.7 Appendix E1 and E2 (Procedure for assessing static 'SLOW DOWN' signs, electronic SIDs and VAS requests)

10.8 Appendix F1 (Procedure for assessing 20mph zone and limit requests)

10.9 Appendix G (Procedure for prioritising TRO requests)

10.10 Appendix H (Procedure for prioritising non-TRO traffic management requests)

10.11 Appendix I1 and I2 (Procedure for issuing a Road Safety Audit request)

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CABINET



Report subject	<b>Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Service structure</b>
Meeting date	1 September 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>A new Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) staffing structure is required after a Dorset Council change of direction with shared partnership line management.</p> <p>Over the last couple of years a Dorset Wide Partnership to tackle the issues of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk was set up in response to encouragement from the Environment Agency wanting to see more projects delivered, as well as recognition of the success of FCERM Partnerships in other authorities.</p> <p>On that journey, BCP have employed key skills able to create that model, both from a managerial perspective as well as technical. Dorset Council, although wanting to have independent teams, still wish to work collaboratively and it is recognised that many of the skills required to deliver Dorset based projects are employed by BCP. Also, the increase in capability has resulted in requests for collaborative support for other authorities (Devon, Cornwall, New Forest and the Environment Agency).</p> <p>Formation of an independent BCP Council Centre of Excellence is recommended, building on existing reputation and allowing delivery of collaborative working opportunities.</p> <p>The business model changes to FCERM over the last couple of years have demonstrated the ability to deliver more projects, increase income, attract quality staff and reduce reliance on consultancy support. Not only does this direction achieve more on the ground, it will result in longer term savings.</p> <p>The basics of the business model with a broader team (either via Partnership or Centre of Excellence):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key skills can be targeted</li> <li>• More attractive in the market for quality staff</li> <li>• More able to bid for grant funding (under permissive powers, so many authorities don't realise they could be bidding to do more)</li> <li>• More able to deliver the projects in-house</li> </ul>

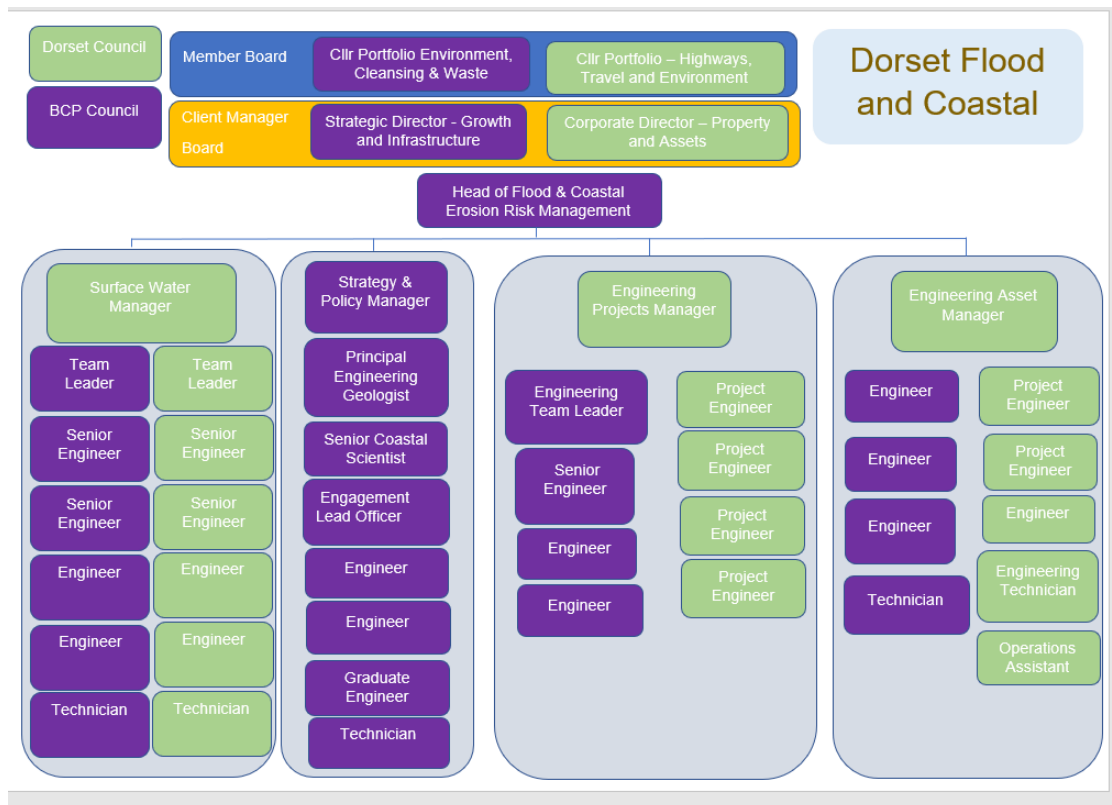
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant funding provides income offsetting the staff costs</li> <li>• Communities get more projects delivered making them more resilient to climate change</li> <li>• Reputation increases ability to recruit and retain staff</li> <li>• Reputation also gives confidence to our funding partners who support our delivery (Environment Agency)</li> </ul> <p>These key facts have already been demonstrated very clearly. Employment has seen staff joining who are very well recognised in the industry sector. This in turn has led to project funding following them, or other authorities requesting support where once they sought it from consultancies.</p> <p>Grant funding has increased considerably, e.g. Poole Bay Beach Management (£36m), Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill (£12.5m), Christchurch Bay and Harbour Strategy (£450k – will lead to £m's on project delivery). At a recent national funding meeting, the EA's Area Flood Risk Manager described BCP as 'best in class' for the Wessex region also demonstrating the reputation that has built with our funding partners.</p> <p>This proposal sets out a new FCERM service structure that delivers a much higher quality of service, able to address the increasing risk from climate change and at no additional cost to the Council.</p> <p>On the face of the tabulated budget figures in section 11, the salary expenditure has risen. However, the budget for the Surface Water Team sat separately (£290k) which has now been moved into the salary pot. Also, considerable expenditure on consultancy support has historically been spent directly against capital budgets, the cost of which is not shown within salaries. The new model reduces that need by employing staff where appropriate. Not only does that increase income, it also retains the skills and knowledge. The FCERM team increased their income from £40k to £400k last year. Employing internally also drastically reduces the staff costs on the projects.</p> <p>The proposal to change the model at no extra cost is conservative and the FCERM team are confident it will lead to bigger savings in the longer run. Nationally, the budgets for Flood Defence Grant in Aid have doubled from £2.6bn to £5.2bn over the next 6 years. The new model will give us the best chance of bidding for those funds and preparing ourselves and our communities for climate change.</p>
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<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>(a) Approval be given for the proposed FCERM service structure.</b></p> <p><b>(b) Support be given to the principle of a ‘Centre of Excellence’ approach and taking up requests to support neighbouring authorities and FCERM delivery bodies for the South West region.</b></p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To allow formation of an independent FCERM service in BCP Council, no longer recognising a single line management structure across BCP and Dorset Councils, but facilitating a collaborative working arrangement.</p> <p>To enable decisions to be made to take on additional external income related work for regional authorities and the Environment Agency.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mark Anderson – Portfolio Holder for Environment, Cleansing and Waste
Corporate Director	Julian McLaughlin – Service Director, Transport & Engineering
Report Authors	<p>Matt Hosey – Head of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM)</p> <p>Alan Frampton – FCERM Strategy &amp; Policy Manager</p>
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

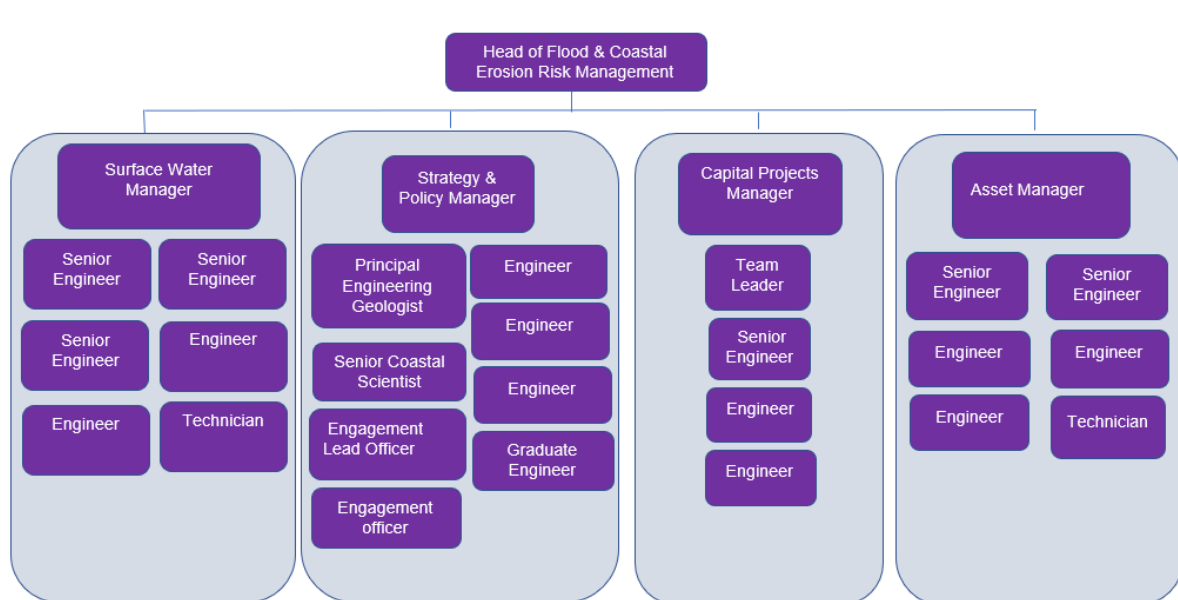
## Background

- Over the last couple of years, BCP Council have been working under a signed partnership agreement with Dorset Council, including shared line management, as part of a process to form a single FCERM Service for the entire coastline of Dorset, from Chewton Bunny in the east to Lyme Regis in the west. On preparing a recommendation to create a full shared service, with shared staffing budget, a change in approach was requested from Dorset Council to move to a position whereby BCP and Dorset have independent FCERM teams that work in collaboration, rather than forming a single team.
- A formal letter was received from Dorset Council on 25 May to make this change in approach clear and to withdraw from the existing partnership agreement.
- The BCP Council FCERM service therefore needs to adapt their line management structure to ensure staff are managed effectively and the growing portfolio of projects as well as external requests for support can be delivered.

4. Both the original Dorset wide Partnership structure and the proposed structure are shown below.
5. Original Structure:



6. Proposed structure:





7. The proposals see the employment of an additional six members of staff in the team, required to cover for the increasing number of grant funded projects as well as replacing expenditure on consultancy support.

### **Options Appraisal**

8. The original proposal to have a single FCERM team serving all of Dorset would have been the best position in terms of management efficiencies and allowing available budget to be focussed on recruitment of technical staff. The change in direction requested by Dorset Council to have fully independent FCERM teams that work in collaboration means that both councils now need to have full management teams. In considering the options for BCP Council in this regard, they were considered to be:
  - a. Establish an FCERM 'centre of excellence' with a line management structure to ensure staff are managed effectively and the growing portfolio of projects as well as external requests for support can be delivered.
  - b. Operate an FCERM service with reduced staffing levels and rely on external consultant support, which has been demonstrated to cost more longer-term so is not the best use of available resources.
9. Based on the two options available, option (a) provides the best value approach to BCP Council, ensuring BCP communities are served by a high-quality, expert FCERM team with local knowledge and experience.
10. The BCP 'centre of excellence' approach gives the following key advantages (many of which have already been demonstrated over the last 2 years since the business model changed):
  - Retention of in-house knowledge, fully integrated with other BCP services (e.g. Planning)
  - Attracts better quality staff due to career prospects and broader work portfolio
  - Increases ability to bid for funding and to deliver more projects for our residents
  - Increases income, offsetting salary expenditure
  - Increases reputation in the industry sector, particularly giving confidence to our funding partners
  - Reduces reliance on more expensive consultancy support.

### **Summary of financial implications**

11. The proposed budget changes will not result in a pressure on the budget or on-going MTFP. The table shows the comparison between the current 2021/22 budget and the proposed structure.

## Budget Changes as a result of the proposals

	21/22 Current £	21/22 Proposed £
Salaries	696,600	1,345,925
Premises	19,200	19,200
Transport	2,200	5,000
Supplies and Services	65,100	65,100
Third Party Payments	290,000	0
Total Expenditure	1,073,100	1,435,225
Recharges to Capital	(210,800)	(572,925)
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>862,300</b>	<b>862,300</b>

12. The current 2021/22 net service budget is £862k. The proposed staffing structure is estimated to cost £1.346m, an increase of £649k. The FCERM capital team averaged a return of 130% of their cost last year demonstrating value in quality internal recruitment as opposed to using consultancy support; the proposed structure increases employed staff and reduces the need for using external consultants. This means that the £290k third party payment budget currently used to purchase resources from WSP for Lead Local Flood Authority duties (Surface Water Flood Risk) can be transferred to salary budgets and fill some of the salary budget gap.
13. Considerable funding has historically been spent on consultancy staff directly against capital budgets. This would not show against the salaries budget above as they are not directly employed. Bringing those roles in house increases our salary budget but directly provides additional income to offset, not only for the role, but also support services as part of their recharge rate. For example, in 20/21 the staff working on the Poole Bay Beach Management scheme averaged a return of 130% of their salaries. They were also a far lower cost against the scheme budgets.
14. Much of the work carried out by the service is on projects and is recharged to capital. In 2020/21 the income budget for capital recharges was originally £40k, the outturn position was £396k. With increased staff numbers undertaking more projects, and with government funding to support these projects increasing (government have doubled the funding for FCERM delivery from £2.6Bn to £5.2Bn for the next 6-year period) the proposed capital recharge budget is set to increase to £573k to cover the remaining salary budget gap. This will allow for the net budget position of £862k to be maintained.
15. Additional BCP Council projects such as the Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Scheme, Christchurch Bay and Harbour Strategy and the Dorset Coastal Asset database all need significant staff input giving a high level of confidence to the increase recharge target. Undertaking further work for external authorities will only add to that income

potential. There will also be a greater ability to bid for funds under our permissive powers and being able to recharge staff time against those budgets. This also gives high confidence that FCERM will in continue to increase income against budget.

16. The structure has been developed with a transitional employment model in mind, whereby recruitment will only be undertaken once projects have been accepted and appropriate funding identified and anticipated. This mitigates the risk of taking on and having to pay staff without achieving the required income levels and also means that redundancy is highly unlikely, only if the government determined that Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk was no longer a priority would exit costs become an issue under this proposal. If the capital budgets available are significantly reduced in the future, then appropriate management action to reduce the staffing costs would be required.

Recruitment will be approached in a controlled manner in line with regular financial monitoring. However, budget forecasts are already showing an income level that would support full recruitment of the new structure, even without income against additional staff (hence the high confidence).

### **Financial risks**

17. CIPFA accounting permits the capitalisation of all direct costs relating to the construction of an asset, which includes allowance for direct staff time, provided supporting evidence for the basis of this charge exists. Recharges to capital will therefore be supported by detailed timesheets.
18. Grant funding for capital projects should be applied to capital spend as outlined in project specific business cases approved by grant provider. All future business cases should therefore continue to include appropriate allowance for staff time as well as tangible costs of asset construction.
19. There is sufficient capital grant secured within the coastal protection capital programme to cover the immediate term of the FCERM proposal.
20. There is some longer-term risk around recruiting staff in advance of future capital grant being secured. The capital programme will need to be monitored over the next 5 years to ensure the FCERM service continues to be managed within budget. This could mean future redundancy costs if insufficient new capital grant funding is secured. Based on previous experience, including turnover levels this risk is likely to be manageable.

### **Value for Money**

21. The proposal presents the opportunity to realise efficiencies and savings from reduced use of external providers. Even after competitive tendering processes are followed, the cost of external contractors is higher than using internal staff.
22. The FCERM service will continue to access external specialist technical support if and when required.

### **Summary of legal implications**

23. Any work undertaken for external authorities will need a legal agreement in place to cover liabilities associated with each task/project. Historically, with Dorset Council, this has been via the existing Partnership Agreement, but this will be moving to a Public Sector Collaboration Agreement (PSCA). It is anticipated the approach will involve BCP Council staff effectively delivering as being 'on secondment' to any

external authority. Legal services are currently working with us to establish an agreement template before any external work is undertaken.

24. Each project/task will also be assessed in its own right regarding any potential liabilities.

#### **Summary of human resources implications**

25. This request results in 6 additional posts, allowing for growth with the FCERM Centre of Excellence approach. This also recognises the need to have managers in place where they were once provided by Dorset Council and ability to deliver against the growing portfolio of projects.
26. A Job Evaluation has already been completed for the Surface Water Manager role and recruitment to that team to enable BCP Council to fulfil their Lead Local Flood Authority responsibilities is a high priority (currently a heavy reliance on consultancy support). Job Evaluation will be needed for the remaining 2 managerial roles.
27. The proposed approach will see us continue to attract good quality staff.

#### **Summary of sustainability impact**

28. There is no sustainability impact.

#### **Summary of public health implications**

29. There are no public health implications.

#### **Summary of equality implications**

30. There are no equality implications of this recommendation.

#### **Summary of risk assessment**

31. A change to the FCERM Structure has to happen to reflect the fact that Dorset staff are no longer participating in a single line management partnership, therefore a new independent BCP Council FCERM Service structure is proposed.
32. BCP Council FCERM have been very successful with both recruitment and project delivery over the last 2 years and we continue to enhance our reputation. Neighbouring authorities as well as the Wessex Region Environment Agency are looking to BCP Council for support and a move to create a 'Centre of Excellence' in Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management. This is an opportunity to clearly demonstrate we are taking the climate change emergency seriously.
33. The proposed structure will not result in any additional budget requirement. If the business model were to become less affordable (e.g. reduction in available capital budgets), then staffing would be tailored to suit. However, FCERM track record on budget management clearly demonstrates this is a low risk.
34. It is recommended to allow the FCERM service to continue growth in capacity through implementation of the proposed structure. Importantly, this will result in more flood and coastal erosion risk initiatives being implemented for our communities.

#### **Background papers**

None

#### **Appendices**

There are no appendices to this report.