

Notice of Overview and Scrutiny Board



Date: Monday, 18 October 2021 at 6.00 pm

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

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

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?MIId=4873>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Claire Johnston on 01202 118686 or email claire.johnston@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 118686 or email press.office@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

GRAHAM FARRANT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

8 October 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?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Yes

Declare the nature of the interest

Do NOT participate in the item at the meeting. Do NOT speak or vote on the item EXCEPT where you hold a dispensation

You must leave the room during the debate unless you hold a dispensation

Other Registerable Interest

Yes

Declare the nature of the interest

You may speak on the matter ONLY if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting

Otherwise, do NOT speak or vote on the matter and leave the room during the debate unless you hold a dispensation

No

Does the matter directly relate to your financial interest or well-being or those of a relative or close associate?

Yes

You must disclose the interest.

Does the matter affect your financial interest or well-being:
 (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

Yes

You may speak on the matter ONLY if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting

Otherwise, do NOT speak or vote on the matter and leave the room during the debate unless you hold a dispensation

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.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer
 (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.bcpouncil.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. Forward Plan

To consider and amend the Board's Forward Plan as appropriate and to consider the published Cabinet Forward Plan – please note that the Cabinet Forward Plan is due to be republished prior to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting and therefore is not included with this agenda. The newly published forward plan will be available prior to the meeting:

7 - 16

6. Request for Scrutiny from a Member of the Public

In line with the Council's constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to consider a request that has been received for scrutiny of the

17 - 38

following issue:

- BCP Council's Planning Committee Structure

Any councillor or member of the public may request that a matter be scrutinised, and the Board must decide whether to include it into the Forward Plan for scrutiny at a future date.

The attached report and appendices are provided to aid deliberations on whether the topic should join the Board's Forward Plan.

7. Scrutiny of Skills Commission Cabinet Report

39 - 54

To consider the Levelling Up - Creating a Skills Commission report scheduled for Cabinet consideration on 27 October 2021.

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

Cabinet members invited to attend for this item: Councillor Nicola Greene, Portfolio Holder for Covid Resilience, Schools and Skills and Councillor Phil Broadhead, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning

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

8. Scrutiny of Regeneration Related Cabinet Reports

55 - 316

To consider the following Regeneration related report scheduled for Cabinet consideration on 27 October 2021:

- BCP Commissioning Plan for Regeneration and Development and Urban Regeneration Company Business Plan

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

Cabinet member invited to attend for this item: Councillor Phil Broadhead, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning.

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.

- 15 November 2021
- 6 December 2021
- 5 January 2022

- 31 January 2022
- 28 February 2022
- 4 April 2022

All meetings will be held in the Poole Civic Centre and 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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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Report subject | Forward Plan |
| Meeting date | 18 October 2021 |
| Status | Public Report |
| Executive summary | The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Board have worked with Officers to identify the priority areas of work for the Board with contributions from the Board members. The work priorities of the Board have been developed on the basis of risk. The proposed Forward Plan is attached at Appendix A. The Board is asked to consider the proposals contained in the Forward Plan and approve or amend the contents. The Cabinet Forward Plan is due to be updated and republished in advance of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting. Board members are asked to consider the latest published Cabinet Forward Plan when it becomes available. |
| Recommendations | It is RECOMMENDED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board amend as appropriate and then approve the Forward Plan attached at Appendix A to this report. |
| Reason for recommendations | The Council's Constitution requires all Overview and Scrutiny bodies to set out proposed work in a Forward Plan which will be published with each agenda. |

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|----------------------|--|
| Portfolio Holder(s): | Not applicable |
| Corporate Director | Graham Farrant, Chief Executive |
| Contributors | Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist |
| Wards | N/A |
| Classification | For Decision |

Background

1. All Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) bodies are required by the Constitution to consider work priorities and set these out in a Forward Plan. When approved, this should be published with each agenda.
2. The Constitution requires that the Forward Plan of O&S bodies shall consist of work aligned to the principles of the function. The BCP Council O&S function is based upon six principles:
 1. Contributes to sound decision making in a timely way by holding decision makers to account as a 'critical friend'.
 2. A member led and owned function – seeks to continuously improve through self-reflection and development. Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard and reflected in the Council's decision-making process.
 3. Engages in decision making and policy development at an appropriate time to be able to have influence.
 4. Contributes to and reflects the vision and priorities of the council.
 5. Agile – able to respond to changing and emerging priorities at the right time with flexible working methods.
3. The O&S Board may take suggestions from a variety of sources to form its Forward Plan. This may include suggestions from members of the public, Officers of the Council, Portfolio Holders, the Cabinet and Council, members of the Board, and other Councillors who are not on the Board.
4. The Constitution requires that all suggestions for O&S work will be accompanied by detail outlining the background to the issue suggested, the proposed method of undertaking the work and likely timescale associated, and the anticipated outcome and value to be added by the work proposed. No item of work shall join the Forward Plan of the O&S Board without an assessment of this information.

Summary of financial implications

5. When establishing a Forward Plan, the Constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny Board to take into account the resources, including Councillor availability, Officer and financial resources, available to support their proposals.
6. To ensure sufficient resource availability across all O&S bodies, Officer advice is that, in addition to agenda items, one additional item of scrutiny inquiry work may be commissioned by an Overview and Scrutiny body at any one time. This may take the form of a working group or task and finish group, for example. Bodies commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Board may have conferred upon them the power to act on behalf of the parent body in considering issues within the remit of the parent body and making recommendations directly to Portfolio Holders, Cabinet, Council or other bodies or people within the Council or externally as appropriate.

Summary of legal implications

7. The Council's Constitution requires all Overview and Scrutiny bodies to set out proposed work in a Forward Plan which will be published with each agenda.

Summary of human resources implications

8. N/A to this decision

Summary of environmental impact

9. N/A to this decision

Summary of public health implications

10. N/A to this decision

Summary of equality implications

11. Any member of the public may make suggestions for Overview and Scrutiny work. Further detail on this process is included with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

Summary of risk assessment

12. N/A to this decision.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Board proposed Forward Plan

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Forward Plan – BCP Overview and Scrutiny Board

Updated 07.10.21

| | Subject and background | Anticipated benefits and value to be added by O&S engagement | How will the scrutiny be done? | Lead Officer / Cabinet Portfolio Holder | Report Information |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Meeting Date – 18 October 2021 | | | | |
| 1. | <p>Scrutiny of Cabinet Items</p> <p>To consider items scheduled for Cabinet decision on 27 October. The Chairman should be notified of any items Board Member’s wish to scrutinise. Items currently identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estates and Accommodation Poole Civic Space • Organisational Design Implementation Progress • MTFP Update Report • BCP Commissioning Plan for Regeneration and Development and Urban Regeneration Company Business Plan • Smart Place Programme – ‘Futures Fund’ funding of Gigabit Fibre and Smart Place Resources • Skills Commission | To enable the Board to consider proposed Cabinet decisions and to make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. | Scrutiny of Cabinet reports and invitations to Cabinet Portfolio Holders to respond to questions. | Various | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| | Meeting Date – 15 November 2021 | | | | |
| 1. | <p>Scrutiny of Cabinet Items</p> <p>To consider items scheduled for Cabinet decision on 24 November. The Chairman should be notified of any items Board Member’s wish to scrutinise. Items identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCP Economic Development Strategy • BCP Arts Festival and NPO Proposal | To enable the Board to consider proposed Cabinet decisions and to make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. | Scrutiny of Cabinet reports and invitations to Cabinet Portfolio Holders to respond to questions. | TBC | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |

| | Subject and background | Anticipated benefits and value to be added by O&S engagement | How will the scrutiny be done? | Lead Officer / Cabinet Portfolio Holder | Report Information |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of Queens Park Leisure Centre | | | | |
| 2. | <p>Review of the Multi-Partner Summer Response Plan.</p> <p>To review the plan performance following the summer season.</p> | The O&S Board considered the plan prior to the summer and requested feedback on this. | TBC | Sophie Sajic, Head of Seasonal Response | Added to the FP following the Board meeting in June at request of Cllr Rigby – moved from October |
| 3. | <p>Crime and Disorder Scrutiny</p> <p>To include an update on the Community Safety Partnership.</p> | To fulfil the Board's statutory responsibility for Crime and Disorder Scrutiny. | Annual report | Cllr May Haines, Community Safety; Andy Williams – Head of Safer Communities | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services – Moved from August |
| 4. | <p>Update Report on the Future of Planning in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole</p> <p>The O&S Board requested an update report on this issue to maintain an overview on progress at its meeting on 1 April.</p> | To enable the Board to maintain an oversight of this issue. | TBD | Cllr P Broadhead, Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning, Nick Perrins, Head of Planning | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services – appropriate date to be agreed 6 months from April 2021 |
| Meeting Date – 6 December 2021 | | | | | |
| 1. | <p>Scrutiny of Cabinet Items</p> <p>To consider items scheduled for Cabinet decision on 15 December. The Chairman should be notified of any items Board Member's wish to scrutinise. Items identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring and MTFP report Organisational Design - Implementation Progress | To enable the Board to consider proposed Cabinet decisions and to make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. | Scrutiny of Cabinet reports and invitations to Cabinet Portfolio Holders to respond to questions. | TBC | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |

| | Subject and background | Anticipated benefits and value to be added by O&S engagement | How will the scrutiny be done? | Lead Officer / Cabinet Portfolio Holder | Report Information |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| Meeting Date – 5 January 2022 | | | | | |
| 1. | Scrutiny of Cabinet Items To consider items scheduled for Cabinet decision on 12 January. The Chairman should be notified of any items Board Member's wish to scrutinise. | To enable the Board to consider proposed Cabinet decisions and to make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. | Scrutiny of Cabinet reports and invitations to Cabinet Portfolio Holders to respond to questions. | TBC | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| 2. | Enquiry Session - Climate Change At its meeting on Monday 19 July the O&S agreed to add this item to its Forward Plan. Full scope of the issue and participants in the enquiry session are to be determined. To include the annual report on Green Credentials | To enable the Board to retain oversight of the Council's performance against climate change targets and make regular recommendations as required. | Enquiry Session | Mike Greene, Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| Meeting Date – 31 January 2022 | | | | | |
| 1. | Scrutiny of Cabinet Items To consider items scheduled for Cabinet decision in February. The Chairman should be notified of any items Board Member's would wish to scrutinise. | To enable the Board to consider proposed Cabinet decisions and to make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. | Scrutiny of Cabinet reports and invitations to Cabinet Portfolio Holders to respond to questions. | TBC | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| Commissioned Work Work commissioned by the Board (for example task and finish groups and working groups) is listed below: Note – to provide sufficient resource for effective scrutiny, one item of commissioned work will run at a time. Further commissioned work can commence upon completion of previous work. | | | | | |

| | Subject and background | Anticipated benefits and value to be added by O&S engagement | How will the scrutiny be done? | Lead Officer / Cabinet Portfolio Holder | Report Information |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1. | <p>Working Group – Development of the BCP Local Plan</p> <p>At its meeting on 7 December 2020 the Board agreed to establish a working group to assist in the development of the BCP Local Plan.</p> <p>The Group held its initial meeting on 20 January. Regular reports on recommendations and actions of the working group will be reported to the O&S Board.</p> | To fulfil the 'overview' element of the Board's role in assisting with the development of policy | A Working Group. The Chairman was agreed as lead member with authority to determine final membership. | Councillor Philip Broadhead, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| 2. | <p>Working Group – Enforcement</p> <p>At its meeting on 17 May the O&S Board agreed that a working group was needed on this issue to resolve a number of issues discussed. The full scope of the working group is to be determined.</p> | TBD – dependent on scope | Working Group | Cllr M Haines, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| 3. | <p>Working Group – Tree Strategy</p> <p>At its meeting on 14 June the O&S Board agreed that a working group to input into the development of the BCP Council Tree Strategy was required. The full scope of the working group is to be determined.</p> | To ensure that the views of O&S are taken into account when developing the strategy and to ensure wider member engagement | Working Group | Cllr M Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Cleansing and Waste | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services. |
| Items to be programmed | | | | | |
| The following items have been identified by the Overview and Scrutiny Board as requiring further scrutiny. Dates are TBC. | | | | | |
| Other items previously agreed by the Board | | | | | |
| 1. | Acquisition and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Strategy - TBC | To enable the Board to test, challenge and contribute to the development of this | Potentially to be included within an acquisition strategy | TBC | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services – |

| | Subject and background | Anticipated benefits and value to be added by O&S engagement | How will the scrutiny be done? | Lead Officer / Cabinet Portfolio Holder | Report Information |
|-----------|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | At its meeting in December 2019 the Board requested to undertake further scrutiny of this strategy, which was referred to as part of the Poole Regeneration report. | strategy prior to its final adoption. | regeneration paper for September 2021 | | appropriate date to be agreed |
| 2. | Review of Leisure Centre Management At its meeting in December 2019 the Board agreed to receive information from the consultants appointed to undertake the Leisure Services Review prior to its report back to Cabinet. | To enable the Board to have an early opportunity to contribute to the development of the Leisure Centre Review. | TBC | Cllr Mohan Iyengar, Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Leisure and Culture | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services – appropriate date to be agreed |
| 3. | Maintenance of Key Destination Locations Across BCP / Poole Quay Added following a request made by a Board member at the meeting on 1 April. It was noted that there was no specific provision for this issue. Scoping request has been submitted by Cllr Howell. Further scope for this item is to be discussed. | To enable the Board to have overview of this issue. | TBC | | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services – appropriate date to be agreed |
| 4. | Review of the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan Item requested by Board members during initial consideration of this item to review progress. | To enable the O&S Board to maintain an overview of this issue and to review progress on the delivery plan a year on. | Committee Report | Cllr May Haines – Community Safety | Any queries to be emailed to the Chair and Democratic Services – appropriate date to be agreed 12 months from May 2021 |

| | Subject and background | Anticipated benefits and value to be added by O&S engagement | How will the scrutiny be done? | Lead Officer / Cabinet Portfolio Holder | Report Information |
|------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| 5. | <p>Scrutiny of the Council's use of Digital</p> <p>To consider the Council's use of digital in a number of different areas both internal and customer facing and the impact of digital developments. To incorporate feedback from the Lansdowne Digital Pilot - https://emfmonitoring.arcatelecom.com/en/public/bcp-council-emf-monitoring/</p> | TBC | TBC | TBC | Added to the FP following the 14 June Meeting at the request of Cllr Slade |
| 6. | <p>Poole Bay Surface Water Runoff and Sewage Overflows</p> <p>To consider information from Wessex Water on the use of overflows across BCP, level of water quality and plans for the future use.</p> | To enable the Board to understand the issues and what steps are being taken to resolve these | TBC | Cllr Mark Anderson, Environment, Cleansing and Waste | Item requested by Cllr Rigby at the August 2021 meeting – to be heard within 6 months |
| Recurring Items | | | | | |
| 7. | <p>Crime and Disorder Scrutiny</p> <p>To include scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership annual report</p> | To fulfil the Board's statutory responsibility for Crime and Disorder Scrutiny | Annual report – August | Cllr May Haines – Community Safety | |
| 8. | <p>Green Credentials</p> <p>An annual report on the Council's progress to assess our performance against targets in respect of climate change.</p> | To enable the Board to retain oversight of the Council's performance against climate change targets and make regular recommendations as required. | Annual Report to O&S in December | Mike Greene, Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability | |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD



| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Report subject | Request for scrutiny from a member of the public |
| Meeting date | 18 October 2021 |
| Status | Public Report |
| Executive summary | <p>In line with the Council's constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to consider a request that has been received for scrutiny of an issue. Any councillor or member of the public may request that a matter be scrutinised, and the Board must decide whether to include it into the Forward Plan for scrutiny at a future date. Reasons should be given if the Board declines the request.</p> <p>Members of the Board should note that this report and appendices are provided to aid deliberations on whether the scrutiny topic requested should join the Board's Forward Plan only.</p> |
| Recommendations | <p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The Board considers the request for scrutiny and determines whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) to proceed with the request for scrutiny, by adding it to the Board's Forward Plan for a future date and providing an outline of the scope of the issue to be scrutinised; b) to not exercise its powers in this respect, providing reasons for its decision. |
| Reason for recommendations | <p>The Council's constitution makes provision at Part 4 Section C,2 for members of the public to make suggestions for overview and scrutiny work. These should be considered by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny body in line with the requirements of the constitution.</p> |

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| Portfolio Holder(s): | Councillor Phil Broadhead, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration Economy and Strategic Planning |
| Corporate Director | Kate Ryan, Chief Operations Officer |
| Report Authors | Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist |
| Wards | All |
| Classification | For Decision |

Background

The Council's constitution provides for councillors and members of the public to request that an issue be considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Board or Committee. A request for scrutiny of 'the potential benefits in terms of improved public confidence, effective use of Councillors' knowledge and time, and the overall cost savings that can all be achieved by changing from the present system of a single Planning Committee to one that has three committees, one for each town in the conurbation', has been submitted by Mr Bob Hutchings, Chairman of Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council. The request has been submitted on behalf of all five parish councils in the BCP area Burton Parish Council, Christchurch Town Council, Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council, Hurn Parish Council, and Throop & Holdenhurst Parish Council.

The request and required accompanying detail supplied by is attached as Appendix 1.

1. The constitution states that:
 - a) all suggestions for overview and scrutiny work made to the council must be accompanied by detail outlining the background to the issue suggested, the proposed method of undertaking the work and likely timescale associated, and the anticipated outcome and the value to be added by the work proposed;
 - b) no item of work suggested in this way shall join the forward plan of any overview and scrutiny committee without an assessment of this information;
 - c) the resources available to the scrutiny body should be taken account of when adding work to its forward plan;
 - d) any member of the public or councillor raising an item under this provision shall be precluded from raising the matter again for a period of 12 months from the date it was considered by the overview and scrutiny body.

2. To aid the Board's consideration of the request, Officers of the service will be present at the meeting to answer any questions of clarity. The member of the public has also provided a copy of the "Review of the BCP Planning Committee Structure," report, which was commissioned by Burton and Winkton Parish Council, Christchurch Town Council, Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council and Hurn Parish Council. A copy of this is attached at appendix B.
3. Board members should note that this information is provided to aid its initial assessment of whether to pursue scrutiny of the suggested issue and is not intended to stimulate full scrutiny and debate of the issue at this meeting.

Options Appraisal

4. The Board should consider the resources available to it to pursue the scrutiny request, along with the value that may be added by the inclusion of the item on the Forward Plan. Should the Board determine that there is value in pursuing scrutiny of the issue raised an outline scope should be identified. The matter may then be added to the Board's Forward Plan for a scrutiny at a date in the future.
5. If the Board decides not to pursue scrutiny at this time it should provide reasons for this decision.

Summary of financial implications

6. N/A to this decision.

Summary of legal implications

7. The right of any councillor to request that an item be scrutinised is set out in the Local Government Act 2000. The Council's constitution makes further provision for members of the public to also make requests for scrutiny. The process set out in the constitution must be followed for both.

Summary of human resources implications

8. N/A to this decision.

Summary of sustainability impact

9. N/A to this decision.

Summary of public health implications

10. N/A to this decision.

Summary of equality implications

11. N/A to this decision.

Summary of risk assessment

12. N/A to this decision.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – ‘Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny’

Appendix B – ‘Review of the BCP Planning Committee Structure’

Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny

Guidance on the use of this form:

This form is for use by councillors and members of the public who want to request that an item joins an Overview and Scrutiny agenda. Any issue may be suggested, provided it affects the BCP area or the inhabitants of the area in some way. Scrutiny of the issue can only be requested once in a 12 month period.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receiving the request will make an assessment of the issue using the detail provided in this form and determine whether to add it to its forward plan of work.

They may take a variety of steps to progress the issue, including requesting more information on it from officers of the council, asking for a member of the overview and scrutiny committee to 'champion' the issue and report back, or establishing a small working group of councillors to look at the issue in more detail.

If the Committee does not agree to progress the issue it will set out reasons for this and they will be provided to the person submitting this form.

Please complete all sections as fully as possible

1. Issue requested for scrutiny

The potential benefits in terms of improved public confidence, effective use of Councillors' knowledge and time, and the overall cost savings that can all be achieved by changing from the present system of a single Planning Committee to one that has three committees, one for each town in the conurbation.

2. Desired outcome resulting from Overview and Scrutiny engagement, including the value to be added to the Council, the BCP area or its inhabitants.

The outcome we request is that Overview & Scrutiny Committee support the proposal and recommend a change in the Council's Constitution.

Additional value will be added by virtue of:

- Greater public confidence that planning applications would be considered by Councillors who are totally familiar with the area
- Potentially lower travel costs for holding meetings more local to Councillors addresses.
- Greater capacity with three small committees to keep pace with the ever-increasing number of planning applications
- Less pressure on Councillors to research and learn about planning issues in areas they are not familiar with.

3. Background to the issue

The Town Council of Christchurch and the Parish Councils of Burton, Highcliffe & Walkford Hurn and Throop & Holdenhurst are consultees for all planning applications received by BCP. As such our Councillors are in regular touch with local residents and the one overriding question asked by them is how can the BCP Councillors who sit on the Planning Committee be expected to decide whether to accept or reject an application when it will frequently be in a part of the area they are not familiar with. Often more than two thirds of Committee members in attendance will come from towns other than the one involved in an application. This, residents believe, cannot be the best way to decide such important issues.

In response to these regular criticisms the 4 local councils commissioned the attached report from a well known and respected planning consultant, Jo Witherden.

The report confirmed our view that a change to three committees would be welcomed by the public, would be in line with the practice at many other similar sized local authorities, would be effective management and should not cost more to operate.

4. Proposed method of scrutiny - (for example, a committee report or a working group investigation)

We favour a small working group but would respect that Overview & Scrutiny Committee members are in a better place to decide how to proceed.

5. Key dates and anticipated timescale for the scrutiny work

We hope for an early decision but defer to Overview & Scrutiny as to the best timetable to observe.

Last reviewed – April 2021

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Review of the BCP Planning Committee Structure

Report commissioned by:

Burton and Winkton Parish Council, Christchurch Town Council, Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council and Hurn Parish Council

July 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of this report, commissioned and funded by Christchurch Town Council, Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council, Hurn Parish Council and Burton Parish Council, is to investigate the functioning of the current BCP Planning Committee and the potential advantages of an area based arrangement, one planning board for each town.

1.2 The decision to seek the review was based on a growing concern in each of the four parish councils (together covering the whole of Christchurch Borough) that a democratic deficit exists in the current planning system which in turn means a lack of confidence among residents about the quality of decision making.

1.3 This report followed the decision made by BCP at Full Council on 5 January 2021, to retain the single planning committee structure. It was based upon the associated working group's recommendations (set up to advise the Audit and Governance Committee in November 2020)¹. It is noted that the working group were presented with some comparative information about the organisation of the planning function in other Councils based on a sample of 12 Councils of similar population size (ranging from 331,000 – 463,000 population). For comparison purposes, this data is given in Appendix A.

About the author

1.4 The report has been researched and written by Jo Witherden BSc(Hons) DipTP DipUD MRTPI. Jo Witherden is a chartered town planner and a full member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, with an upper second-class honours degree in City & Regional Planning from Cardiff University, a distinction in the Diploma in Town Planning from Cardiff University, and a distinction in the Diploma in Urban Design from Oxford Brookes. Jo has worked in planning policy roles in local authorities across Dorset for nearly 20 years, last employed as Head of Spatial Policy and Implementation for Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and West Dorset District Councils, leading a multi-disciplinary team of more than 10 officers dealing with planning policy, environmental assessment, planning obligations, urban and landscape design for the two council areas. Since November 2014 Jo has been working as an independent planning consultant, advising a wide range of clients on planning applications, appeals and policy matters, including working with Town and Parish Councils on Neighbourhood Plans.

How the review was undertaken

1.5 The review has been undertaken in three parts:

- a) Identification of similar Councils (in terms of unitary function and population size / geographic area / volume of applications) for comparison purposes;

¹ <https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/documents/s21378/Changes%20to%20the%20Councils%20Constitution.pdf>

- b) Review of sample of these local planning authorities, identifying variation in committee set-up and how they function – including any peer review and community engagement / representation information available;
- c) Identify key learning points of best practice.

Principal Conclusions

The main conclusions arising from this research can be summarised below:

- The research shows that Planning Committee structures are varied and there is no one favoured method. If anything there is a slight partiality towards using area-based committees in comparable Councils, and geography is not a determining factor.
- There appear to be more factors in favour of an area-based committee structure than a single committee structure. An area-based structure would enable meetings to be held closer to the main population affected and would enable committee members to have greater familiarity with that area, and this is reinforced by the introduction of Neighbourhood Plans as a local layer of planning policy.
- It is clear that area based committees can and do work effectively in other local authority areas, can benefit from more local knowledge and expertise and are more likely to be accessible to the local community, therefore increasing public faith and confidence in the process.
- There is no evidence that they result in 'parochial' decision making. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that an area-based committee structure would increase the costs of the planning service.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF COMPARISON COUNCILS

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council

2.1 BCP Council was established on 1 April 2019, following local government reorganisation in the former county of Dorset. This saw the county's nine councils replaced by two new councils: Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (comprising Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Borough Councils and the constituent element of Dorset County Council that covered the Christchurch area); and Dorset Council (comprising the remaining Dorset authorities).

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| – Population size: | – 395,331 (2019 mid year estimate) |
| – Council type: | – Unitary |
| – Geographic area: | – 17,393 hectares (total extent, not accounting for topography) |
| – Annual planning applications: | – 2,378 (all application types) |

Comparison Councils by Population and Type

2.2 Table 4 in Appendix B identifies Local Planning Authorities (i.e. excluding County Councils) within England by type and population size similar to the BCP population (of approximately 395,000). Those with a similar populations ($\pm 75,000$ people) were highlighted for further consideration, but as this only identified 3 Councils with larger populations, the upper limited was extended to +150,000.

Comparison Councils by Geographic area

2.3 Table 5 in Appendix B identifies Local Planning Authorities (i.e. excluding County Councils) within England by geographic area similar to the BCP area (of approximately 17,000 hectares). The spread of Councils was broadly similar looking $\pm 3,000$ hectares either side of the BCP figure (13 more, and 9 less than BCP in area size).

Comparison Councils by number of planning applications

2.4 And finally, Table 6 in Appendix B identifies Local Planning Authorities (i.e. excluding County Councils) within England by the number of planning applications (all types) received in the last 12 months (approximately 2,400 applications). Those with a similar volume (± 500 applications) were highlighted for further consideration (9 Councils with more, and 23 with fewer, applications).

Suggested comparison Councils

2.5 Based on an appraisal of all three factors, the following 15 Councils were then identified as reasonably close comparators to BCP for further evaluation, based on at least 2 of the 3 comparison factors (population size, area size and number of applications processed) with a ranking-based weighting applied to identify those most comparable to BCP².

Table 1. Suggested Councils for further research as comparators to BCP Council

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Barnet * | Cheshire West and Chester | East Riding of Yorkshire * | St Albans |
| Bristol City * | County Durham | Hillingdon | Shropshire |
| Bromley * | Croydon * | Kirklees * | Wandsworth |
| Cheshire East * | Dorset * | Manchester | Wigan |

* these nine Councils plus Newham, Enfield and Nottingham were also considered in the comparison report undertaken by the BCP working party.

3. OVERVIEW OF COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENT BY COMPARATORS

Table 2. Overview of Committee Arrangement by Comparators³

| Authority | Type | Area | App's | Pop'n | Committee Structure |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| Barnet | London | 8,677 | 2,705 | 395,869 | M Three planning committees ⁴ |
| BCP Council | Unitary | 17,393 | 2,378 | 395,331 | S Single planning committee |
| Bristol City | Unitary | 23,544 | 2,463 | 463,377 | M Two committees |
| Bromley | London | 15,013 | 2,517 | 332,336 | M Four sub + planning committee |
| Cheshire E | Unitary | 116,636 | 2,896 | 384,152 | A Two area + strategic board |
| Cheshire W | Unitary | 94,121 | 2,542 | 343,071 | S Single planning committee |
| Co. Durham | Unitary | 223,261 | 2,267 | 530,094 | A Three area + county board |
| Croydon | London | 8,649 | 2,156 | 386,710 | M Single + sub-committee |
| Dorset | Unitary | 252,108 | 3,412 | 378,508 | A Three area + strategic board |
| East Riding | Unitary | 249,179 | 2,529 | 341,173 | A Two area + planning board |
| Hillingdon | London | 11,570 | 2,361 | 306,870 | A Two area + majors board |
| Kirklees | Metropolitan | 40,855 | 2,059 | 439,787 | A Two area + strategic board |
| Manchester | Metropolitan | 11,565 | 2,022 | 552,858 | S Single planning committee |
| Shropshire | Unitary | 319,728 | 2,682 | 323,136 | A Three area committees |
| St Albans | District | 16,121 | 1,872 | 148,452 | A Three area + referral committee |
| Wandsworth | London | 3,522 | 2,305 | 329,677 | S Single planning committee |
| Wigan | Metropolitan | 18,817 | 1,038 | 328,662 | S Single planning committee |

3.1 It is clear from an initial overview that there is no single method by which these comparable Councils operate. There are three main types of set-up: a single planning committee (S), multiple planning committees (M), and area-based planning committees (A) some of which also have an area-wide strategic committee for the most significant applications. The sample suggests that there is a slight partiality towards using area-based committees as the preferred approach (8 of the 17 sampled), with only 5 of the 17 sampled (including BCP) operating a single planning committee structure⁵.

² 7 other authorities were identified as part of this sieving process but were considered less comparable than those in Table 1. These were: Bradford; Brent; Ealing; Lambeth; Liverpool; and Northumberland.

³ See Appendix A for data sources

⁴ The committee system changed from an area-based one system to the current arrangement in January 2021.

⁵ It is noted that the additional 6 authorities discounted in the previous stage (see footnote 2) were fairly evenly split between single planning committee (4) and area-based committee (2) type structures and therefore their omission would not have altered the above conclusions.

3.2 In general, the data suggests that area-based committees tend to be more prevalent in the larger geographic areas (but not exclusively so - Cheshire West and Chester, Hillingdon and St Albans operating in much smaller areas), with no obvious correlation based on either the number of applications or population size. But clearly geography / rurality is not a determining factor, as there are examples of several London Boroughs that operate such a system (including Hillingdon, as well as others such as Kingston upon Thames and Greenwich)⁶.

3.3 Given the purpose of this report, the multiple committee structure can be discounted, particularly given that it was the least favoured form of planning committee structure and it would not appear to have any obvious advantages with regards to addressing the perceived problem that a democratic deficit exists in the current planning system.

4. PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS

4.1 The next step was to check comparable performance between Councils in relation to their Planning and Development Services functions. To do this, the relative performance as reported through the Local Government Association benchmarking tools was used⁷.

Table 3. Overview of Planning Performance Indicators by Comparators (2019/20)

| Authority | | Revenue / person | Majors % 13wks | Minors % 8wks | % Appeals granted | Appeals (1/4ly) | % appeals dismissed | Complaints / app'n |
|---------------------|----------|------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Barnet ⁸ | A | £23.84 | 86% | 93% | 71% | 22 | 45% | 0.5% |
| BCP Council | S | £21.59 | 70% | 63% | 75% | 27 | 85% | 0.7% |
| Cheshire E | A | £47.42 | 96% | 88% | 85% | 24 | 67% | 0.9% |
| Cheshire W | S | £58.17 | 100% | 96% | 89% | 18 | 67% | 0.4% |
| Co. Durham | A | £60.54 | 87% | 96% | 94% | 14 | 71% | 0.6% |
| Dorset | A | £40.25 | 71% | 71% | 82% | 32 | 72% | 0.0% |
| East Riding | A | £50.38 | 95% | 95% | 89% | 21 | 76% | 0.5% |
| Hillingdon | A | £23.64 | 88% | 92% | 63% | 12 | 75% | 0.6% |
| Kirklees | A | £45.82 | 100% | 94% | 87% | 14 | 93% | 0.5% |
| Manchester | S | £54.11 | 68% | 82% | 89% | 8 | 63% | 0.4% |
| Shropshire | A | £57.53 | 76% | 88% | 87% | 19 | 74% | 0.7% |
| St Albans | | £33.20 | 100% | 75% | 79% | 10 | 90% | 0.3% |
| Wandsworth | S | £39.62 | 100% | 90% | 88% | 3 | 100% | 0.2% |
| Wigan | S | £38.10 | 100% | 93% | 89% | 4 | 100% | 0.8% |
| Single | S | £42.32 | 88% | 85% | 86% | 12 | 83% | 0.5% |
| Area-based | A | £42.51 | 89% | 88% | 82% | 19 | 74% | 0.5% |

4.2 The analysis of these figures highlights that there is no clear correlation between any of these factors and the type of committee structure used. There is no significant difference between the committee types in terms of the performance indicators with the exception of appeals, with fewer appeals and higher dismissal rates for authorities using the single committee structure. However it is not possible to readily tell whether these were committee 'overturned' decisions that were going against officer recommendations.

Peer Reviews / Challenges

4.3 The various comparator Councils were checked in terms of whether any had undergone recent Peer Review challenges of either their Planning department or Committee arrangements. The search

⁶ It is noted that the London Borough of Barnet recently took the decision to change from an area-based to multiple planning committees (with the new structure in plan from January 2021).

⁷ <https://lginform.local.gov.uk/> and based on latest available quarter data at that time (July to September 2020)

⁸ These results reflect the previous area-based system in Barnet

identified Dorset as the only relevant case study⁹. Given the limited review data, a further search was undertaken to consider any additional evidence on scrutiny of Planning Committee's structures. This highlighted reports with regard to Cornwall, Enfield, Isle of Wight, South Cambridgeshire, South Lakeland, Test Valley, Waverley and Wirral Councils. The report findings are summarised in Appendix C, and common themes / messages are summarised below.

4.4 Planning can be a contentious matter, with concerns typically focused on:

- the transparency of decision-making and trust in the process
- the degree of political influence
- the perception that residents' concerns are not taken into account
- the efficiency of the decision-making process (the number of applications going in front of Committee can vary considerably, and ultimately is a matter for local determination based on delegation arrangements).

4.5 It is important that both the committee process and the legal requirements (i.e. that decisions must be taken in accord with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise) are clearly explained to the public, and the decision-making process is seen to be fair and transparent. There should be adequate opportunity for resident's views to be aired at committee, and a flexible approach may be needed in applying limits on public speaking where (for example) allowing more time would help members to better understand public views.

4.6 Problems are more likely to arise when Member involvement in planning decisions is left to the end of the process, missing opportunities to engage during the 'life' of the application, to potentially ensure any improvements or concerns they have are fully considered (and that these points are covered in the committee report).

4.7 It is important for the Council to learn from their decisions and seek improvements, particularly:

- reviewing decisions in terms of 'successes' and 'failures' where scheme are built, to help inform future considerations. This need not necessarily be limited to just those schemes approved by committee, but could include schemes approved under delegated powers;
- involving planning committee members in the review work on the Local Plan.

4.8 Where recommendations were made by the Planning Advisory Service in terms of restructuring planning committees, this was mainly based on the suggestion that Members involvement should focus more on strategic rather than minor planning applications (as being more important due to their scale). The pro's and con's of the different committee structures were not clearly explained or evidenced in those reports. Where this would result in a single committee structure, there was also clearly a reluctance from members to lose the benefits of area-based committees (as they saw them).

5. CONSIDERATION OF THE REVIEWED MATERIAL

5.1 Looking at comparable Councils of similar size and form, it is clear that the planning committee structure is varied and there is no one favoured method. Whilst area-based committees tend to be more prevalent in the larger geographic areas, there are exceptions to this 'rule of thumb'.

5.2 From a review of high level data, there is no clear correlation between the type of committee structure used and performance. Furthermore there are no clear indicators of customer satisfaction, either in terms of the process or whether decisions have (on hindsight) been good for the area (in terms of what is or isn't built). There is also no readily available data on direct and indirect costs of the planning services which can be broken down in order to be able to compare the cost efficiencies of the different planning committee processes, as well as the wide range of other factors that impact on performance.

5.3 The analysis of Peer Review challenges suggests that, whilst the Planning Advisory Service has made some recommendations in terms of restructuring planning committees, the pro's and con's of the different planning committee models are not clearly explained or evidenced in those reports. Where a

⁹ Kirklees underwent a Corporate Peer Challenge in July 2019 but this did not make any notable comment on the planning committees.

recommendation to move to a single planning committee structure have been made, there is also clearly a reluctance from members to lose the benefits of area-based committees (as they see them) where these are in place, as they were in the individual legacy Councils of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

5.4 Where local representation issues were raised, the main response from the Peer Review challenges was in line with the 1997 report by the Nolan Committee¹⁰, which considered standards of conduct in Local Government, and which stated:

"It is essential for the proper operation of the planning system that local concerns are adequately ventilated. The most effective and suitable way that this can be done is through the local elected representatives, the councillors themselves."

However not all councillors will be able to (or necessarily want to) attend committee regarding decisions for their area (a review of BCP planning committee minutes over the period November 2020 – April 2021 suggests that about a third of applications have no ward member input). As such, some areas may be disadvantaged by relying solely on this remedy. At the current time, BCP Planning Committee is held in Bournemouth, which is not local to Christchurch or Poole, and is therefore likely to deter attendance (on cost / convenience grounds) by not only Councillors from the outlying areas but also local residents and businesses who may find it more difficult / costly to attend (than attending a more local alternative).

5.5 Where cost issues were raised, the main response from the Peer Review challenges was to reduce the amount of planning applications as far as practical to allow just the major strategic decisions to be considered by a single committee. Whilst there is no readily available cost comparison data, it is self-evident that the more applications considered by committee (and their complexity) increases the time spent, and therefore costs (a review of BCP planning committee minutes over the period November 2020 – April 2021 suggests that committees are typically 5 hours long with about 6 applications considered per committee). There is no obvious reason to conclude that the same amount of applications considered under either a single committee or through a number of area-based committees would necessarily be significantly different in cost terms, the main factor potentially being travel time and abortive time 'waiting' for the relevant item on the agenda (which may be reduced for officers but greater for members of the public). The fact that there are area-based planning teams and the potential for greater local representation on the committees (subject to proportionate political representation) further reduces any apparent time-saving benefits of a single planning committee.

5.6 With reference to BCP Council, there are clearly challenges with regard to the how the operation of the planning committee may operate due to:

- The complexity of the current adopted development plan and associated supplementary guidance, as comprised from the constituent parts inherited from the former Councils. This means that there are different policies applied to the different areas, some of which include two sets of policies (such as for Christchurch Council where in addition to the Core Strategy there are also saved policies from the previous Local Plan),

⇒ *Given the extent of knowledge and materials required for each area, this would suggest an area-based committee structure reflecting the former areas may be the more appropriate format at this time. Clear planning officer advice (together with appropriate member training) is also key. The consolidation of the library of planning policy documents and associated maps onto a single webpage relevant to the committee coverage is also important, for all participants.*

¹⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336864/3rdInquiryReport.pdf

- Emerging Neighbourhood Plans which add an additional layer of local policy to the development plan (when BCP Council formed there were just two made Neighbourhood Plans, both in Poole (Poole Quays and Broadstone) – since that time the Boscombe and Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan has been made, and 6 more areas are currently designated for Neighbourhood Planning purposes),
 - ⇒ *The increasing complexity of Neighbourhood Plans (which have the same development plan status but cover smaller areas) would suggest an area-based committee structure may be more appropriate for this reason. It would also be advisable for the Neighbourhood Plan Groups to be canvassed to see if they would wish to play an advisory role at committees in the interpretation of policies.*
- Previous public concerns raised about the Council reorganisation that local areas would receive less attention and representation, and
 - ⇒ *Whilst committee decisions need to be made based upon the development plan, an area-based committee structure would enable meetings to be held closer to the main population affected, and would enable committee members to have greater familiarity with that area (and also limit planning officer involvement to the respective area team).*
- Officer and Councillor’s familiarity and knowledge of the area and previous decisions is also likely to be below average due to the re-organisation, and
 - ⇒ *Whilst reducing the number of applications considered by committee may be most effective at reducing direct costs, there are many indirect consequences that also need to be considered, such as the benefits of having greater member involvement that can feed into the review of the Local Plan.*
- Budgetary constraints, recognising the duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised (best value), having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Based on the above considerations, there appear to be more factors in favour of an area-based committee structure than a single committee structure. It is clear that area based committees can and do work effectively in other local authority areas, can benefit more from local knowledge and expertise (including that being developed through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans), and are more likely to be accessible to the local community, therefore increasing public faith and confidence in the process. There is no evidence to suggest that they result in ‘parochial’ decision making. There is no evidence to suggest that this arrangement would increase the costs, particularly if the delegation arrangements (which influence the number of applications called in to committee) remains unchanged.

6.2 An area-based structure should reflect the existing local plans, and the planning team arrangements continue to align to the same areas. Any new Neighbourhood Area designations should be encouraged to fall within the area rather than straddling an area. A strategic overview on consistency in the application of strategic policies can and should be provided by the Head of Planning (or delegated to a single officer).

6.3 The committee membership should avoid political influence / bias. This can be achieved through committee member selection (both in terms of proportionate representation and exclusion of Cabinet / Executive members), seating mix during committee and clarity over the role of the ward councillor at committee. In introducing the committee, the Chairperson should clarify the role of the committee with reference to making decisions based on the development plan and other material considerations.

6.4 To improve performance at, and perceptions of, committee meetings, there should be:

- Good communication between officers and committee members prior to Committee, including informal (non-decision making) briefings / questions where relevant to reduce the length of less relevant discussion;

- Clear and reasonably succinct officer presentations. The presentation should identify the most relevant development plan policies, any other material considerations and any clear technical evidence to take into account. A slide / summary highlighting what weight should be given to the key issues when taking a balanced decision is considered to be good practice in focusing the discussion.
- Some flexibility in how the public can speak in the meetings prior to the committee debate – on rare occasions it may be beneficial to hold a public meeting.
- Consideration of the role of Neighbourhood Plan Groups / Forums to play an advisory role at committees in the interpretation of their policies.

6.5 It would be prudent to monitor customer satisfaction on planning including the views of those attending committee, and also those that choose not to attend (to understand the reasons why).

6.6 Planning committee members should be closely involved in the formation and review of planning policy (and this can be at both BCP Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan levels). They should also look to learn from past decisions by having an annual tour / review of developments that were decided through committee and those decided under delegated powers.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Comparison data presented to the BCP working group

| Authority | Population (ranking in England) | Committee structure |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bristol | 463,000 10th | 2 |
| Kirklees | 438,000 11th | 3 (2 sub committees 1 strategic) |
| BCP Council | 398,000 12th | 1 |
| LB Barnet | 392,000 13 th | 3 |
| LB Croydon | 385,000 14th | 2 |
| Cheshire East | 380,000 15th | 3 (2 sub committees 1 strategic) |
| Dorset | 376,000 16th | 4 (3 sub committees 1 strategic) |
| LB Newham | 352,000 19th | 2 |
| East Riding Yorkshire | 339,000 23rd | 2 |
| LB Enfield | 333,000 24th | 1 + Planning Panel |
| LB Bromley | 331,000 25th | 2 |
| Nottingham | 331,000 26th | 2 (1 is strategic) |

Appendix B – Comparison Councils Data

Table 4. Population and Council Type comparisons¹¹:

| Authority | Council Type | Population Size |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Manchester | Metropolitan District | 552,858 |
| Buckinghamshire ¹² | Unitary Authority | 543,973 |
| Bradford | Metropolitan District | 539,776 |
| County Durham | Unitary Authority | 530,094 |
| Wiltshire | Unitary Authority | 500,024 |
| Liverpool | Metropolitan District | 498,042 |
| Bristol City | Unitary Authority | 463,377 |
| Kirklees | Metropolitan District | 439,787 |
| Barnet | London Borough | 395,869 |
| BCP Council | Unitary Authority | 395,331 |
| Croydon | London Borough | 386,710 |
| Cheshire East | Unitary Authority | 384,152 |
| Dorset | Unitary Authority | 378,508 |
| Coventry | Metropolitan District | 371,521 |
| Leicester | Unitary Authority | 354,224 |
| Newham | London Borough | 353,134 |
| Wakefield | Metropolitan District | 348,312 |
| Cheshire West and Chester | Unitary Authority | 343,071 |
| Ealing | London Borough | 341,806 |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Unitary Authority | 341,173 |
| Enfield | London Borough | 333,794 |
| Nottingham | Unitary Authority | 332,900 |
| Bromley | London Borough | 332,336 |
| Brent | London Borough | 329,771 |
| Wandsworth | London Borough | 329,677 |
| Wigan | Metropolitan District | 328,662 |
| Sandwell | Metropolitan District | 328,450 |
| Lambeth | London Borough | 326,034 |
| Tower Hamlets | London Borough | 324,745 |
| Wirral | Metropolitan District | 324,011 |
| Shropshire | Unitary Authority | 323,136 |
| Northumberland | Unitary Authority | 322,434 |
| Hillingdon | London Borough | 306,870 |

¹¹ Based on Mid-2019: April 2020 local authority district codes

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

¹² Former as a new Unitary authority in April 2020

Table 5. Area and Council comparisons¹³:

| Authority | Area (ha) | Council Type | Population Size |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Chorley | 20,291 | Shire District | 118,216 |
| Sefton | 20,276 | Metropolitan District | 276,410 |
| North East Lincolnshire | 20,266 | Unitary Authority | 159,563 |
| Windsor and Maidenhead | 19,843 | Unitary Authority | 151,422 |
| Darlington | 19,748 | Unitary Authority | 106,803 |
| Wyre Forest | 19,540 | Shire District | 101,291 |
| Wigan | 18,817 | Metropolitan District | 328,662 |
| Thurrock | 18,441 | Unitary Authority | 174,341 |
| Fylde | 18,263 | Shire District | 80,780 |
| Great Yarmouth | 18,256 | Shire District | 99,336 |
| Warrington | 18,238 | Unitary Authority | 210,014 |
| Wokingham | 17,897 | Unitary Authority | 171,119 |
| Solihull | 17,828 | Metropolitan District | 216,374 |
| BCP Council | 17,393 | Unitary Authority | 395,331 |
| Pendle | 16,938 | Shire District | 92,112 |
| Wellingborough | 16,304 | Shire District | 79,707 |
| St Albans | 16,121 | Shire District | 148,452 |
| Bolsover | 16,033 | Shire District | 80,562 |
| Rochdale | 15,813 | Metropolitan District | 222,412 |
| Brentwood | 15,312 | Shire District | 77,021 |
| Bromley | 15,013 | London Borough | 332,336 |
| Gateshead | 14,408 | Metropolitan District | 202,055 |
| Preston | 14,294 | Shire District | 143,135 |
| Liverpool | 13,353 | Metropolitan District | 498,042 |
| Stockport | 12,604 | Metropolitan District | 293,423 |
| Hillingdon | 11,570 | London Borough | 306,870 |
| Manchester | 11,565 | Metropolitan District | 552,858 |

¹³ Based on Standard Area Measurements (SAM) for the administrative areas in the United Kingdom as at 31 December 2020 <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets/standard-area-measurements-latest-for-administrative-areas-in-the-united-kingdom>

Table 6. Application volume and Council comparisons¹⁴

| Authority | Applications | Council Type | Population Size |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Dorset | 3,412 | Unitary Authority | 378,508 |
| Cheshire East | 2,896 | Unitary Authority | 384,152 |
| Bradford | 2,870 | Metropolitan District | 539,776 |
| Barnet | 2,705 | London Borough | 395,869 |
| Shropshire | 2,682 | Unitary Authority | 323,136 |
| Cheshire West and Chester | 2,542 | Unitary Authority | 343,071 |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | 2,529 | Unitary Authority | 341,173 |
| Bromley | 2,517 | London Borough | 332,336 |
| Bristol City | 2,463 | Unitary Authority | 463,377 |
| Richmond upon Thames | 2,421 | London boroughs | 198,019 |
| BCP Council | 2,378 | Unitary Authority | 395,331 |
| Hillingdon | 2,361 | London boroughs | 306,870 |
| Wandsworth | 2,305 | London Borough | 329,677 |
| Sheffield | 2,282 | Metropolitan District | 584,853 |
| County Durham | 2,267 | Unitary Authority | 530,094 |
| East Suffolk | 2,202 | Shire District | 249,461 |
| Central Bedfordshire | 2,164 | Unitary authorities | 288,648 |
| Croydon | 2,156 | London boroughs | 386,710 |
| Brighton and Hove | 2,153 | Unitary authorities | 290,885 |
| Ealing | 2,130 | London Borough | 341,806 |
| Kensington and Chelsea | 2,097 | London boroughs | 156,129 |
| Kirklees | 2,059 | Metropolitan District | 439,787 |
| Northumberland | 2,059 | Unitary Authority | 322,434 |
| Manchester | 2,022 | Metropolitan District | 552,858 |
| South Downs National Park | 1,991 | National parks | 117,000 |
| Brent | 1,925 | London Borough | 329,771 |
| Bath and North East Somerset | 1,922 | Unitary authorities | 193,282 |
| Camden | 1,922 | London boroughs | 270,029 |
| St Albans | 1,872 | Shire District | 148,452 |
| Redbridge | 1,871 | London boroughs | 305,222 |
| Lambeth | 1,858 | London Borough | 326,034 |
| Herefordshire, County of | 1,848 | Unitary authorities | 192,801 |
| South Oxfordshire | 1,826 | Shire District | 142,057 |
| South Gloucestershire | 1,767 | Unitary authorities | 285,093 |

¹⁴ Based on Table P124A: district planning authorities – ALL planning decisions by local planning authority, year ending September 2020 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics#district-matter-tables>

Appendix C: Peer Reviews / Challenges – Advice / Issues Summary

Dorset¹⁵

6.7 A Planning Advisory Service Peer Challenge of the Planning Service was undertaken for Dorset Council in 2020. Whilst this did not specifically focus on the committee arrangements, it highlighted that in considering the role of the committee it was important to think about how this could best be focused on decisions where it was possible to add significant value. :

Cornwall¹⁶

6.8 The Peer Review for Cornwall considered the committee approach in the Council in some depth. It recognised that strongly held views about local choice and the importance of protecting the communities and landscape had underpinned the initial decision to create an area-based structure. The poor policy framework (at that time Cornwall did not yet have its own Local Plan; and had a shortfall of housing land supply) and finely balanced coalition politics had all contributed to poor decisions being made and overturned at appeal (at that time this had been around 62% of appeals being allowed).

6.9 The report commended a number of actions:

- The single 'key issue' slide that was used to help Committees to stay focussed on the main planning issues raised by the proposed development and what weight should be given to these when taking a balanced decision
- Good communication between officers and councillors prior to Committee (this was notably better in one of the committees)

6.10 It also suggested disbanding the strategic committee, with these decisions delegated to the relevant area-based committee (this recommendation does not appear to have been taken up by the Council) and eliminating the 'cross-examination' of the public / applicants by the Divisional councillor (which was considered to have gone 'too far').

Enfield¹⁷

6.11 The 2014 Peer Review for Enfield looked specifically at the planning committee, following on from its planning service review. This operated as a single committee (and still does) sitting at least once a month (and sometimes two or even three times). The recommendations and suggestions made were relatively minor in scope, with perhaps the most significant (and relevant) being:

- Measures to reduce the politicising of the agenda, such as in terms of seating and arrangement (avoiding political groupings) and involvement of the lead member of the opposition in the pre-meeting
- Greater engagement of members in pre-application discussions of major applications
- Consider involving committee members in review work on the Local Plan
- Have an annual tour of completed sites in order to provide the Committee with valuable information on the impact of its decisions and inform future considerations.

Isle of Wight¹⁸

6.12 The 2016 Peer Review of the Planning Committee Isle of Wight Council looked at the constitutional and procedural arrangements which were in place for determining planning applications at the single Planning Committee. At that time it was notably underperforming in relation to determining major applications within the statutory period, and a slightly higher than average proportion of overturned

¹⁵ <https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/s21977/APPENDIX%20A%20-%20Dorset%20Peer%20Challenge%20Final%20Report%202020%20Publication%20Version.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/20505029/planning-peer-report-final-070116.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s45789/APPENDIX%201%20-%20PAS%20Report%20Recommendations.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Meetings/Committees/Planning%20Committee%20from%202013/13-6-16/Paper%20A%20-%20Appendix%20A.pdf>

appeals. The committee meets about once every six weeks (a very high proportion of applications being decided under delegated powers). The recommendations and suggestions made were relatively minor in scope. In addition to further member training, the most notable recommendations included:

- Continue the commendable practice of holding occasional public meetings prior to the formal planning committee meeting for members of the committee to hear public views (but not debate the merits of a scheme), for relevant major and controversial applications.
- Continue the practice of extending the period for public speaking for reasons of natural justice, fairness, or for other reasons to enable the proper determination of an application
- Continue with the annual review of developments granted permission by the committee.

South Cambridgeshire¹⁹

6.13 South Cambridgeshire similarly has a single planning committee, which was reviewed relatively recently in the summer of 2020. The report notes that the numbers of applications going in front of Committee are low compared against other councils (but that this is a matter for local determination). The main issue identified by officers and members was in terms of a breakdown in trust and confidence, partly due to the lack of a 5 year housing land supply and growing community frustrations that developments were being approved against the general thrust of the local plan. Probably one of the more notable recommendations (in line with those flagged in other reviews) was:

- Re-establish the Chair's briefing with planning managers to support improved communication between members and officers and explore ways to establish opportunities for informal (non-decision making) pre planning briefings for members of the planning committee, district councillors and parish councillors.

South Lakeland²⁰

6.14 South Lakeland District Council's review of its single planning committee in 2015 generally focused on procedural issues such as committee timings, report formats, use of IT in presentations etc.

Test Valley²¹

6.15 The Peer Review of the operation of the Planning Committees for Test Valley Borough Council was undertaken in 2018. At that time the Council was operating two area committees and a Planning Control Committee (dealing with referrals from the area committees where the Head of Planning has identified a possible conflict with policy, public interest or claim for costs against the Council). All Councillors (including cabinet members) sat on one of the area committees. The main issues requiring a review were the poor public and customer experience from those committees (the planning service was otherwise operating effectively in terms of Government targets).

6.16 The report recommended creating one, smaller, Borough wide, committee (no larger than the Planning Control Committee) to make decisions for the whole Borough, or alternatively two smaller area committees (and abolishing the Planning Control Committee). The reasons given were: "to create a more effective and efficient decision making body where the proceedings can be more clearly understood, where all the members are trained to effectively execute the planning decision making function of the Borough and make decisions in the public interest of the whole Borough". The reviewers however did note that the single committee option may be considered 'too radical'. The second (less radical) recommendation appears to have been carried through.

¹⁹ <https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s120312/Appendix%20A%20->

²⁰ <https://democracy.southlakeland.gov.uk/documents/s13470/Planning%20Committee%20Peer%20Review%20-%20Appx%201.pdf>

²¹ <https://democracy.testvalley.gov.uk/documents/s2384/Item%2011%20Review%20of%20Area%20Planning%20Committees%20-%20Annex%202.pdf>

Waverley²²

6.17 The Planning Improvement Peer Challenge for Waverley Borough Council took place in 2018. At that time there were four area committees together with a joint planning committee (dealing with the larger, more strategic, and more controversial applications), with the majority of councillors sitting on planning decision making committees. Concerns had been raised that this was an overly complicated and inefficient decision-making processes. The Review Panel also felt that this set-up wrongly gave the impression that Councillors' roles were to represent local community views rather than for decisions to be taken in accord with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (and with particular focus on the consequences of failing to have a five year housing land supply). They recommended the restructuring of the committee to one strategic planning committee. This recommendation was rejected by members.

Wirral²³

6.18 The Planning Improvement Peer Challenge for Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council in 2019 examined a wider range of issues arising from the planning service, including proposals to create two Planning Committees to separate out major applications. Instead, the Peer Challenge Panel recommended the existing committee refocus on strategic rather than minor planning applications, together with more informal pre-planning briefings for members to better understand the issues (and for officers to consider what further information that could usefully provide). It does not appear that this option has yet been formally considered by the Council.

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²² <https://modgov.waverley.gov.uk/documents/s28577/Item%209%20-%20Peer%20Review%20Final%20Report%20to%20Waverley%20BC%20Sept%203%202018%20Appendix%201.pdf>

²³ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/planning%20and%20building/Wirral%20Council%20Planning%20Peer%20Review%20Final%20Report%20to%20Council%20July%2029%202019.pdf>

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CABINET



| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Report subject | Levelling up – Creating a Skills Commission |
| Meeting date | 27 October 2021 |
| Status | Public Report |
| Executive summary | This report recommends the creation of a time-limited Dorset Skills Commission to oversee an ‘at pace’ response to critical skills issues that have been identified from recent economic research. These require an urgent response if the area is to achieve its economic ambitions and level up our economy. The Commission will be tasked with reporting back on its findings to a future Cabinet meeting in 2022/23. |
| Recommendations | <p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cabinet supports the creation of a Dorset Skills Commission between November 2021 and September 2022; b) For this Commission to facilitate the skills delivery needed for an effective and at pace response to a job-led approach to COVID-19 economic recovery and levelling up across Dorset; c) That the Commission undertakes a review into the Dorset skills landscape – with a particular consideration of the National Skills White Paper, and the levelling up agenda, producing a report that lays out a potential skills journey and opportunities/needs based on 10, 20 and 30-years trajectories; d) That the Commission works closely with the Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support immediate implementation of the wider skills priorities within the agreed Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus; e) That the Director – Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Covid resilience, Schools and Skills, and the Cabinet member for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning, be given delegated authority to agree with Dorset Council and Dorset LEP the governance and membership of the Commission for inclusion in the Terms of Reference. |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Reason for recommendations | The establishment of a dedicated Commission will oversee an effective and at pace response to a jobs-led approach to COVID-19 economic recovery and contribute to the levelling up of the economy. It would also provide an objective and independent review of the future Dorset Skills landscape, helping to shape a world-class skills and learning infrastructure for all communities, and helping to inform actions in the Brighter Futures and Dynamic Places sections of the Council's corporate plan. |
| Portfolio Holder(s): | Councillor Nicola Greene, Portfolio Holder for Covid Resilience, Schools and Skills Councillor Phil Broadhead, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning and Deputy Leader of the Council |
| Corporate Director | Elaine Redding – Corporate Director Children’s Services Adam Richens – Director of Finance |
| Report Authors | Chris Shephard – Director of Economic Development Sarah Rempel – Director of Education |
| Wards | Council-wide |
| Classification | For Decision |

Background

1. The importance of a skilled labour market and the link between skills and social mobility has been recognised and embedded across all recent work associated with economic growth and levelling up in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, particularly but not exclusively in the Council's draft Economic Development Strategy which will come to Cabinet in November.
2. A critical focus for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole's successful economic future is ensuring an increase in the availability of a local labour market, with the right skills. At the same time, it has to ensure that these people have the ability to live and move effectively across the region.
3. The 'demographic crunch' across our area (i.e., our rapidly ageing workforce) will put significant pressure on our skill base, social infrastructure and economic development potential. This represents one of the biggest challenges to our economic strategy and ambition to level up, with many businesses struggling to recruit the key skills that enable them to meet demand, to innovate and to grow. This has been further exacerbated with the economic impacts of COVID-19.
4. Headlines from the wider-Dorset area economic evidence base show that, out of a total population of some 800k (of which 350k are of employment age):
 - 25% of people working are due to retire in the next 10 years

- 24% of the working population have been furloughed – with a high % risk of redundancy (at the time of writing this the Furlough scheme has just ended)
 - We have seen over 150% increase in claimant count (which rises to 190% for 16-24yr olds) – i.e. a high % of people have already experienced job loss.
5. The evidence base would lead us to infer the following ‘take-away’ points:
- The demographic impact in Dorset is leading to a critical replacement demand issue (i.e. those leaving the workforce to retire are relatively well-qualified/skilled – an equivalent workforce is not ready ‘in the wings’).
 - Hard to fill vacancies are marked in Dorset.
 - Skills levels fluctuate across the area – with the lowest skilled in areas of relative deprivation.
 - Graduates and highly skilled people are leaving the area, with low numbers of those with equivalent skills coming into the area, yet 77% jobs are forecast to require Level 5 or above between 2017-2027.
 - There are widely reported recruitment gaps and lower numbers of Apprentices when compared nationally
 - COVID-19 has created a significant exposure in key industries: Hospitality & leisure, manufacturing, construction, arts/creative, tourism.
 - Dorset has a high % of people in self-employment - many of whom have been unable to access additional support in last 12 months.

We need to act now to address these issues, and identify the most effective responses to help level up our economy.

Proposed action

6. This report recommends the creation of a time-limited Dorset Skills Commission to oversee an ‘at pace’ response to critical skills issues across Dorset. This is one of a series of actions BCP Council is looking to take to address the issues outlined above and contribute to levelling up our economy.
7. Draft Terms of Reference (see appendix 1) are appended to this report. In summary, we would seek high level business leadership of the Commission, by appointment – with an emphasis on independence and objectivity as well as an understanding of the skills agenda in Dorset, the UK and beyond. It should be led by a figurehead skills expert, preferably from outside Dorset, who can claim the national stage on Dorset’s behalf. The Commission will be established in November 2021, with a final report by 30 September 2022.
8. The Commission would report to both Councils and the Dorset LEP Board. It is not proposed to be a Committee or Joint Committee and therefore only has advisory powers, not decision-making ones. It is envisaged that the Commission would focus on 3 tasks.
9. First, to oversee and help shape the most effective response to deal with the immediate implications on skills and learning (for those aged 16 and above) as a result of COVID-19 across Dorset. Whilst partners are already working on recovery and response activity, it is felt that a dedicated, high-level Commission would give

added impetus and focus, helping to 'cut through' barriers to progress. At this stage, it is envisioned that focus will be on:

- Establishing demand-led rapid retraining/reskilling programmes (potentially targeting worst hit areas, sectors and groups, such as 16 – 24 year-olds and the visitor economy).
 - Unlocking bespoke support to the self-employed (e.g., local procurement, supply chain network growth, 'buy local' etc).
 - Identifying support for business to achieve increased vacancy opportunities (e.g., Dorset co-ordination of Kickstart for micro and SMEs)
 - Aligning local and national responses for 'seamless' approach with maximum impact.
10. Second, and the *primary* role for the Commission will be to oversee a review of the Dorset skills landscape, with a particular focus on responding to the Government's [Skills White Paper](#) and on the levelling up agenda, enabling a plan for the future economy (10, 20, and 30-years) based on the future skills needs to improve and accelerate the productivity values of the economy.
 11. The White Paper notes the role of skills as "critical to our future success" noting *'the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the commitment for net-zero by 2050 and to embrace the new opportunities that exiting the European Union brings'*. It also supports the delivery of the Prime Minister's commitment to a "Lifetime Skills Guarantee". It is anticipated that the Commission would also seek to identify optimum implementation arrangements, particularly for Further Education, as well as the opportunity to deliver a devolved Adult Skills budget for Dorset.
 12. Finally, to ensure alignment and continuity, the Commission would be expected to work closely with the existing Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support, where appropriate, their implementation agenda across the Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus, and with future bids to Government funds including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. It will also be expected to work with colleagues in the Integrated Care System (ICS) to ensure alignment with work on this subject.
 13. This alignment will then ensure continuity with the Council's work to help young people to Prepare for Adulthood by implementing accredited approaches to developing skills, strengthening the working relationships between adult and children services to improve transitions, widening the apprenticeships offer to increase accessibility for young people into the employment market. And, with the work to develop a broad post-16 curriculum offer, apprenticeships and joint work with local businesses to increase the range of high-quality opportunities for young people reducing local levels of Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) to at or below the national average of 11.5%.

Options Appraisal

14. Option 1: To support the creation of a time-limited Dorset Skills Commission to oversee an 'at pace' response to critical skills issues across Dorset and contribute to levelling up our economy.
15. Option 2: To not support the recommendations and miss the opportunity to address critical skills issues across Dorset and contribute to levelling up our economy.

Summary of financial implications

16. The cost of delivering the work of the Commission is estimated to be approximately £25,000. This includes remuneration for the Chair of the Commission, operating costs and production of final report material. Several organisations, including Arts University Bournemouth and Dorset LEP have expressed interest in sponsoring and/or supporting the Commission. Contributions will also be made from both BCP Council and Dorset Council of approximately £5,000 each, which will come from existing service budgets from Economic Development, Adult Skills and Learning and Children's Services. Officer time will also be provided in-kind in support of the Commission. Actions arising will be delivered through a combination of committed resources, securing external funding and bids for additional funding as and when appropriate.

Summary of legal implications

17. The Council intends to enter into a form of 'research and development' group with Dorset Council, the Dorset LEP, and Arts University Bournemouth, ('the R&D Group') in order to set up an independent, non-decision making Skills Commission. The initiative to set up the R&D Group has arisen as a result of the "Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth" White Paper released January 2021 which aims to guarantee access to education and training opportunities in order to fill an emerging skills gap. The purpose of the R&D Group is to set up and monitor the Skills Commission who will delve into the skills shortage specific to the county of Dorset which is due to worsen over the coming years and propose remedial options. Whilst there is no statutory obligation for the Council to enter into the R&D Group or undertake this piece of work, the Council is bound by s3(1) Local Government Act 1999 which states that Local Authorities "must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness." By creating and participating in the R&D Group, the Council is complying with its continuous improvement duty by taking pro-active steps to identify and improve the skills shortage within the Dorset area.
18. The members of the R&D Group will consider entering into a Memorandum of Understanding or other such agreement with each other, to include but not limited to, setting out each parties obligations, nominating a member to contract with third parties on behalf of the R&D Group, confirming monetary and time contributions by each member and other such matters.
19. It is understood that the R&D Group will procure consultants who will form the Commission, to then undertake research, produce reports and propose improvements which will be fed back to each organisation. Given the R&D Group is at a very early stage, it is not clear as to which entity within the R&D Group will contract with the relevant consultant(s). The Service Unit has been advised that whichever entity intends to contract on behalf of the R&D Group, it must ensure that an appropriate procurement process is followed (i.e. three quotes procedure). If the intention is that the Council will be the contracting body, the Council must ensure that it has adequate funds to pay the consultant before entering into the contract in order to minimise risk to the Council. The R&D Group must carefully consider any confidentiality clauses when appointing consultants to ensure that the outputs can be distributed to each member of the R&D Group (and their respective employees) and other bodies which the R&D Group intends to work with.

20. This report refers to the R&D Group potentially applying for and obtaining external funding at a later stage. Whilst this is merely an option at this point, the Service Unit has been advised that it must ensure that the terms of any funding are reviewed to ensure that monies can be passed via one applicant through to the R&D Group, whether there are any clawback provisions, whether there are any conditions precedent to draw down and any other risks associated with the funding terms and conditions

Summary of human resources implications

21. Whilst this will be an externally led commission, some officer time will be required to both administer it and support it at a strategic level. This will come from existing resources in Economic Development and Adult Skills and Learning. The Secretariat will be provided by the Dorset LEP.

Summary of sustainability impact

22. The report acknowledges the commitment of the Council to the climate and ecological emergency. The Dorset Skills Plan and Investment Prospectus prioritises 'green and blue skills' which highlight the importance of skills needs and opportunities to support delivery of sustainable and clean growth, achieving progress towards a zero-carbon economy

Summary of public health implications

23. It will be important for Public Health to be consulted as part of the work of the Commission, both in terms of the links between the future health and well-being of the public and their future skills needs, but also in terms of what opportunities might exist in terms of future skills needs to support the public health sector itself. It is recommended that the Commission ensures there is continuity between its work with ongoing within the ICS on this subject.

Summary of equality implications

24. An EIA conversation/screening document has been completed and has been approved by the EIA panel, rated Green. This is attached at Appendix 2. The impact assessment summary is as follows:

The creation of a Skills Commission as set out in this EIA, and in this Cabinet report, will help create a more inclusive and world class skills and learning infrastructure for all communities. Whilst this EIA is focused on the strategy to set up a Commission, such as the procurement or recruitment of its members, further EIAs will be required on the outcome/output and following actions, which will be known once the Commission has published its findings in 2022. It will be important for the Commission to work with different stakeholders and groups to gather local perspectives on the subject and to inform its research. [The Principles of Public Life](#) and [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) are embedded in the Terms Of Reference for the Commission and in the process for establishing it, and will be followed at all times.

Summary of risk assessment

25. Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low. Residual Risk: Low

Appendices

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: EIA conversation/screening document

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Appendix 1: Dorset Skills Commission – Terms of reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1. **The Dorset Skills Commission** (referred to as the ‘Commission’ hereafter) will be established as a time-limited, high-level Commission to oversee an effective and at pace response to achieve a jobs-led approach to COVID-19 economic recovery. It will also provide an objective and independent review of the future Dorset Skills landscape, helping to shape a *world-class* skills and learning infrastructure for all communities.
- 1.2. The Commission will bring together senior representatives from industry, education and public life. It will be led by research and an evidence base from industry and global academic research reports and local information. The Commission will ultimately report to the Cabinets of the Dorset Unitary Councils (Dorset and BCP) and the Dorset LEP Board.
- 1.3. The aims of the Commission are:
 - 1.3.1. To oversee an effective Dorset post-COVID skills and jobs ‘at pace’ **response early 2022.**
 - 1.3.2. To undertake a review into the Dorset skills landscape – with a particular consideration of the National Skills White Paper producing a report that lays out a potential skills journey and opportunities/needs based on 10-, 20- and 30-years trajectories **To report findings by 30 September 2022.**
 - 1.3.3. To work closely with the Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support immediate implementation of the wider skills priorities within the Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus, and **to ensure an effective handover at the end of the Commission’s lifetime in 2022.**

2. Status

- 2.1. The Commission is established as an independent Board, not a Committee or Joint Committee and therefore only has advisory powers, not decision-making ones.
- 2.2. Ultimately the Commission will report to the Cabinets of the Dorset Unitary Councils (Dorset and BCP) and the Dorset LEP Board.
- 2.3. All business of the Commission will be conducted in accordance with the Nolan Principles of Public Life (see Appendix 1).

3. Commission membership and structure

- 3.1. The Commission membership is by appointment and drawn from senior and respected individuals from within and external to Dorset. Members have been chosen for their independence and objectivity, as well as understanding of the skills agenda in Dorset, the UK and beyond.
- 3.2. An agenda item of an early meeting will review and finalise the governance structure and membership.
- 3.3. Where required the Commission may co-opt relevant specialists or organisational representatives to serve as members or advisors if there is a clear requirement for additional expertise and experience.
- 3.4. A chair will be appointed jointly by the Dorset Unitary Councils and the Dorset LEP.

4. Core focus

- 4.1. To oversee an effective Dorset post-COVID skills and jobs 'at pace' response early in 2022. Work will be delivered by key agencies and organisations in Dorset – the role of the Commission is to:
 - 4.1.1. Ensure that activity is targeted for most impact.
 - 4.1.2. To unblock issues which are preventing pace or innovation in delivery
 - 4.1.3. To oversee performance of the Dorset-wide response

- 4.2. To undertake a review into the Dorset skills landscape – with a particular consideration of the recent National Skills White Paper – to identify an optimum solution for Dorset's current and future skills opportunities/needs based on 10-, 20- and 30-years trajectories. Core focus on the following:
 - 4.2.1. To assess the optimum solution for delivery of Further Education across Dorset
 - 4.2.2. Develop a strong dialogue with business and industry to future proof emerging markets and talent gaps
 - 4.2.3. To investigate and, potentially, to propose the most effective framework for negotiation of an Adult Skills Devolution Deal with Central Government
 - 4.2.4. To report findings by 30 September 2022

- 4.3. To work closely with the Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support immediate implementation of the wider skills priorities within the Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus.
 - 4.3.1. Ensuring alignment with the skills landscape review and local partner priorities as appropriate
 - 4.3.2. Ensuring alignment with the post-COVID response
 - 4.3.3. Offering advice and expertise to drive innovation and future-facing solutions for skills needs and opportunities over the next 10 years in Dorset.
 - 4.3.4. Undertake a comprehensive handover to the Dorset Skills Board and Panel at the end of the Commission's lifetime.

5. Representation and attendance

- 5.1. Commission members are expected to attend not less than 75% of meetings.
- 5.2. Commission members are appointed for their individual expertise and insight – and rigorous approach to independence and objectivity.
- 5.3. Deputies shall not attend Commission meetings.

6. Decisions

- 6.1. The Commission shall operate on the basis of consensus.
- 6.2. In the event that a consensus cannot be achieved on a matter requiring decision, that decision shall be taken by vote and carried if it is supported by over 50% of those present.
- 6.3. In the event of a tied decision, the Chair of the meeting will cast the deciding vote.
- 6.4. There should be a quorum of TBC members.
- 6.5. There will be no Written Procedure decisions.

7. Meetings and papers

- 7.1. Commission meetings shall initially be held on TBC basis. A calendar of future meetings and enquiry days will be established early in the Commission's time, although the minimum notice required for a meeting is two weeks, to ensure that all members are afforded the opportunity to attend.
- 7.2. The agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved by the Chair and issued at least five working days in advance of the meeting by the Secretariat (Dorset LEP).
- 7.3. Meeting minutes shall be approved in draft form by the Chair and disseminated to members no later than ten working days following the meeting. Minutes shall remain in draft until approval by the Commission at the next meeting.
- 7.4. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the Dorset LEP website. Minutes will be redacted were they contain personal information about individuals or commercially sensitive data or for good legal reason.

8. Conflicts of interest

- 8.1. The Commission shall ensure that all conflicts of interest are fully disclosed.
- 8.2. The Secretariat shall maintain a Register of Members' Interests and publish these on the Dorset LEP website. Members shall supply information to the Secretariat for inclusion in the register, or a nil return, on joining the Commission, in response to any request for an update and on becoming aware of any new interest. The Secretariat will circulate a request for information about interests annually.
- 8.3. Should a member's interests change, s/he shall inform the Secretariat at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.4. Should an issue be discussed by the Commission which presents a conflict of interest to a member, the member shall declare the conflict of interest, regardless of whether s/he has previously declared the interest in the Register of Members' Interests. Such declarations shall be minuted.
- 8.5. Members shall not vote or participate in discussions on any issues on which they have registered an interest

9. Review

- 9.1. The Commission shall arrange for periodic reviews of its own performance and review its terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness.

Appendix 1

Principles of Conduct in Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office 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

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office 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

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office 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.

Equality Impact Assessment: conversation screening tool

[Use this form to prompt an EIA conversation and capture the output between officers, stakeholders and interested groups. This completed form or a full EIA report will be published as part of the decision-making process]

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Policy/Service under development/review:</p> | <p>Dorset Skills Commission</p> |
| <p>What changes are being made to the policy/service?</p> | <p>BCP Council and Dorset Council, and its partners, are seeking approval from their respective Cabinets to create a time-limited Dorset Skills Commission. This Commission will oversee an ‘at pace’ response to critical skills issues that have been identified from recent economic research. These require an urgent response if the area is to achieve its economic ambitions.</p> <p>It will also provide an objective and independent review of the future Dorset Skills landscape, helping to shape a world-class skills and learning infrastructure for all communities.</p> <p>The Commission will be tasked with reporting back on its findings to a future Cabinet meeting in 2022/23.</p> <p>The Commission will bring together senior representatives from industry, education and public life. It will be led by research and an evidence base from industry and global academic research reports and local information.</p> <p>The Commission will ultimately report to the Cabinets of the Dorset Unitary Councils (Dorset and BCP) and the Dorset LEP Board.</p> <p>The aims of the Commission are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To oversee an effective Dorset post-COVID skills and jobs ‘at pace’ response - To undertake a review into the Dorset skills landscape – with a particular consideration of the National Skills White Paper producing a report that lays out a potential skills journey and opportunities/needs based on 10-, 20- and 30-years trajectories. - To work closely with the Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support immediate implementation of the wider skills priorities within the Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus, and to ensure an effective handover at the end of the Commission’s lifetime |
| <p>Service Unit:</p> | <p>Development Services & Education to establish the Commission</p> |
| <p>Persons present in the conversation and their role/experience in the service:</p> | <p>Chris Shephard – Director, Development Services Adrian Trevett – Head of Economic Development Sarah Rempel – Director, Education Lesley Spain – Head of Adult Skills & Learning</p> <p>Jon Bird – Dorset Council John Sellgren – Dorset Council</p> <p>Emma Hunt – Deputy Vice Chancellor, Arts University Bournemouth</p> |

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| Conversation dates: | June and August 2021 |
| Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders? | BCP Council and Dorset Council – specifically relevant teams involved with or who can provide data and insight on the subject. Dorset LEP’s Skills Board and Panel (education providers). Businesses and business groups based in BCP and Dorset. Local groups who will have an interest into the work of the Commission. In all cases this will be to secure involvement, consultation and engagement in the work of the Commission. |
| Do different groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/service? | The Commission’s work will identify this. The commission is required to help shape a world-class skills and learning infrastructure for all communities. The Commission should use available data and insight to help identify any trends/predict outcomes for particular socio-economic groups. The recruitment of the members of the commission will follow all E&D protocols, to ensure a diverse range of backgrounds will be represented. The Public Sector Equality Duty will be embedded in the procurement/recruitment of the Commission members and the outputs required of them through any contracting documentation and performance framework that is committed to. The Principles of Public Life are embedded in the Terms of Reference and will be followed at all times by the Commission and those creating and monitoring it. |
| Will the policy or service change affect any of these service users? | This relates to the findings of the Commission. Further EIA’s will be necessary relating to the proposed next steps, which will be in the publication of its findings, presented at a future Cabinet meeting in 2022. |
| [If the answer to any of the questions above is ‘don’t know’ then you need to gather more evidence and do a full EIA. The best way to do this is to use the Capturing Evidence form] | |
| What are the benefits or positive impacts of the policy/service change on current or potential service users? | The creation of a Skills Commission to do this targeted piece of work is precisely to set out the steps required to create a world-class skills and learning infrastructure for all communities, now and into the near future. |
| What are the negative impacts of the policy/service change on current or potential service users? | None currently known. When developing its report, any potential negative impacts will be fully considered against every protected group. |
| Will the policy or service change affect employees? | There will be no effect on employees as a result of the Commission being created. |
| Will the policy or service change affect the wider community? | Yes, positively for the reasons outlined above. |
| What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by the policy/service change? | If negative impacts are predicted, these will be picked up as part of the consideration of next steps of the Commission’s report |
| Summary of Equality Implications: | The creation of a Skills Commission as set out in this EIA and in this Cabinet report will help create a more inclusive and world class skills and learning infrastructure for all communities. Whilst this EIA is focused on the strategy to set up a Commission, such as the procurement or recruitment of its members, further EIAs will be required on the outcome/output and following actions, |

which will be known once the Commission has published its findings in 2022. It will be important for the commission to work with different stakeholders and groups to gather local perspectives on the subject and to inform its research. [The Principles of Public Life](#) and [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) are embedded in the TOR for the Commission and in the process for establishing it, and will be followed at all times.

For any questions on this, please contact the Policy and Performance Team by emailing performance@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

-
- Commission to speak to commissioning teams inside councils
 - Should the TOR feature equalities specifically in relation to their recommendations?
 - Equality data that predictions can be pulled from – Insights team e.g. census; ONS etc
 - Representation of Commission – diverse: how will they deliver the PS equality duty; and SLA/Performance framework to ensure that they are compliant/delivery
 - Add in hyperlinks – Bmth 2026
 - Links to existing contacts locally to ensure involvement, consultation and engagement with local

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CABINET



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| Report subject | BCP Commissioning Plan for Regeneration and Development and Urban Regeneration Company Business Plan |
| Meeting date | 27 October 2021 |
| Status | Public Report with Confidential Appendix 2 |
| Executive summary | <p>The opportunity to shape a better Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole in the coming years is a hugely significant one. The BCP area faces a demand for over 2,000 new homes to be built each year over the next 16 years. To deliver these homes, as well as new offices and infrastructure, and realise the vision of a world class city region, as set out in its Big Plan, the Council will need to act at scale, deliver at pace and ensure development and placemaking of the highest quality.</p> <p>This report proposes that the Council should adopt a commissioning model for regeneration working with key partners including its Urban Regeneration Company (URC), <i>BCP FuturePlaces Limited</i>, the Bournemouth Development Company (BDC) and the Boscombe Towns Fund Board to deliver high quality regeneration and development for residents.</p> <p>This report explains the Council's approach, detailing how it will commission services from <i>FuturePlaces</i>; the initial plans for regenerating key sites, and the anticipated outcomes from the approach.</p> |
| Recommendations | <p>It is recommended that Cabinet approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The commissioning approach to Regeneration and the Commissioning Plan described in this report, including the reporting and monitoring arrangements below and attached at Appendix 1. b) The URC Business Plan shown at Confidential Appendix 2. c) That the Council's formal relationship with the URC will be governed through several legal documents including: the Commissioning Contract; Articles of Association; a Shareholder's Agreement; a Support Services Agreement. |

| | |
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| | <p>d) That responsibility to finalise the terms of these documents be delegated to the Corporate Property Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>e) The initial sites and projects to be taken forward for development by the URC as shown in Table 1 and detailed in the Business Plan at Confidential Appendix 2.</p> <p>f) The budget required by the URC to manage its planned programme and deliver the development management services necessary to progress the development of the sites identified in the business plan, subject to the approval of the additional budget by Council.</p> <p>Cabinet recommends to Council that it approves</p> <p>g) The financial recommendations as set out in the 29th September Cabinet report entitled 'Accelerating regeneration and investment in the BCP area' namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To approve £3.404m of additional resources to support the regeneration programme in 2021/22 (including £0.380m to fund the first phase of the Seafront Strategy. ii. To note that £3.470m has been requested to support regeneration in 2022/23 and £1.331m annually thereafter which will be subject to formal approval as part of the 2022/23 budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update report in February 2022. |
| Reason for recommendations | <p>The opportunity for investment, regeneration, and development within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole is significant. There is a compelling need for the Council to intervene proactively to improve the quality and quantity of development and embrace the best practice and innovation in place-making by learning from industry experts across the UK and internationally.</p> <p>This means hiring practitioners with a proven track record of accomplishment and ensuring plans are put in place for key sites such as Holes Bay, so they do not remain undeveloped for another 20 years.</p> <p>In May and September 2021, Cabinet supported the establishment of an Urban Regeneration Company, and approved the proposal to form the company.</p> <p>In order to service this approach and provide an intelligent client function, the Council needs to move to a commissioning model for regeneration with Officers preparing a Commissioning Plan. This approach is being proposed for the following reasons:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scale and complexity of regeneration sites across the BCP area and the need for additional housing is too big for the Council to pursue solely using its existing staffing resources. New expertise and insights are needed. • The proposed approach will allow officers to develop and agree strategy with Members and oversee delivery, in accordance with policy objectives set by the Council. • A 'Commissioning' approach to delivery will bring greater consistency to project and programme governance through an account / contract management model enabling relationships with the URC, BDC and the Boscombe Towns Fund Board to be managed in similar ways, with regular reporting to Members. • Commissioning will reduce delivery risks by providing a consistent framework within which projects may be scrutinised and risk assessed as they progress from conception through to planning and implementation. • The new commissioning model will allow the Council to benefit from subject matter experts in development management with the necessary professional, commercial, and technical expertise to deliver large scale regeneration programmes, while also helping to build capacity and expert knowledge within the Council. • The commissioning model will help the Council to accelerate investment across the BCP area by developing 'investor ready' sites and projects and forming new investment partnerships. <p>The new approach will enable development to proceed at a scale appropriate to an urban context while respecting and recognising the value of our distinctive local communities and smaller settlements.</p> |
| Portfolio Holder(s): | Councillor Drew Mellor - Leader of the Council Councillor Philip Broadhead - Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning and Deputy Leader of the Council |
| Corporate Director | Graham Farrant |
| Report Authors | Dave Anderson |
| Wards | Council-wide |

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| Classification | For Decision |
|----------------|--------------|

Background

1. At its meeting on the 26 May 2021, Cabinet supported the establishment of an Urban Regeneration Company (URC), now BCP FuturePlaces Ltd, which aims to achieve a step change in the scale, pace, and ambition of regeneration in the BCP area – the 10th largest urban authority in the UK.
2. BCP Council's *Big Plan* sets the ambition for the BCP area to be world class – one of the best coastal places in the world in which to live, work, invest and play. The Big Plan sets out five key aims that, if achieved, would deliver changes across the whole area supporting the creation of over 13,000 jobs across the local economy, the growth of businesses and prosperity of local communities.
3. One of the aims of the Big Plan is to **act at scale** and deliver more than 15,000 new homes for people of all incomes. This target can only be achieved through a mixture of direct investment by the Council and enabling third parties within the market to build a sustainable mix of housing from affordable homes to high-end, apartments and houses.
4. A commissioning approach combined with a Stewardship Model of regeneration offers the opportunity to provide better outcomes to local residents over the long term, enabling more desirable placemaking and a better place to live. It is also vital that as new developments proceed, they create places that are sustainable, attractive, liveable communities that reflect the best current practice in placemaking.
5. It is equally critical in creating the URC that the principles of long-term stewardship of places, building quality and value through patient capital investment are embedded.
6. In order to support this change, the Council client-side team must also adapt its way of working to support a shift to a commissioning function.
7. This report outlines the detailed approaches contained within the appendices and how the two will interface.

A Commissioning Approach to the Future of Regeneration

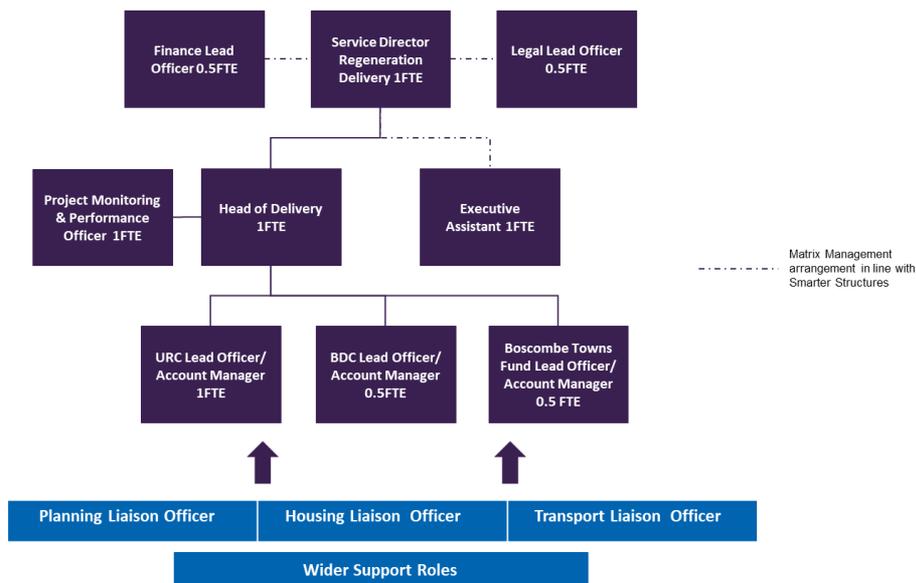
8. In order to ensure that key delivery partners, such as the wholly owned Urban Regeneration Company (URC), Bournemouth Development Company (BDC) and Boscombe Towns Fund Board are fully enabled to work collaboratively with the Council, the Council needs to adopt a commissioning approach to regeneration. This approach will ensure that the Council retains an intelligent client function that minimises risk, facilitates cross-party collaboration and maximises impact for the Council.
9. The Commissioning Plan attached at Appendix 1 provides a framework of strategic guidance and direction that guides and oversees the delivery of placemaking and regeneration services. The Plan sets out:
 - The Council's aims and objectives for regeneration
 - Service standard requirements

- The Council's expectations in terms of project and programme management, reporting and budgetary control.
10. The objective of commissioning is to ensure that the scope and specification of services are clearly articulated and built into agreements and structures from the outset and managed through the life of the programme.

An Intelligent Client Function

11. Effective governance and oversight of regeneration delivery will be necessary to ensure the Council's objectives are being delivered and its duty to ensure best value is being met. This will be achieved by setting up a Client Team within the Council reporting to the Director of Delivery. The Director of Delivery will act as the 'client' for regeneration with support from contract managers who will both support partners and also oversee delivery, holding them to account for meeting targets and achieving performance standards.
12. The team will undertake contract management, performance monitoring, and oversight of the activities of the URC, BDC and the Boscombe Towns Fund Board. However, the governance of the individual relationships will vary according to the constitutional and contractual arrangements for each organisation.
13. The client team will be responsible for ensuring that the intended regeneration and placemaking outcomes are delivered in terms of housing delivery, economic, social, environmental and cultural improvements. They will provide strategic guidance for the Council's key partners, ensuring that there is an appropriate translation from the Council's strategic priorities into the partner's priorities.
14. In order to provide the appropriate level of quality assurance, given the size of the total portfolio across the URC, BDC and Boscombe, the proposed Commissioning Team structure is outlined below:

Regeneration Client Team Structure



15. The role of the Commissioning Team will be to act both as an enabler of regeneration and development – supporting the URC, the Boscombe Towns Fund Board and BDC with their plans, as well as a mechanism for quality assurance and performance monitoring. The team will provide a single point of contact within the Council for resolving any issues that may be creating problems for the regeneration of key sites and ensuring a constructive and positive approach to partnership working. The initial structure will be reviewed within the first two years to ensure its continuing fitness for purpose.

A Commissioning Model Impact on Bournemouth Development Company (BDC), and The Bournemouth Towns Fund (for Boscombe)

16. In addition to the URC, BCP Council has two major regeneration delivery partners: the long-established Bournemouth Development Company (BDC) and the recently formed Bournemouth Town Deal for Boscombe.
17. The Bournemouth Development Company (BDC) was set up as a joint venture (JV) in 2011 by Bournemouth Borough Council. To date, 4 sites have been completed by BDC and 2 are currently in progress: Winter Gardens and Durley Road. There is 10 years to run on the remaining option agreement which includes a further 9 sites.
18. In Boscombe, the Towns Fund Board has received an indicative award of £21.7m from the Government to kick start town centre regeneration.
19. The Towns Fund presents a transformational opportunity to unlock ambitious regeneration plans for this disadvantaged neighbourhood to create new homes, improve public realm, and open spaces, and create new community, skills, and enterprise facilities so that Boscombe can thrive and prosper in the future.
20. The Client Team will manage the relationships with the URC, BDC, and the Boscombe Towns Fund Board in a similar way, ensuring the development and delivery of regeneration projects remains aligned to policy objectives set by the Council, bringing greater consistency to project and programme governance through an account/ contract management model, and reducing risks to delivery by ensuring projects are properly scrutinised and risk assessed as they progress from conception to planning and through to implementation.

A Commissioning Model Approach to the Urban Regeneration Company (URC)

21. The regeneration client team have put together a Commissioning Plan for approval by Cabinet (Appendix 1). The Commissioning Plan offers strategic guidance and direction to the URC setting out service standards and arrangements necessary to ensure effective programme and project management and budgetary control.
22. This Commissioning Plan is expected to be updated on an annual basis, in order to set the strategic commissioning priorities of the Council each year.
23. This Commissioning Plan will form a part of the Commissioning Contract, a formal contractual relationship with the URC, that will set targets specifying the sites to be advanced for development and the outcomes the Council wishes the URC to achieve. These will take account of the Council's service priorities and the needs of

local communities, but they will also be informed by the URC's own research and consultation work on the needs and opportunities within each local area.

24. The URC's Annual Business Plan will respond to and mirror the requirements of the Commissioning Plan and be informed by its detailed knowledge of the opportunities presented in each local site. In effect the Commissioning Plan (Appendix 1) and URC Business Plan (Confidential Appendix 2) are sister documents. The Council will specify the regeneration outcomes it wishes the URC to deliver: the URC will propose how they believe the outcomes can best be achieved. As part of this process the Annual Business Plan will be approved by Council, which will then feed into wider Council planning processes, such as the MTFP.
25. The Regeneration Client Team will monitor service standards, and review and evaluate outcomes in line with the methodology set out in the Commissioning Plan, to ensure that the key deliverables have been provided.

Urban Regeneration Company (URC) – FuturePlaces

26. In May 2021, Cabinet approved an innovative approach to delivering regeneration and development across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole.
27. This saw the creation of the Council's Urban Regeneration Company (URC), *FuturePlaces* which has been tasked with driving the regeneration of sites across the BCP area with a gross development value of over £2bn and the potential to create around 3,500 new homes.
28. *FuturePlaces* has been set up to address capacity and skills gaps in the Council's staff resources by employing people with the expertise needed to bring sites forward at pace. The company will be led and managed by an executive team that will provide dedicated and focussed leadership. Its structure as a separate, Council company will also provide a measure of protection against calls on resources that tend to occur when teams are part of a larger organisation.
29. The proposals arising from this work are covered in the FuturePlaces Business Plan attached at Confidential Appendix 2. It responds to the strategic priorities raised by the Council within the Commissioning Plan and is predicated on the company being able to secure the staff resources and expertise needed to enable the agreed priority sites and projects to be taken forward.

A Stewardship Approach to Regeneration

30. *FuturePlaces* plans to pursue an approach to regeneration based on principles of stewardship. These are founded upon research first identified by the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission and then undertaken by the Stewardship Initiative which has completed a systematic review of high quality, contemporary housing schemes and the commercial conditions under which these have been taken forward. In every case, high quality, residentially led urban development at scale has been shown to be the product of long-term landowner involvement, and of a patient approach to financial returns. BCP Council, as a long-term actor within the area, is well placed to implement a stewardship approach to placemaking within its conurbation, supporting the area now and in the future.

31. Adopting a stewardship-led approach to regeneration offers the opportunity to address these challenges, delivering more plentiful, better homes to local residents, while aiming to improve the quality of life for existing residents in these areas.

A Coastline of Opportunity

32. FuturePlaces will pursue an initial portfolio of 14 development sites across the BCP area undertaking the necessary development management work to bring these sites forward for development. The detailed sites and indicative expenditure are set out in confidential Appendix 2. The sites in question are summarised at table 1 below.

Table 1 Summary of URC Development Sites

| | Site | Present Use | Working Hypotheses |
|----|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Beach Road Car Park | Car Park | Asset optimisation |
| 2a | BIC/ARC | Conference centre & surroundings | Redevelopment & regeneration of key site |
| 2b | Winter Gardens Revision | Car Park | Place making input |
| 3 | Boscombe | Area Based - High Street; Sovereign Centre; Royal Arcade & surroundings | Area based regeneration |
| 4 | Poole Old Town & Quay | Area Based - High Street; Between the Bridges; West Quay & surroundings | Area based regeneration |
| 5 | Christchurch | Area Based & Former Civic Centre Asset and car parks | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| 6 | Heart of Poole | Council assets: Dolphin Centre; Dolphin Leisure Centre; Seldown Road Car Park & public realm | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| 7 | Holes Bay | Brownfield site | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| b | Carters Quay Design Quality Exercise | Vacant site | Design quality management and place making |
| 8 | Poole Civic Centre | Former Civic Buildings & Car Park | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| 9 | Turlin Moor | Housing Estate | Place making inputs & development strategy |
| 10 | Wessex Fields | Greenfield site | Place making inputs & development strategy |
| 11 | Port of Poole | Partnership opportunity | Capacity and connectivity issues; optimisation of asset |
| 12 | Constitution Hill | Redevelopment site | Asset optimisation |
| 13 | Extra Care Village | Partnership Opportunity | Extra Care provision strategy |

| | | | |
|----|------------------------------|---------------|--|
| 14 | Cotlands Road ^[1] | Car Park site | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
|----|------------------------------|---------------|--|

^[1] BDC site, with options and viability to be determined in cooperation

33. In addition to working on the development of the above sites the URC will progress a number of strategic studies and thematic projects aimed at unlocking the place potential of the BCP area. These may include studies in the following areas:

- Retail Vacancy Studies and Gap Analysis
- Hotel Gap Analysis
- Market Study on Future of Conferencing and Events
- Greener Carparks & Landscape Design
- Seafront Pop-up Restaurants
- Seafront Design Coding & Car Parking
- Poole High St level crossing; Poole station etc
- Place Potential Strategy (resort, cultural, sport etc)
- Property Market Performance Report (baseline plus regular update)
- Integrated Transport Study
- Rail Frequency Study
- Land-Use Intensification Study
- Cultural Proposition
- Small Sites Strategy
- Grey Field Sites Strategy
- Design Codes
- Car Parking Study
- Strategic Landscaping Study (gateways; waterfront).

Options Appraisal

34. A systematic review of options for the future delivery of regeneration was undertaken in May 2021 using Treasury Green Book methodology, to consider both service scope and delivery options. The options were set out in the business case that supported the 26 May Cabinet decision to set up the URC. They were appraised against five critical success factors:

- Strategic Fit:
 - Dedicated Leadership and Focus
 - Accelerated Delivery
 - Adaptability and Flexibility
 - Scalability
 - Talent Attraction
- Potential Value for Money
- Affordability
- Supplier Capacity and Capability
- Achievability

35. The following service delivery options were appraised:

- a) In House: Direct Delivery

^[1] BDC site, with options and viability to be determined in cooperation

- b) Special Purpose Vehicle
- c) Joint Venture
- d) Strategic Partnership
- e) Expansion of existing Council Owned Company (Seascape Homes).

36. The options were reviewed against six success criteria: Value for money, Dedicated Leadership and Focus, Accelerated Delivery, Adaptability and Flexibility, Scalability, and Talent Attraction.

37. The comparison concluded that the option most likely to meet the Council's strategic objectives was the formation of a dedicated Urban Regeneration Company (URC) supported and overseen by a client Team within the Council reporting to the Director of Delivery. The Director of Delivery will act as the 'Client' for regeneration with support from contract managers who will oversee performance and manage the key relationships with delivery partners.

38. It is anticipated that the preferred option will bring greater consistency to project and programme governance through an integrated account / contract management model. This will allow relationships with the URC, BDC and the Boscombe Towns Fund Board to be managed in a more consistent way, reducing risks to delivery by ensuring projects are scrutinised and risk assessed as they progress from conception to planning and implementation.

Summary of financial implications

39. While the set-up of FuturePlaces will incur additional expenditure including staffing and running costs, the business case makes it clear that over a 10-year period the focus of expert resources that the URC will bring additional benefits of around £80m through its activities to accelerate and improve the quality of development across BCP.

40. The financial implications for the Council stepping up its regeneration efforts in this way are significant. The setting up of the URC's operations; allied to the residual costs of consulting support from Inner Circle Consulting; the costs of Council commissioning staff and the necessary technical and market studies such as ground Investigations; ecological surveys and transport assessments are anticipated to require a further £3m to be spent in 2021/22 and around £3.5m to be spent in 2022/23 and around £1.3m per annum thereafter. However, by making the necessary investment the Council will be able to accelerate the development of the 11 major sites it owns and achieve the benefits set out in the URC business case which are predicated on delivering over £2bn in gross development value once fully built out.

41. The estimated URC costs are shown in table 2 below.

| BCP Regeneration - Corporate Priority | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| | | |
| Budget Requirements | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
| Inner Circle | 431,850 | 0 |
| BCP Futureplaces Limited - Staff | 1,119,692 | 1,706,126 |
| BCP Futureplaces Limited – Operational costs | 424,589 | 516,876 |
| BCP Client Team – Staff | 628,599 | 660,489 |
| BCP Client Team – Other | 495,161 | 126,353 |
| Contingency | 251,767 | 297,812 |
| | | |
| Total | 3,351,658 | 3,307,657 |
| | | |
| Existing Budget | | |
| Corporate priority - Regeneration | (1,750,000) | (1,750,000) |
| Existing BCP staff base budget | (226,400) | (226,400) |
| Total | (1,976,400) | (1,976,400) |
| | | |
| Additional Budget request 2021/22 – URC and Client teams | 1,375,258 | 1,331,257 |
| | | |
| | | |
| Budget Requirements | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
| Development enabling costs | 1,935,440 | 2,946,405 |
| | | |
| Existing Budget | | |
| Existing Capital Investment Programme revenue budgets (applied as appropriate) | (286,650) | (807,850) |
| | | |
| Additional Budget request 2021/22 – Development enabling costs | 1,648,790 | 2,138,555 |
| | | |
| Total Additional Budget request 2021/22 | 3,024,048 | 3,469,812 |

42. Council is asked to formally approve the extra £3.024m of additional resources being requested for 2021/22 having already applied £0.287m of existing project resources previously approved by BCP and legacy councils. As this request falls outside the approved 2021/22 budget framework of the council these resources will need to be allocated from the Council's Financial Resilience Reserves.
43. Based on the June MTFP Update report the Council had £20.870m available in its Financial Resilience Reserves not previously committed to either the 2021/22 or 2022/23 budget of the council. Of this amount £4.2m is committed to this and other 2021/22 resource requests through the September 2021 reports to Cabinet. Further requests are likely to come forward as part of the 27 October 2021 reports to Cabinet.
44. Cabinet is also asked to note the additional resources requested to support the regeneration programme in future years: £3.470m in 2022/23, having already applied £0.408m of existing project resources previously approved by BCP and legacy councils and assumes £0.400m of future scheme costs will be capitalised in 2022/23. The £0.400m assumed to be capital will be brought forward separately for approval within each of the individual scheme business cases. Plus £1.331m per annum thereafter. This is on the basis that Council will formally be requested to approve these resources as part of the 2022/23 budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update report in February 2022.
45. In considering investing in the regeneration programme set out in this report members will need to reflect on their responsibility to both current and future taxpayers and its

fiduciary duty to be prudent in the administration of its funds. In that regard, members should consider the financial sustainability of the Council in the context of the funding gaps in the MTFP and that any drawdown from the Council's Financial Resilience Reserves will reduce the Council's flexibility in managing future years' deficits. It should also be borne in mind that the funding gaps in the MTFP are subject to a number of risks including an ambitious £42.4m in annual, additional transformation savings in the period before 31 March 2024.

Summary of legal implications

46. It is proposed that the Council should adopt a commissioning approach to regeneration. The Council is empowered to do anything that a private individual may do pursuant to section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. More particularly, the Council is empowered to enter into contracts for the provision to it of services pursuant to section 1 of the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997.
47. If the approach is approved, the Council would predominantly commission those services from existing vehicles, including a joint venture limited liability partnership, BDC (which was subject to a tender in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006) and a wholly owned "Teckal" vehicle set up by the Council earlier this year, BCP FuturePlaces Ltd (in compliance with section 4 of the Localism Act, The Local Authorities (Companies) Order 1995 and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015), although further alternative delivery arrangements may be considered and entered into in future subject to compliance with the relevant legal requirements. Further details of the current commissioning arrangements were set out in the relevant decisions taken at the time and are not repeated here.
48. As regards regeneration, the Council is permitted to develop land pursuant to section 2 of the Local Authority (Land) Act 1963 and section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides that the Council is entitled to invest for any purposes relevant to its functions under any enactment. Local authorities also play a pivotal role in housing delivery, as housebuilders via the Housing Revenue Account, through housing delivery vehicles and in the exercise of their strategic planning functions.
49. The nature of the commissioning arrangements are or will be documented by way of formal written agreement and will be overseen as described in this report via the contract management mechanisms provided in the relevant agreement / (s).
50. Pursuant to the shareholder agreement between the Council and the URC (currently in draft, but anticipated to be adopted substantively in that form), the Council's approval of the URC's annual business plan is required. It is noted that the business plan may be approved subject always to the approval of the Council's budget in relation to the relevant period (i.e., confirmation of the Council's financial commitment to delivery of the business plan) in future years. However, the contract management arrangements will facilitate oversight and control by the Council of the expenditure of approved sums and delivery of the approved business plan in each financial year.

Summary of human resources implications

51. Future Places will set its own employment terms and conditions and payroll arrangements. The Company Reserved Matters provide detail on the decisions that remain with the Council in relation to Director appointments. Care will be taken to minimise the prospect of TUPE transfer and Equal Pay considerations. Staff will be

recruited into the company on the open market subject to identifying individuals with the requisite skills, qualifications, and experience.

Summary of sustainability impact

52. As a Council owned company, the URC will be required to provide its operational response to the Council's climate change emergency declaration.
53. The URC will contribute to the Council's Climate Emergency action plan by ensuring new development is resource efficient, adopts low carbon technology and leads to sustainable communities which are resilient to climate change and contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain either on site or through natural capital and landscape strategies.
54. The URC will be tasked, through the Commissioning Contract, with pursuing a low carbon approach to development: minimising the carbon impact of new developments, ensuring walkable neighbourhoods, and providing good access to public transport services.
55. The URC will play a key role in ensuring that opportunities are taken to reduce our city region's carbon footprint by providing sustainable transport choices and delivering low-carbon, energy efficient buildings. They will aim to lead by example developing cleaner supply chains building local capacity to take forward the carbon reduction agenda. Cleaner supply chains and building the capacity to deliver carbon reduction locally.
56. Within the constraints of commercial viability and value for money, the URC will aim to deliver the best possible standards of low-carbon, energy efficient buildings taking account of the established BREEAM classifications.
57. A Decision Impact Assessment (DIA) was completed in relation to the creation of the URC and sustainability feedback from officers across the Council has been used to inform the requirements set out in the Council's commissioning plan. Projects and programmes delivered by the URC will be subject to further assessment as part of the business case development process to ensure that individual schemes meet the required standards.
58. There will be similar provisions in the Council's relationships with the Boscombe Towns Fund Board and BDC to ensure that the response to climate emergency and imperative to decarbonise are carefully considered through sustainability impact assessments.

Summary of public health implications

59. By accelerating regeneration and investment there will be a better prospect of sustaining jobs and prosperity across the BCP area, improving housing and high-quality open spaces, with well designed, walkable, inclusive neighbourhoods that help promote health and well-being.
60. The URC will aim to produce developments that place a premium on quality-of-life considerations including safe, walkable neighbourhoods with good local amenities and access to quality green and open space.

Summary of equality implications

61. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried for this report. This report's primary purpose is to describe an innovative approach to regeneration which will enable the Council to accelerate investment in the area, rather than change its overall strategy which remains focussed upon tackling those areas within BCP that need regeneration and renewal. Full Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken as part of the scheme development process.

Summary of risk assessment

62. The key risks associated with the proposal to approve the URC business plan are as follows:

- Operational risks through failure to achieve delivery targets set out in the Commissioning Contract.
- Financial risks e.g., through engagement in an external investment partnership which could fail.
- Planning risks through failure to achieve consent for proposed projects.
- Market risks through a downturn in the property market affecting local property values.
- Reputational risks through BCP FuturePlaces creating difficulties for the Council e.g., developing a position contrary to planning policy.

63. These risks will be managed through the relationship between the Client Team and the URC guided by the terms of the Commissioning Contract and related agreements including the requirement for the URC to develop and maintain a risk register for its key projects and activities.

Background papers

Published Works:

- BCP: The Big Plan
- Proposed Regeneration Vehicle Options Appraisal – Cabinet Paper 26th May 2021
- The Future of Regeneration in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole – Cabinet Paper 10th March 2021
- The SHMA

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Strategic Regeneration Commissioning Plan

Confidential Appendix 2 – Future Places Business Plan

Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Urban Regeneration Company



Commissioning Plan



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Urban Regeneration Company Commissioning Plan

1. Introduction

In May 2021, BCP Cabinet supported the establishment of an Urban Regeneration Company (URC), in order to achieve a step change in the scale, pace and ambition of regeneration across the BCP city region – the 10th largest urban authority in the UK.

BCP Council's Big Plan sets the ambition for the BCP city region to be world class – one of the best coastal places in the world in which to live, work, invest and play. The Big Plan sets out five key aims that, if achieved, would deliver changes across the whole area supporting the creation of over 13,000 jobs across the local economy, promoting the growth of businesses and the prosperity of local communities.

One of the aims of the Big Plan is to **act at scale** and deliver more than 15,000 new homes for people of all incomes. This target can only be achieved through direct investment by the Council and by enabling third parties, within the market, to build a sustainable mix of housing from affordable homes to high-end, apartments and houses.

The Council is proposing to move towards a Commissioning Model for regeneration with an internal client team providing strategic direction and support to key delivery partners. The Council recognises the opportunity that the long-term stewardship of regeneration sites provides to provide better outcomes to our residents. As new developments proceed, it will be vital that they create places that are sustainable, attractive, liveable communities and reflect current best practice in placemaking.

1.1. Purpose

Welcome to the **Regeneration Commissioning Plan** for Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole.

The purpose of the **Commissioning Plan** is to provide a framework of **strategic guidance and direction** to guide and oversee the delivery of placemaking and regeneration services by the newly formed urban regeneration company, BCP FuturePlaces Limited.

The URC has been established as a Teckal company which is wholly owned by BCP Council. It will drive place making, regeneration and property market transformation to support the aspirations set out in the Council's *Big Plan* – both across sites owned by the Council and across the wider area. The URC vehicle will take a long-term view of value creation. It will use patient financial capital to enhance value across a range of measures and to seek the best outcomes over the medium / long term. This will include looking beyond the creation of new homes to investing in public realm, access to open space and public transport to create sustainable communities for the future.

An internal **Client Team** reporting to a Service Director has been set up by the council to guide, enable and oversee the work of the **URC**, ensuring that its activities are aligned to the objectives of the council's *Big Plan* and its **Corporate Plan**.

The Client Team will be responsible for ensuring that the intended **regeneration and placemaking outcomes** are delivered in terms of housing delivery, economic, social, environmental, and cultural improvements.

The URC will be required to achieve **best value** from the Council's land and property assets (defined broadly across a range of value measures) and to develop enhanced assets and revenue streams to support the Council's core services. A broad aim will be to secure local property market transformation and unlock high quality placemaking with enhanced delivery, measured in terms of pace and quality, across the conurbation.

The Council's Client Team will oversee delivery and fulfil the role of **Intelligent Client**, ensuring the effective programming of work, prioritisation, and appraisal of projects through Gateway **Approval** processes. It will also ensure that high standards of governance and appropriate oversight are maintained. Finally, it will act as a key conduit to relevant council departments to ensure coordination, collaborative working and the ability to unlock blockages to development.

The Council will provide an early warning to the URC of developing policy and strategy initiatives to ensure that the URC's placemaking efforts remain fully aligned to Council goals.

This **Commissioning Plan** sets out the Council's strategic objectives and its requirements in commissioning the Urban Regeneration Company. The plan is divided into five main sections:

1) COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS

The Council's aims and objectives in undertaking the commissioning approach, the scope and scale of the services and the desired outcomes. It also identifies key roles, relationships and interfaces between the council and the URC; Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and measures for assessing value for money.

2) ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

How the Council's governance and Commissioning team will be structured to support an efficient and effective approach to delivery.

3) FINANCE

The financial strategy and implications anticipated to apply to the Urban Regeneration Company.

4) COMMUNICATIONS

The communications protocols and guidance for the company.

5) RISK MANAGEMENT

The Council's expectations in terms of risk management processes and control of risks.

1.2. Background

The formation of BCP Council in 2019 brought together the land and property assets of the three composite, predecessor authorities. This merger created a pool of land and property assets that are of sufficient size and value to underpin a significant programme of regeneration and growth. This portfolio of sites also offers the opportunity to create valuable income streams that can help to support the medium and long-term funding needs of council services.

In recent history the BCP area property market has been characterised by stalled sites and schemes that often fail to meet the 'place potential' of the setting. The local economy also has a strong element of seasonality and is possibly over reliant on a relatively small number of sectors. BCP Council recognises the need to diversify and grow the economy and to intervene to secure the wider potential of the place, both as a destination and as a high-quality place in which to live and work.

The challenge of growth, and the opportunity to develop a significant portfolio of Council-Owned sites, led the Cabinet at its meeting of 26 May 2021, to support the establishment of an Urban Regeneration Company (URC) which will aim to achieve a step change in the scale, pace, and ambition of regeneration across the BCP city region.

The URC will bring additional placemaking and stewardship investment/development expertise to bear to ensure that we make the most of our City Region's potential. The URC will aim to build strong relationships with local stakeholders, the local property market, and other partner organisations involved in regeneration such as the Bournemouth Development Company and Boscombe Towns Fund Board.

The URC will be wholly owned by BCP Council. Its work will be overseen by a **Regeneration Client Team** whose purpose will be to ensure that the projects progressed by the URC adhere to the scope and specification agreed with the Council; align with its objectives and priorities and achieve value for money.

2. Section One: Council Requirements

2.1. Corporate Strategy and The Big Plan

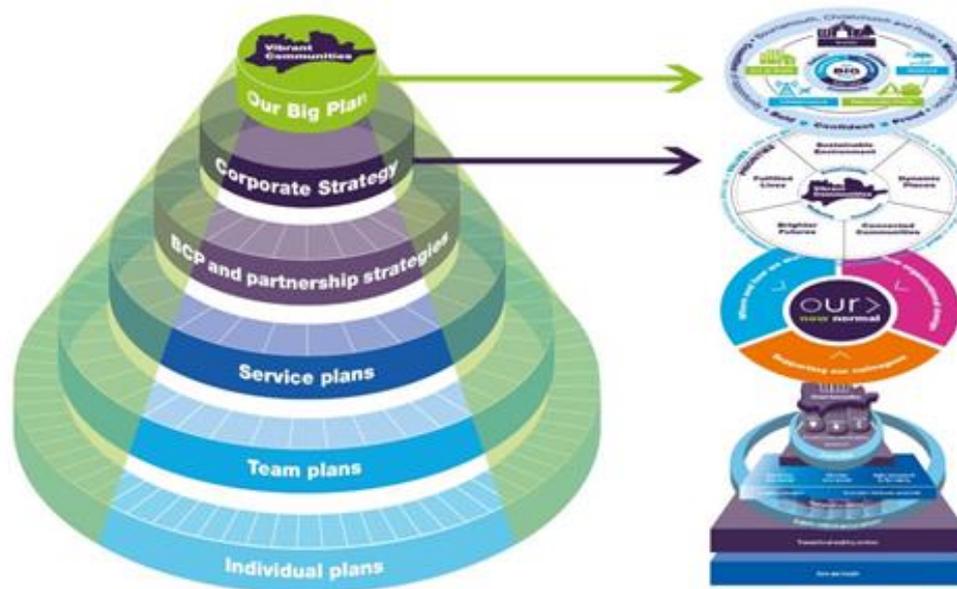


Figure 1: The relationship between corporate strategy and the Big Plan

BCP Council's Corporate Strategy was created in Summer 2019 following the formation of the new unitary authority. The Corporate Strategy aims to deliver vibrant communities with outstanding quality of life where everybody plays an active role. The strategy focuses on five priorities which are summarised below:

- **Sustainable Environment** - Leading our communities towards a cleaner, sustainable future that preserves our outstanding environment for generations to come
- **Dynamic Places** - Supporting an innovative, successful economy in a great place to live, learn, work and visit
- **Connected Communities** - Empowering our communities so everyone feels safe, engaged and included
- **Brighter Futures** - Caring for our children and young people; providing a nurturing environment, high quality education and great opportunities to grow and flourish
- **Fulfilled lives** - Helping people lead active, healthy, and independent lives, adding years to life and life to years.

The Corporate Strategy also sets out how the Council will contribute to the vision set out in the Council's Big Plan:

“We want our city region to be world class – one of the best coastal places in the world in which to live, work, invest and play. A *coastline of opportunity* where people and businesses want to be.”

The **Big Plan** has 5 key aims: the creation of an iconic **cityscape**; investment in our **seafront**; the rejuvenation of **Poole**; investment in our **physical and digital infrastructure**; and **acting at scale** to deliver more than 32,000, new homes over the next 16 years. This level of housing development is needed to cope with population growth and changes in household structure as forecast by the Council’s strategic housing market assessment (SMHA).



Figure 2: The Big Plan aims

The **Urban Regeneration Company** (URC) will provide strategic advice and development management expertise, supplementing the Council's in-house capability and enabling the Council to accelerate the delivery of key sites, unlocking their full value through best practice in urban design and placemaking.

Drawing on the principles of **sustainability and stewardship** the URC will facilitate a legacy of safe, attractive, well connected, walkable neighbourhoods, low carbon buildings, sustainable infrastructure, and new sporting, cultural, health and education facilities, boosting **jobs, prosperity, and quality of life** for residents, supporting the growth of local businesses, and attracting new investment and visitors to the city region.

2.1.1. Our Big Plan

The key aims of the Big Plan are linked to the delivery of tangible **outcomes** such as new infrastructure, facilities, homes, transport services and public realm improvements.

Together, the **Big Plan** and the Council’s Corporate **Plan** set out the Council’s vision, mission, ambition, and key priorities, and create a strategic framework for our regeneration activity.

The **Regeneration Commissioning Plan** therefore connects directly to the Corporate Plan objectives and especially those concerned with the Environment, Places and Communities.

The broader strategic context for regeneration is set by the **Local Plan** for the conurbation which provides a framework of policies and site allocations to guide future development. A new Local Plan is currently under development and will set out the need for new homes, jobs, infrastructure, natural and cultural amenities, and other supporting services within BCP Council area.

The **Local Plan** will provide a framework of land use and planning policies for the city region supplemented in some areas by **Neighbourhood Plans** which will express the aspirations of local communities.

The new URC will assist BCP Council to deliver the objectives set out in the Local Plan through deploying its skills in land assembly, project delivery and place making. It will also support neighbourhood plans at a local level, by ensuring that community consultation and a placemaking-led response to sites respond to the local needs of the area.

The **Commissioning Plan** sets the framework within which the URC will operate and sets out its operating method and governance.

2.1.2. Supporting Strategies

A '**Golden Thread**' of common objectives links the **Commissioning Plan** to the **Big Plan** and **Corporate Plan** and to related Council strategies for Economic Development, Housing, Regeneration, the Seafront and High Streets, the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan. The Commissioning Plan will be developed to take account of strategy and policy changes in service areas as they occur ensuring that the URC is finely attuned to changes in policy and works in harmony with Council Services through a jointly developed 'Ways of Working' protocol.

There are several Council related strategies that will impact upon and influence the work of the URC. The key ones and their status are summarised below.

2.1.2.1. Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy will set out the Council's commitment to enabling economic growth and productivity, whilst also protecting the environment and quality of life and will be published in late 2021.

2.1.2.2. Regeneration Strategy

A Regeneration Strategy will be produced in spring 2022 to set out the Council's priorities for regeneration and placemaking and provide a framework for delivering key elements of the Big Plan.

2.1.2.3. Seafront Strategy

The BCP Council Seafront Strategy, currently under consultation, will be adopted towards the end of 2021 setting out the vision for the future of our coastal leisure and resort offer for the next 20 years, supported by a 5-year investment programme to help establish a world class seafront destination.

2.1.2.4. Destination Strategy

The Destination & Culture directorate is working closely with the Destination Management Board and the Cultural Compact partnership for the BCP area to develop a vision for the potential of our natural, cultural, and human resource assets to provide a year-round quality visitor destination. This strategy will recognise the major impact that COVID 19 has had on the visitor economy and the need to return to growth through the development of traditional and new markets including the move towards 'staycations'. By 2025, the strategy will be targeting a sector valuation of at least £1.4bn a year.

2.1.2.5. Housing Strategy

The aim of the Housing Strategy is to ensure that housing, planning, economic development, and regeneration work seamlessly together to deliver high quality housing at the volumes and types the market needs taking full account of affordability and lifestyle choice. Its vision is “*To provide a safe, secure and sustainable home where it is needed and thereby enabling people the opportunity to live well*”.

2.1.2.6. High Streets Strategy

This strategy will be published in autumn 2021 to support High Streets across the conurbation to recover from the Coronavirus Pandemic and the transition to online shopping. It will aim to rebalance and intensify the occupation of the conurbation’s high streets and district centres; secure new catchments and build upon the distinctive character and quality of local centres to serve residents within walking distance and attract others through the distinctive nature of their offer.

2.1.2.7. Capital Investment Strategy (Non-Treasury)

The Council’s Capital Investment Strategy guides the use of borrowing for residential and regeneration projects and will be an important document in relation to investment in projects that will be developed by the URC.

2.2. Objectives & Outcomes

The **Commissioning Plan** translates the strategic context of the Corporate Plan, the Big Plan and related Council strategies and policies into objectives and targets for the URC, ensuring that the Council commits its limited resources to support agreed priorities.

The URC will be required to produce detailed business plans articulating their contribution to these priorities, while the Commissioning Plan will set out the processes and procedures that will be used to measure their performance and monitor delivery.

The proposed controls will aim to ensure that:

- A robust process for project inception is created that considers the project fit with strategic objectives and value for money
- Projects are consistently reviewed and appraised at each key stage of development
- Audit trails are documented, and the public interest is protected
- Projects and programmes are delivered on time and to budget
- Public money is invested in projects that are aligned to Council objectives and value for money is achieved
- Projects are designed and delivered to a high standard
- Planned regeneration and place making outcomes are delivered.

Major URC projects will be supported by a **Project Initiation Document (PID)** and a **Business Case process**. Smaller scale, or early-stage projects, will be supported by a mini PID and Project Brief that sets out the business justification for the project.

For larger programmes it may be necessary for the URC to develop a **Theory of Change model** in line with HM Treasury guidance to define key issues, specify intended outcomes and the project outputs required to deliver those outcomes, as shown in the example.

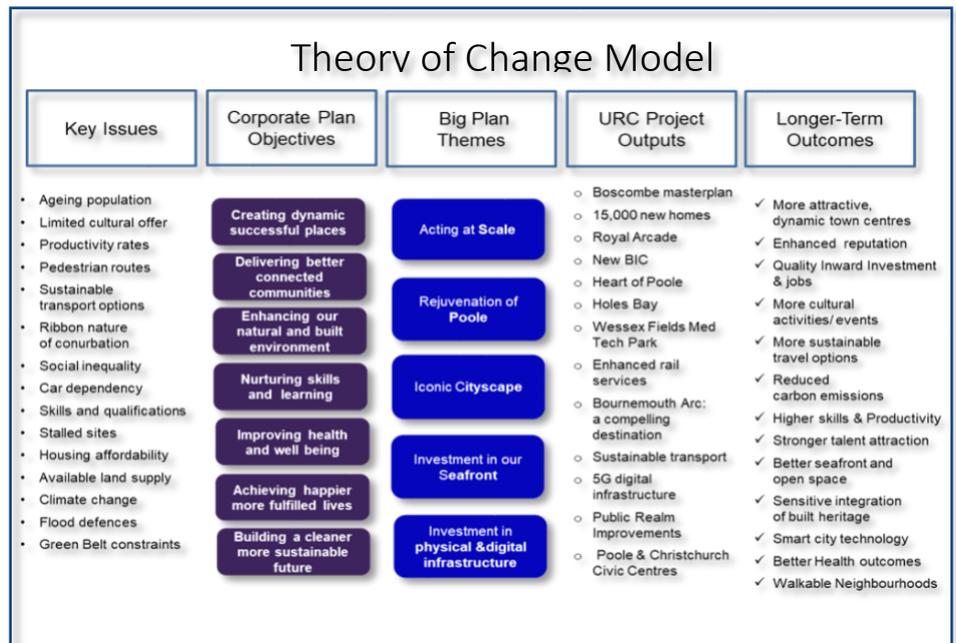


Figure 3: The Theory of Change Model for the Urban Regeneration Company

The **Commissioning Plan** is informed by the Council’s commitment to bringing about real and lasting change across our local communities. It will do so by: investing sustainably in the development and stewardship of sites and properties in public ownership; drawing upon best practice in placemaking, stewardship development & investment (patient capital) practices; and delivering ‘smart growth’.

2.2.1. Smart Growth

Smart Growth connects social, economic, and environmental aspirations. It creates places that attract investment, and support economic vitality, environmental health, and quality of life by creating:

- Liveable neighbourhoods – safe, convenient, attractive, and affordable places
- Walkability through foot-printing the city to be more self-contained and less dependent on unnecessary commuting
- Better access to public transport and less congestion
- A thriving urban realm
- Shared benefits – jobs, education, healthcare for all social groups
- Economic viability
- Access to gardens; space for growing and high-quality green space
- Cleaner water, waste, and energy solutions
- Fewer environmental impacts arising from growth.

The concept of **Stewardship** which has emerged following the *Building Better Building Beautiful* Commission complements smart growth. It takes a longer-term perspective to placemaking by using patient capital to create enduring value, rather than building developments without the necessary investment in physical and community infrastructure that is needed to create attractive, sustainable places.

By adopting a stewardship-based approach to investment, the URC will enable the delivery of more complex mixed-use communities by: taking a more patient approach to returns on investment; contractually building-in controls on design quality and place making; and applying a sequential/incremental approach to delivery to capture value uplift into the project.

2.3. Embedding Corporate Goals

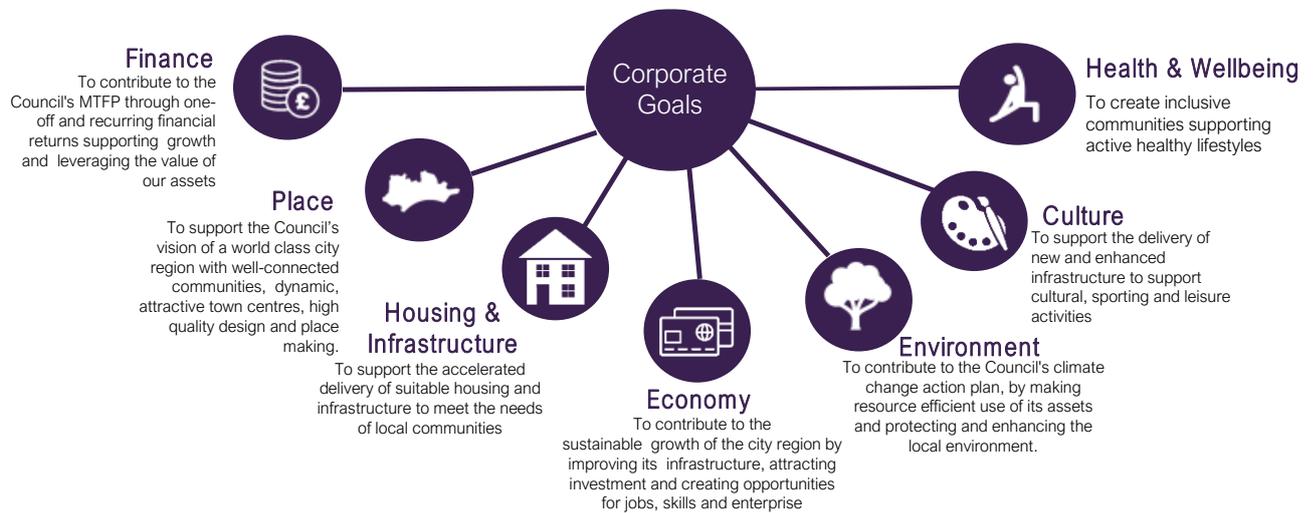


Figure 4: Corporate Goals for the URC based upon the Council's objectives

The URC will be expected to contribute to a range of the Council's corporate goals as highlighted in the above schematic diagram and explained below.

2.3.1. Finance

The URC will unlock value from regeneration sites to create new sources of revenue to support the Council's core services.

2.3.2. Place

The URC will develop schemes that are contextually appropriate to each location in terms of height, massing, and architectural and landscape references, and support the Council's vision of creating a world class city region.

2.3.3. Housing & Infrastructure

The URC will contribute to the Council's aims to provide residents with safe, secure, and sustainable homes where they are needed. It will also invest in the necessary community infrastructure to support attractive, sustainable neighbourhoods.

2.3.4. Economy

The URC will contribute to the city region's economic growth by improving local infrastructure, attracting investment, and creating new employment locations and opportunities for new jobs, skills, and enterprise.

2.3.5. Environmental resilience and Climate Emergency

The URC will contribute to the Council's Climate Emergency action plan. It will ensure new developments are resource efficient, adopt low carbon technology, and lead to sustainable communities which are resilient to climate change and contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain either on site or through natural capital and landscape strategies.

The Council has statutory duties and powers that shape the local area through its buildings, transport systems, waste services and natural environment. The URC will use its role in place shaping to work closely with the Council to support these functions.

URC schemes will be developed with resilience in mind, and layouts and designs will be tested to consider key threats such as flood; drought; extreme heat/cold; security; public health; resilience and to build in robustness.

The URC will play a key role in ensuring that opportunities are taken to reduce our city region's carbon footprint by providing sustainable transport choices and delivering low-carbon, energy efficient buildings. They will lead by example, developing cleaner supply chains and building local capacity to take forward the carbon reduction agenda. The URC will also champion cleaner supply chains and work to build the capacity to deliver carbon reduction locally.

Within the constraints of commercial viability and value for money, the URC will aim to deliver the best possible standards of low-carbon, energy efficient buildings taking account of the established BREEAM classifications shown below:

Mandatory minimum standard:

- New-build projects to achieve as a minimum BREEAM 'Excellent' rating.
- Major refurbishments to achieve as a minimum BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.

Best practice standard:

- New-build projects to achieve BREEAM "outstanding" rating.
- Major refurbishment projects are to achieve as a minimum BREEAM "excellent" rating
- A *Towards Zero* water, waste and energy plan will be adopted for each scheme.

2.3.6. Culture and Sport

Culture and sport play a pivotal role in community life. The URC will work to develop cultural and sporting facilities where there are opportunities to do so. It will also use cultural and sporting activities to support place making e.g., through encouraging 'Meanwhile' uses on sites such as music events, food festivals and art installations. The URC will aim to develop parks and spaces for community recreation, grassroots sport participation and leisure activities.

2.3.7. Health & Wellbeing

The URC will work with the Council to build healthy neighbourhoods that support physical wellbeing by designing places that encourage walkability, cycling and active leisure. Urban design will take account of mental health and well-being by creating opportunities for social contact and community activity. Following the Coronavirus pandemic, access to green space (including balconies, gardens, communal gardens, parks, or open space) is recognised as particularly important to well-being and will be provided for in development proposals.

2.3.8. Equalities

The URC will adopt a conscientious approach to considering how schemes will be used and occupied by a range of user groups and interests to ensure that a diverse range of needs are accommodated, and developments are suitable for groups including the elderly and those with health limiting and mobility restrictions. At the inception stage of new scheme development proposals, there will be systematic stakeholder and community consultation engagement with a view to achieving a good balance of gender, age, ethnicity, and other equalities perspectives. Proposals for emerging schemes will be reviewed against an agreed Equalities Framework.

2.4. Scope

The URC will initially review and aim to accelerate the development of 14 major sites, the bulk of which are in Council ownership. The URC business plan will set out a phased programme for the preparation of these sites for development. In the case of those sites not earmarked for immediate redevelopment, disposal, or alternative use, plans will be developed in conjunction with appropriate BCP Council departments, including opportunities for 'Meanwhile' uses until the local property market can viably support their development.

The 14 sites identified for regeneration are estimated to have a gross development value of over £2bn, and the potential to deliver around 3,500 new homes, together with associated business space, community infrastructure and amenities.

The initial research undertaken by the URC has identified the need for specific research to support the delivery of key council objectives. Areas where the URC proposes to commission work include: research on retail and support for the renaissance of High Streets; a coordinated approach to land use intensification across the BCP area building on the concept of '15 minute neighbourhoods'; and work with the local plan team on the development of a natural capital investment strategy to support carbon and biodiversity offsetting together with a structured approach to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and water catchment improvement.

As its programme of work and range of expertise develops, the URC may also offer placemaking support to the Council in other areas of policy development.

The URC will aim to become an exemplar of best practice in urban design and sustainable development; pursuing leading edge placemaking practices; design quality processes; and taking advantage of digital and low carbon technologies to create attractive, liveable, connected neighbourhoods.

2.5. Definition of Services

The services that the URC will provide to the Council will be set out in its Business Plan. Individual work packages will be specified within the Commissioning Contract between the Council and the URC. These may be added to as new opportunities arise when it is agreed that the URC is best placed to manage these projects. The primary services that will be provided by the URC will be **development management** activities such as:

- **Project scoping work** on council owned sites including project inception, briefing, capacity studies, masterplans and project viability testing and financial modelling.
- **Commissioning professional and technical work** from architects, quantity surveyors, civil engineers, planning consultants, master-planners, urban/landscape designers, and other professionals necessary to prepare designs from the early concept stage through to detailed planning and contractor procurement.
- **Preparing business cases** ensuring that schemes are **developer/investor ready** and the necessary market studies, budgets, contractor procurement routes, delivery strategy, design quality management and, if appropriate, exit routes have been clarified.
- **Design and Review of proof-of-concept due diligence process**
- **Providing commercial advice and interpretation to the Council** on market demand and investor appetite across key property sectors and segments e.g., residential, commercial, retail, leisure, industrial.
- **Providing urban development and place making advice** and best practice guidance to the Council to ensure that schemes optimise place potential; have a low carbon impact; provide sustainable returns; create attractive, walkable; liveable communities and are resilient to climate change.
- **Promoting development opportunities** on BCP Council sites to the investment market including Institutional Funders and private investors and developers.
- **Providing advice to the Council on suitable exit routes for sites** e.g., disposal, retention, and direct build., development with a JV partner.
- **Preparing 3rd party funding bids** on behalf of the Council to external bodies such as Homes England and MHCLG.
- **Managing assets on behalf of the Council** in cases where it has been agreed that assets should transfer to the URC.
- **Identifying asset acquisition** strategies in support of regeneration, income generation and other policy objectives.
- **Managing community consultation and stakeholder engagement work** on behalf of the Council to support the advancement of agreed schemes through planning.
- **Representing the Council, where agreed, in meetings with Government and public agencies.**
- **Supporting efforts to attract inward investment to the BCP region** and managing investor relations, where agreed.
- **Contributing placemaking input to departmental strategies** (e.g., Marketing & Inward Investment; Destination Proposition & Hotels Strategy; High Streets Strategy; Green Infrastructure Strategy, Cultural Strategy etc.)
- **Developing thematic place-based projects** to support market transformation proposition - bringing key URC inputs of place making, enabling, collaborative project

definition, design quality management, agile delivery, strategic investment - subject to corporate agreement via PID.

- **Providing urban development and place making advice to the council** to support the regeneration of local areas drawing upon identified best practice.
- Identifying **leading edge planning and development practices** to develop the BCP area as a national centre of excellence in stewardship driven development.

2.6. Key Performance Indicators and Outcomes

An initial suite of key performance indicators and outcomes have been identified below. The nature of built environment interventions means that there can often be several year lead times before tangible deliverables are produced. In the early years of the URC's operations, many of the key proxy indicators that measure progress will be focussed on improving the understanding of the potential of key sites and defining options for development. Progress of the URC will be measured through the achievement of key milestones in the process, such as business cases and design development.

As part of the Annual Business Planning cycle, indicators will be applied to specific schemes and projects along with targets to measure performance and contribution towards the Council's Big Plan ambitions:

- **Site technical studies** completed e.g., ground investigation reports, flood risk assessments, structural engineering studies
- **Site masterplanning and architectural studies**
- **Site feasibility and viability** reports e.g., property appraisals for various use forms – residential, commercial, retail, leisure
- **Site enabling works completed** (Flood defences, new access roads; SUDS etc)
- **Public realm enhancements delivered (by Sq. M)**
- Biodiversity net gain and **landscape** enhancement
- **Hectares of derelict and contaminated land cleared**
- **Other infrastructure improvements completed**
- **Option assessments** and projects briefs
- **Business cases completed for key sites and projects**
 - Strategic outline cases
 - Outline business cases
 - Full business cases
- Stakeholder and public **engagement exercises** undertaken
- Number of Press mentions of "Stewardship", 'BCP', Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Regeneration – in the **national and professional press**
- **3rd party funding leverage achieved**
 - Other public sector investment (e.g., Homes England)
 - Private sector investment
- **Successful site development outcomes**
 - Direct development by £ GDV
 - Joint Venture Development by £GDV
 - Sales to developers by £ purchase price achieved
- **Quantum of new or improved commercial floorspace** delivered (Sq. M)
- Quantum of **new residential units** delivered (number of homes)
- Quantum of **new sporting, leisure and cultural amenities** developed (Sq. M)

- Annual £ Value achieved from **revenue producing assets** developed by URC
- Annual £ value of **capital receipts** achieved from disposals
- Placemaking and **architecture and design awards** achieved.

2.7. Programme of Work

The URC's initial delivery plan will cover three key areas of work: an initial portfolio of sites to support the regenerative development within the BCP conurbation; a series of thematic workstreams which will enable better placemaking across the area; and contribution to the formulation of key strategies to support placemaking and regeneration across the region.

The URC priority projects for the remainder of 2021/22 and 2022/23 are summarised in the table below and detailed in an Appendix to the URC Business Plan along with proposed deliverables and performance metrics:

Table 1: The URC's Initial Workplan

| | Site | Present Use | Working Hypotheses |
|----|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Beach Road Car Park | Car Park | Asset optimisation |
| 2a | BIC/ARC | Conference centre & surroundings | Redevelopment & regeneration of key site |
| 2b | Winter Gardens Revision | Car Park | Place making input |
| 3 | Boscombe | Area Based - High Street; Sovereign Centre; Royal Arcade & surroundings | Area based regeneration |
| 4 | Poole Old Town & Quay | Area Based - High Street; Between the Bridges; West Quay & surroundings | Area based regeneration |
| 5 | Christchurch | Area Based & Former Civic Centre Asset and car parks | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| 6 | Heart of Poole | Council assets: Dolphin Centre; Dolphin Leisure Centre; Seldown Road Car Park & public realm | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| 7 | Holes Bay | Brownfield site | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| b | Carters Quay Design Quality Exercise | Vacant site | Design quality management and place making |
| 8 | Poole Civic Centre | Former Civic Buildings & Car Park | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| 9 | Turlin Moor | Housing Estate | Place making inputs & development strategy |
| 10 | Wessex Fields | Greenfield site | Place making inputs & development strategy |
| 11 | Port of Poole | Partnership opportunity | Capacity and connectivity issues; optimisation of asset |
| 12 | Constitution Hill | Redevelopment site | Asset optimisation |
| 13 | Extra Care Village | Partnership Opportunity | Extra Care provision strategy |

| | | | |
|---|--|---------------|--|
| 14 | Cotlands Road ^[1] | Car Park site | Area based regeneration & asset optimisation |
| Thematic Projects | | | |
| 15 | High Streets Renaissance (leading to investment proposition) | | |
| 16 | Hotel Regeneration Portfolio (Initially Poole CC, Christchurch CC) | | |
| 17 | Greener Car Parks | | |
| 18 | SuperLoos (architectural competition and delivery) | | |
| 19 | Natural Capital Investment Fund & Strategy | | |
| 20 | Railway Station Refurbs and East-West Metro Route | | |
| Cross -Cutting Strategic Initiatives (with BCP Council via Council-led Governance) | | | |
| | Place Potential Study | | |
| | Property market & place SWOT/Comparators/GAP Analysis | | |
| | Office & Commercial Proposition | | |
| | Destination | | |
| | Cultural & creative | | |
| | Sport, Leisure & Recreation | | |
| | Food, Retail & Entertainment | | |
| | Economy, Jobs, Skills & Local Economic Capture | | |
| | Balanced neighbourhoods | | |
| | Green Infrastructure & Towards Zero approach | | |
| | Place Branding | | |
| | Property Market Performance - baselining and monitoring; all property categories; supply chain issues & skills | | |
| | Feasibility East-West Rail Service | | |
| | Walkability Movement & Parking | | |
| | Strategic Integrated Transport strategy based on multi modal analyses | | |
| | East-West MetroLink Feasibility | | |
| | Strategic Parking Review | | |
| | Smart footprinting to enhance walkability | | |
| | Smart Growth | | |
| | Integrated Urban & Infrastructure Model | | |
| | Land use intensification mapping and study | | |
| | Small sites search | | |

2.8. Quality Management, Monitoring & Evaluation

Excellent quality management process will be critical to the delivery of schemes and, ultimately, to the achievement of the Council's objectives for the URC.

Two key areas will enable quality management within the company:

1. Monitoring and Evaluation
2. Clarity over critical success criteria and key performance indicators to be used for measuring success.

^[1] BDC site, with options and viability to be determined in cooperation

2.9. Monitoring and Evaluation

The following section describes how the objectives and outcomes in the URC Business Plan will be measured, monitored, and evaluated to assess the impact of the URC in achieving its stated aims; and considering the extent to which investment provides value for money.

Monitoring aims to review progress against planned targets, by providing information and evidence to check that programme expenditure and outputs are successfully delivered and agreed milestones are met. This is in contrast with **evaluation which assesses effectiveness and efficiency**, during and after the implementation of specific project interventions and aims to measure whether anticipated benefits have been realised.

2.9.1. Baseline

The Theory of Change Model, set out earlier in this document, summarises the key issues the URC Business Plan aims to address, the proposed interventions and projects, and the intended outputs and longer-term outcomes.

Before projects can be monitored and evaluated, there is a need to establish a starting point or baseline against which progress, and the eventual effectiveness of the completed project can be assessed. The baseline for projects will be agreed with the URC in Year 1 of the service.

2.9.2. Regular Reporting

Monitoring and evaluation will support the quality management of day-to-day activities. It will provide the Council with ongoing assurance that the activities being undertaken by its wholly owned company are in line with the Council's priorities and objectives.

The URC will be required to provide a monthly highlight report update on its programme of works in order to inform Council officers and Members of its progress towards the Council's objectives. The format of this report will be agreed between the URC and the Council, however, is expected to contain:

- The key priority projects for the Council
- The progress against forecast timescales
- The progress against forecast costs
- The progress against forecast quality
- Likelihood of achieving expected benefits
- Key risks and issues
- Lessons Learned.

This reporting also enables a systematic, regular opportunity for senior leadership within the URC to raise concerns and request the support of Council stakeholders in removing barriers for individual projects.

2.9.3. Annual Performance Reporting

As part of the ongoing business planning cycle, the URC will be required to compile an Annual Performance Report which outlines the progress made over the last year. It is envisaged that this should be undertaken in conjunction with forward business planning.

2.9.4. Evaluation

There are three main types of evaluation. Process evaluation considers whether an intervention is being implemented as intended; whether its design is working; what aspects are working well or less well, and why. Impact evaluation tests what changes have occurred as a result of the intervention, the scale of those changes, and assesses the extent to which they can be attributed to the intervention, while any comparison of the benefits and costs of the intervention is usually referred to as a value-for-money evaluation. These types of targeted evaluations are important for the Council to undertake as they build a track record of delivery and analysis that is increasingly critical for successful Central Government bidding.

However, it is equally important that the scale and scope of specific evaluation work is pragmatic and commensurate with the scale of the project and the associated level of risk. Undertaking duplicative or unnecessary evaluation will create capacity challenges for both the URC and the Council. Our requirement will be to ensure that any evaluations are useful, credible, robust, and proportionate.

When undertaking impact evaluation work, the Client Team will address questions including:

- What measurable outcomes, both intended and unintended, occurred?
- How much of these outcomes can be attributed to the project /intervention?
- Have different groups been impacted in different ways, how and why?
- How has the local context influenced outcomes?
- Can the benefits of the project/ intervention be reproduced?

3. Section Two: Organisation & Governance

3.1. Contractual Framework

This Commissioning Plan provides a framework that sets out how the URC and Council's Client Team will be expected to work together to advance the development of agreed sites and projects. The plan will be supported by a formal Commissioning Agreement specifying the works packages the URC will be asked to deliver on behalf of the Council. This will provide a framework for monitoring the URC and its performance in delivering the agreed works packages and outcomes.

The Commissioning Plan will be refreshed each year alongside the URC's Business Plan which will set out a forward rolling programme of development.

The contractual arrangements for the URC will be incorporated within a series of formal documents. These will include:

3.1.1. Shareholder Agreement

The Council will be the sole shareholder of the URC. The Shareholder Agreement will set out the Council's expectations concerning the governance and strategic direction of the URC and the development management services and outcomes it requires the company to deliver. The Shareholder Agreement will also set out a series of Reserved Matters covering issues on which the URC will require to obtain approval from the Shareholder (the Council) before progressing.

3.1.2. Articles of Association

The articles of association are a statutory requirement and specify the regulations for the company's operations including the process for appointing directors and the handling of financial records.

3.1.3. Strategic Commissioning Agreement

The Commissioning Agreement is the overarching contract between both parties and will set out the detailed working practices between the parties including key factors for a successful relationship including schedules that cover insurance, work packages, approval process, payment, obligations, etc. The success of the URC will depend upon the parties' ability to effectively co-ordinate and combine expertise, manpower, and resources to accelerate the delivery of key sites and unlock their full value through best practice urban design and placemaking.

3.1.4. Resource Agreement

The Council will provide a range of services to the URC to assist with its operation. The Resource Agreement sets out the obligations of both parties in relation to those services.

3.1.5. The Teckal Exemption

The URC will be a council owned company set up within the terms of the so called Teckal exemption. In general, public contracts are subject to competition in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR). However, where a Local Authority undertakes work in-house, it does not have to follow the competition procedures set out within the PCR.

The Teckal exemption extends the 'in-house' principle to entities which meet the relevant criteria, allowing contracts to be awarded without following a tender process, in accordance with the PCR, in circumstances where the entity is utilising the Council's own administrative, technical, and other internal resources.

For the URC to benefit from the Teckal exemption, it must comply with a three-stage test under Reg 12(1) of the Public Contract Regulations.

- (a) the contracting authority exercises over the legal person concerned a control which is similar to that which it exercises over its own departments;*
- (b) more than 80% of the activities of the controlled legal person are carried out in the performance of tasks entrusted to it by the controlling contracting authority or by other legal persons controlled by that contracting authority; and*
- (c) there is no direct private capital participation in the controlled legal person with the exception of non-controlling and non-blocking forms of private capital participation required by national legislative provisions, in conformity with the Treaties, which do not exert a decisive influence on the controlled legal person."*

3.1.5.1. Safeguarding the Teckal Exemption

In relation to Reg 12(1)(a), the test that needs to be satisfied concerns whether the Council will have control over the URC as it would if the URC was one of its own internal departments.

The Council must be able to show it exercises a decisive influence over both strategic objective and significant decisions:

- "(3) A contracting authority shall be deemed to exercise over a legal person a control similar to that which it exercises over its own departments within the meaning of paragraph (1)(a) where—*
- (a) it exercises a decisive influence over both strategic objectives and significant decisions of the controlled legal person, or*
 - (b) the control is exercised by another legal person which is itself controlled in the same way by the contracting authority, and references to "control", "controlled" and "controlling" in paragraphs (1) to (3) shall be interpreted accordingly."*

There are several ways in which the Council can demonstrate that it is exercising control over the URC and thereby safeguarding the Teckal status. These include:

- Utilising an extensive list of Reserved Matters within the Shareholder Agreement. The Reserved Matters are matters which require the company to obtain approval of the shareholder before being in a position to move forward,
- Requiring the URC to adopt the same policies and procedures used by the Council including its Financial Regulations, scheme of delegation, and its Mandatory Training programme.

- In relation to Reg 12(1)(b), it has been determined that the purpose of the URC is to provide regeneration services back to the Council with no intention of completing in the wider market which satisfies the second test.
- Finally, in compliance with the third test Reg 12(1)(c), it is the intention that the Council will be the sole shareholder of the URC, without any external private investors.

Should any of the above change, such as the possibility of the URC providing services to the open market, or seeking private investment, the URC must liaise with the Council's Client Team to instruct Legal Services to consider any implications so that the URC's Teckal status can remain safeguarded.

3.2. Governance

3.2.1. Approval Process & Investment Gateways

The operations of the URC will be governed at varying levels. The work of the URC Senior Management Team will be overseen by a Company Board. In conformance with the requirements of the Companies Act and best practice in corporate governance, this will include independent non-Executive Directors with relevant subject matter expertise.

The Council's Regeneration Commissioning Team will receive regular reports on URC activities and performance to ensure progress is being made in line with the URC's Annual Business Plan and to enable coordination and collaborative working.

Each year the URC's Business Plan will be refreshed and updated, and the URC will bid for resources to be considered as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.

As part of this process, the Council's Regeneration Commissioning Team will undertake an Annual Review of the business plan. This review will validate, and recommend the approval of, the draft URC Annual Performance Report and Business Plan before these progress through Cabinet and Council.

On a day-to-day basis the Client Team within the Council will employ a contract manager who will act as point of liaison and support for the URC. It will also monitor its progress in achieving the objectives set out in its business plan and formalised within the Commissioning Contract.

In addition to the corporate governance of the URC as a company, it will be important to ensure that governance of new projects and investment proposals is properly managed.

A portfolio control system will provide a robust mechanism for the URC and the Council to conduct a balanced evaluation of all projects at key points in their lifecycle and is designed to ensure that the URC meets the objectives set out in the business plan and contributes effectively to the ambitions of the Council's Big Plan.

The system adopted has been based on HM Treasury Green Book guidance and corresponds to the key stages of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Plan of Work scheme. This includes a series of **project stages** and decision **gateways** including control/approval points to govern specific investment decisions.

The system provides a control framework through which strategic interventions and negotiations are enabled while protecting the public interest and ensuring there is an audit trail behind key decisions.

The system will provide assurance to the FuturePlaces Board and BCP Council that:

- Projects are carefully and consistently reviewed at key project stages
- Public money is invested in projects that are aligned to the objectives set out in the BCP Council Regeneration Commissioning Plan and the FuturePlaces Business Plan
- Projects and programs are delivered on time and to budget
- Projects are designed and delivered to a high standard, and
- Socio-economic benefits are achieved.

3.2.2. Investment Gateway System Overview

The Investment Gateway System includes six project stages alongside seven control points, of which five are decision points and two (completion and benefits realisation) are outcome points. A decision point is a strategic decision to proceed with an investment; an outcome point is a reporting point to validate outcomes.

BCP FUTUREPLACES INVESTMENT GATEWAYS

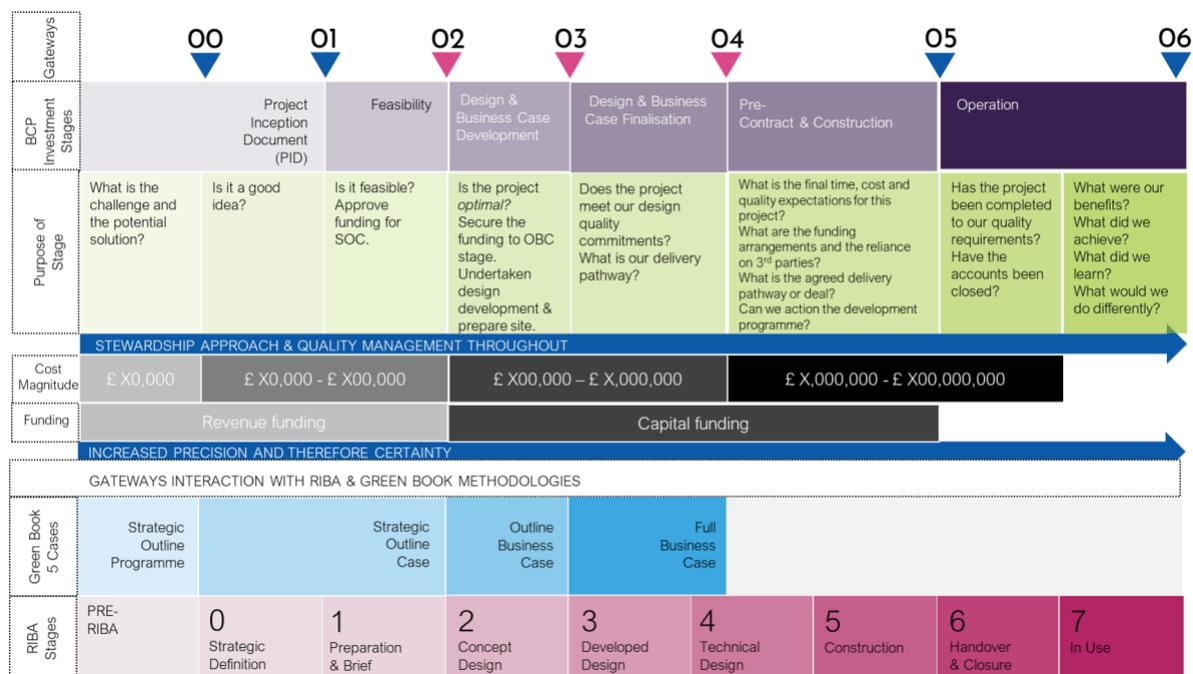


Figure 5: A summary of the Investment Gateway process for the URC

The system:

- Covers the full project lifecycle, from inception, through operation and to completion.
- Provides a level of project appraisal and assurance proportionate to the scale and risk associated with projects and the URC's overall portfolio.

A project must gain approval at each point before moving forward to the next stage. There are various approval bodies depending upon the control point. The process and the various approval bodies who are involved at each point are explained below.

Within the system there is a distinct separation between those who manage projects (such as Development Managers or Construction Managers) and those who approve projects to proceed through a control point (Senior Management).

3.2.3. Approval Bodies

Two Gateway approval bodies are identified in the diagram below:

- **The BCP FuturePlaces Gateway Board**, which is comprised of the FuturePlaces' Senior Management Team.
- **BCP Council.** Depending upon the size and scale of the projects coming forward, it is likely that this will be either the Cabinet or the Council providing approvals at this Gateway.

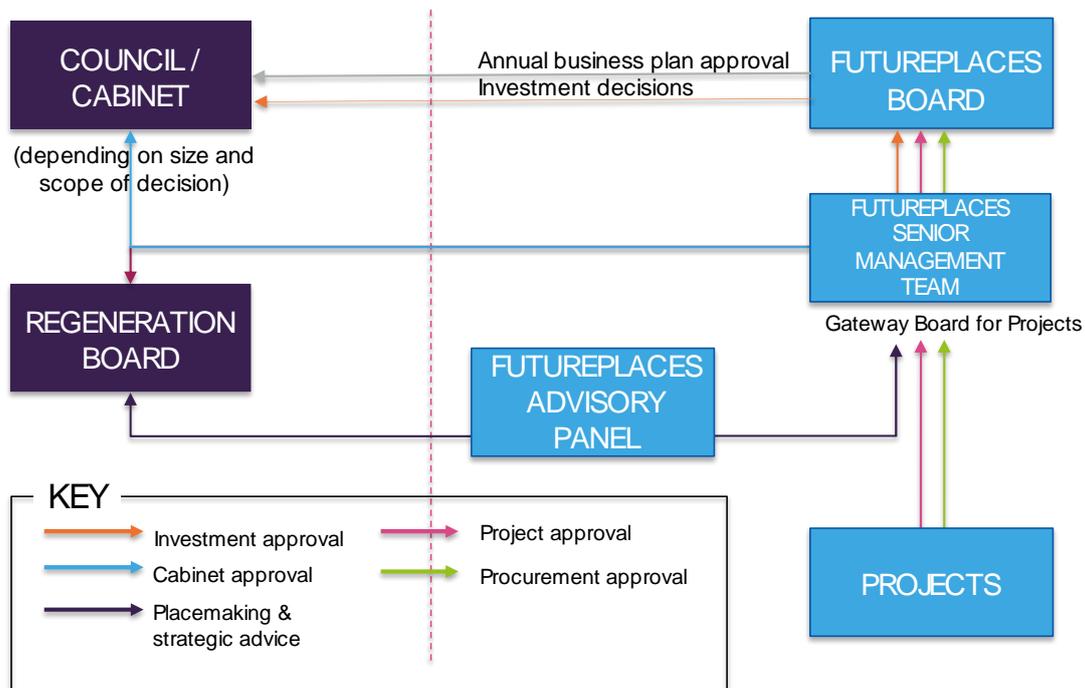


Figure 6: The project approval and commissioning pathways for the URC.

While not part of the formal decision-making process, it is expected that the URC Senior Management Team will undertake early engagement with the Regeneration Commissioning Team to ensure that the Council is involved in the scheme development process. Any report that is taken for Council decision-making will be required to move through the normal Council clearance process, which involves officer review and sign off.

3.2.4. Detailed Guidance for Gateway Stages

This section provides guidance for each gateway stage, setting out in more detail the purpose and procedures for each stage and its corresponding control point. The URC will be responsible for assembling and managing a core project team tasked with the delivery of the development projects. The delivery of each project will require input from both the URC and BCP Council. The process below identifies who will need to be involved in shaping the project and at which stage.

Each section contains guidance on the steps required to ensure successful progression through the relevant control point.

For those on the Gateway Board, further guidance will be provided setting out suggested lines of questioning and the evidence expected to fully appraise each project's progress.

The guidance for each stage includes:

- The purpose of the stage
- Considerations, documents, and other inputs that should be taken into consideration when completing the tasks for the stage
- Control point
- Approval body
- Template(s) to use for the control point review
- Other core information required.

The Investment Gateway process has six key stages, at the end of each a gateway must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

Table 2: The Investment Gateway Process

| Stage | Gate way | Decision-Maker | Key Consideration | Required Product (end of Stage) |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------|--|--|
| Project Inception / PID | 0 | FuturePlaces Gateway Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is the challenge and the potential solution?</i> • <i>What is the triple-bottom line value to the Council?</i> | |
| | 1 | FuturePlaces Gateway Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is it a good idea?</i> | Project Inception Document |
| Feasibility | 2 | BCP Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is it feasible, and potentially financially viable?</i> | Strategic Outline Case |
| Design and Business Case Development | 3 | BCP Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the project meet our design quality commitments?</i> • <i>Does the financial case meet minimum return and maximum investment conditions?</i> • <i>What is the delivery pathway?</i> | Outline Business Case |
| Design and Business Case Finalisation | 4 | BCP Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the final time, cost and quality expectations for the project?</i> • <i>What is the agreed delivery pathway or deal?</i> • <i>Can we action the development programme (e.g., award contractor; enter JV; etc).</i> | Full Business Case |
| Pre-Contract & Construction | 5 | FuturePlaces Gateway Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the project been completed to our quality requirements?</i> • <i>Have the accounts been closed off?</i> <p><i>For retained assets:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is a plan for ongoing operation and asset management in place?</i> • <i>Are sufficient resources in place to allow long term stewardship of</i> | Completion Ongoing asset management |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | | | <i>the site to retain and increase value?</i> | |
| Operation | 6 | FuturePlaces Gateway Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What were our benefits?</i> • <i>What did we achieve?</i> • <i>What did we learn?</i> • <i>What would we do differently?</i> | Benefits & Evaluation Report |

3.2.4.1. Stage 0 Pre-Project Inception

Given the complexity of the sites and the company’s intrinsic placemaking aims, a Pre-Project Inception stage has been included in the Investment Gateway process. This stage is particularly critical for complex programmes or schemes where multiple projects may exist but may not initially be easily defined. It is the stage where a project is initially expected to define its quality criteria and to develop a sense of the key challenges that the programme is trying to address. It provides the opportunity for a Strategic Outline Programme (in line with the Treasury Green Book process) to be created, if required. It also allows for appropriate studies to be undertaken that inform the later project development process.

Note that for less complex schemes, or schemes where the challenges and requirements are already well understood, the scheme may progress directly to Stage 1 – Project Inception Document, without the need for a Strategic Outline Programme to be created.

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | To ensure that the opportunities and challenges for the area – and potential intervention – are understood. |
| Considerations | Corporate strategies and objectives, market knowledge, networks, statutory development plan and other material considerations, planning obligations, relevant legislation, funding opportunities, planning applications/monitoring, Portfolio performance data, any available due diligence information affecting deliverability, possible commercial partners. |
| Control Point | Gateway 1 Project Inception |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board |
| Template to use: | • Strategic Outline Programme (if required). |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Information – strategic and local context, photos, site constraints etc. • Initial Client brief – a short statement setting out what the Council might want from the site or options for FuturePlaces to appraise / discount. |

3.2.4.2. Stage 1 Project Inception

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Purpose | To confirm that an <i>idea</i> is a good one prior to FuturePlaces investing significant levels of resource into developing the <i>idea</i> with further feasibility work during the next stage. |
| | This stage should provide an initial feasibility review of the site and provide an answer as to whether the project is worth pursuing by FuturePlaces with its own working capital. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Considerations | Corporate strategies and objectives, market knowledge, networks, statutory development plan and other material considerations, planning obligations, relevant legislation, funding opportunities, planning applications/monitoring, Portfolio performance data, any available due diligence information affecting deliverability, possible commercial partners. |
| Control Point | Gateway 1 – Approval to Move to Feasibility |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board |
| Template to use: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Inception Document • Site Viability Appraisal, including planning feasibility |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Information – strategic and local context, photos, site constraints etc. • Initial Client brief – a short statement setting out what the Council might want from the site or options for FuturePlaces to appraise / discount. • A simple massing and capacity study outlining site, wider context, development principles, indicative heights and massing and resulting development capacity (floorspace and unit numbers). • At least 1 viable development option tested using available cost information to ascertain if a viable development scheme can be achieved on the site. • Initial site review by Planning Consultancy as to site’s redevelopment potential in planning, including development principles and guidance on policy implications and planning strategy. • Consideration as to how the scheme might best be delivered (direct delivery, JV, disposal etc). |

3.2.4.3. Stage 2 Feasibility & Strategic Outline Case

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To validate that a project is feasible and worth pursuing into developed design • To obtain commitment to invest and approval to fund the project’s pre-development costs to contract award (G4) and starting construction. • This may also include seeking approval to purchase land/property. |
| Considerations | Gateway 1 Pre - Feasibility feedback/actions, site feasibility information, site constraints, commercial viability, planning policy and other material considerations, planning obligations, planning strategy risks and mitigation. |
| Control Point | Gateway 2 – Approval to Develop Design and Business Case |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board Full Council / Cabinet (Depending upon scheme size and existing delegations) |
| Template to use: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Outline Case, including Site Viability Appraisal (SVA) • Risk Register • Programme (Project Plan / Gantt Chart) |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project brief • Full Due Diligence Information (Report on Title, initial survey information etc.) • Full Feasibility Study undertaken by Architect and reviewed by Planning Consultant • Feasibility Cost Plan undertaken by a QS |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme valuation information – local sales/lettings info • Scheme viability and funding proposals • Planning Strategy Note prepared by Planning Consultancy • Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy • Heads of Terms and any legal agreements (if purchasing land/property from a third party) • Procurement Strategy and timetable for appointing contractor |
|--|---|

3.2.4.4. Stage 3 Outline Business Case

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a scheme which optimises the site and is acceptable in principle in planning terms. • To validate that the project is optimal in terms of the balance of costs, benefits, and risks. • To approve the scheme be submitted for planning approval. • To approve the procurement strategy and commencement of contractor tender process. |
| Considerations | Gateway 2 Commitment to Invest supporting documents and comments, planning information, stakeholders and community engagement, site technical information and survey outputs |
| Control Point | Gateway 3 – Approval of Outline Business Case & Design and to Progress to Stage 4. |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board Full Council / Cabinet (Depending upon scheme size and existing delegations) |
| Template to use: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline Business Case, including a Site Viability Appraisal, • Risk Register • Programme |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- application advice • Planning application and supporting documentation • Procurement Strategy and draft tender documentation (ER's and specifications) • Valuation report • Pre-tender Cost Plan • Statutory approvals / permissions |

3.2.4.5. Stage 4 Determination of Planning Application & Full Business Case

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assure the Full Business case and verify final commitment to invest from all investors and draw down funds to enable the construction and delivery of the scheme. • To Award Contract to preferred bidder and commence construction period • To secure planning permission |
| Considerations | Gateway 3 supporting documents and comments, procurement strategy, tender information and supplier engagement, payment schedule |
| Control Point | Gateway 4 – Commitment to Invest |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board Full Council / Cabinet (Depending upon scheme size and existing delegations) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Template to use: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Business Case • Risk Register • Programme |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-tender cost plan • Tender documentation • Post-tender cost plan and evaluation • Final Contract awaiting authorisation and execution • Other statutory approvals required • Planning Decision Notice |

3.2.4.6. Stage 5 Handover

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and approve the final account (or equivalent) for a project, confirming that the project is complete and any formal project close and handover activities have been completed and lessons learned documented. • For retained assets, to ensure that a plan for ongoing operation and asset management is in place and supports the long-term stewardship approach to a site. |
| Considerations | Gateway 3 Sign off supporting documents and comments; Gateway 4 Contract Award supporting documents and comments. |
| Control Point | Gateway 5 – Completion of Project |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board |
| Template to use: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme • Handover Summary Report • Curation Plan (for retained assets) • Project Closure Report |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC Certificate • Final account • Defects list and resolution • Warranties and certificates |

3.2.4.7. Stage 6 Benefits Realisation

The benefits realisation stage occurs at the end of a project once handover has been completed. It is possible that there may be a time delay between the end of a project and the benefits realisation assessment, depending upon the benefits that were expected to be created through the scheme. It is also possible that a Project Sponsor may request that two rounds of benefits realisation are undertaken: the first as construction and handover is completed; and the second sometime after the project completion to assess the wider benefits of the scheme.

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | To confirm that the benefits stated in the Full Business Case are being / have been achieved, the benefits and outcomes feed into the Portfolio monitoring and project approvals processes. |
| Considerations | Gateway 5 Sign off supporting documents and comments |
| Control Point | Gateway 6 – Realisation of Benefits |
| Approval Body: | FuturePlaces Gateway Board |
| Template to use: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits Realisation Report |
| Other core information required: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident satisfaction surveys • Defect completion update • Management and maintenance performance review |

3.3. The Role of the Regeneration Client Team in Commissioning

The objective of commissioning is to ensure that the scope and specification of services are clearly articulated and built into contract specifications from the outset; and managed throughout the lifetime of the entity.

Commissioning staff need to be skilled in several areas including project planning, financial analysis, communication, stakeholder management, project management, contract management, resource allocation and management, performance monitoring and risk management.

The commissioning team will be responsible for ensuring that:

- The key policy objectives of the council are embedded within each project
- A high standard of project management and performance is adhered to
- A high standard of project due diligence is adhered to
- A high standard of oversight and governance is adhered to through the life of the project
- Risk management is actively put in place and monitored on an ongoing basis
- Key obstacles to delivery sitting on the BCP Council side are positively and effectively addressed.

3.3.1. Regeneration Client Team Structure

The intended client team structure is outlined below.

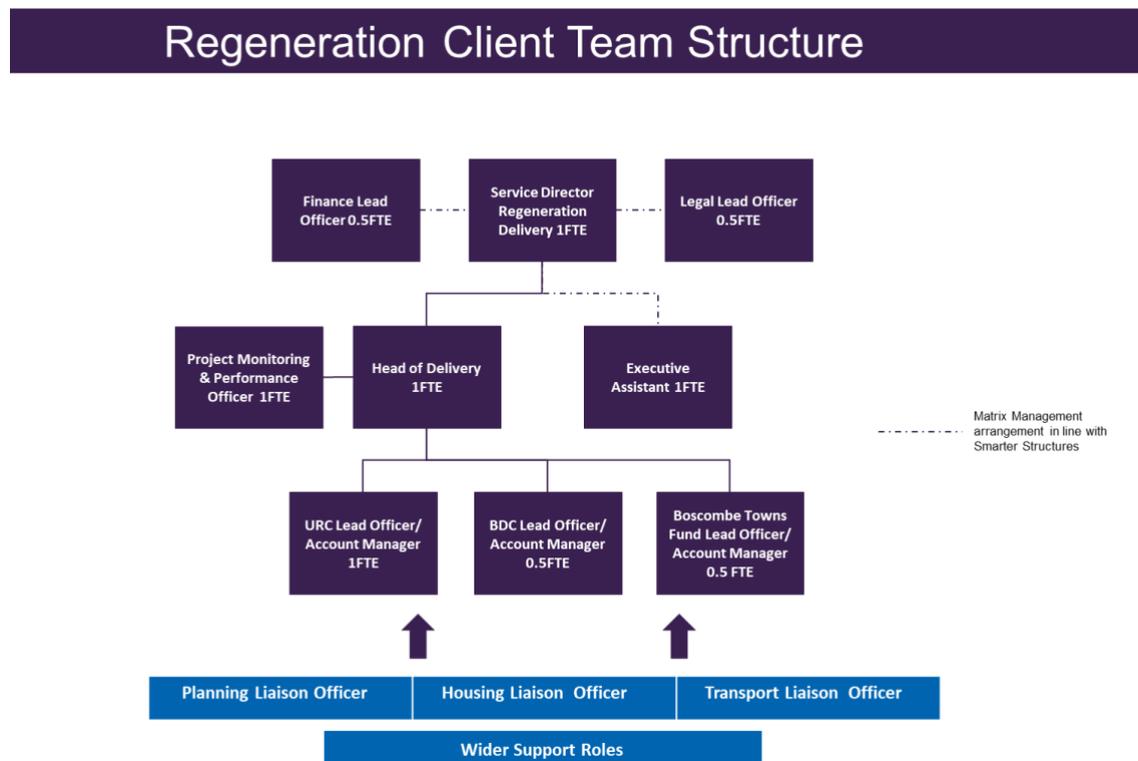


Figure 7: The proposed team structure for the Regeneration Client Team

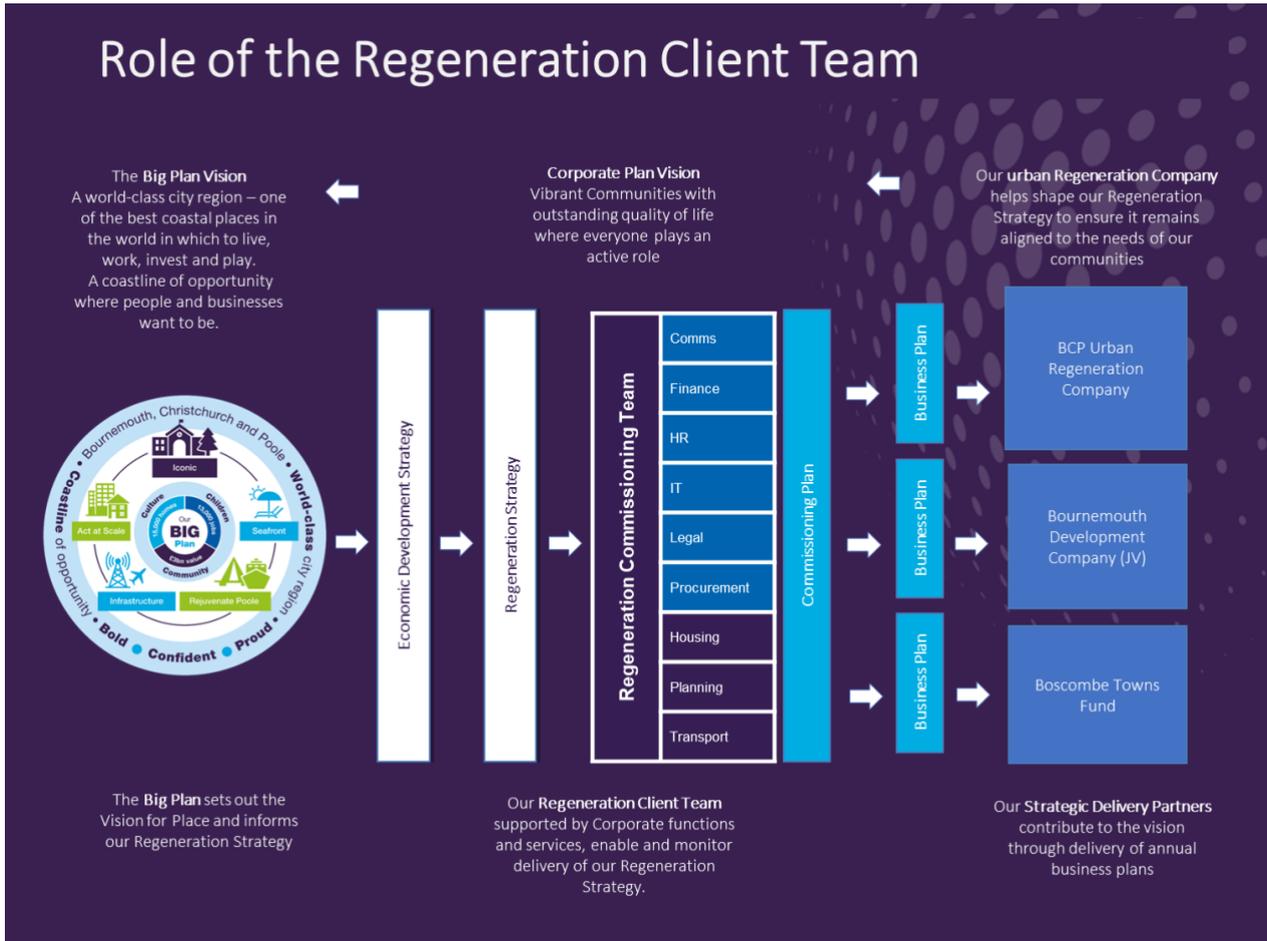


Figure 8: The Role of the Regeneration team and key partners

In the short term there is not expected to be any transfer of assets to the URC. As such, the Client Team will operate as the key interface to the Council’s real estate, legal, and finance functions and will ensure that these are adequately resourced to support the deal flow anticipated by the URC programme.

The Client Team will provide the right resources at the right time to ensure project success and to minimise bottlenecks and pressure points occurring across a portfolio of projects.

The team will carry out a variety of monitoring functions including receiving data about project progress; producing performance reports; developing standards and processes; and ensuring the use of agreed standards and processes to:

- Ensure projects are aligned to organisational strategy
- Engage senior leadership and stakeholders
- Develop a culture of collaboration between the client body and its delivery partners, customers, and stakeholders
- Demonstrate the value that the Client Team brings to the organisation
- Simplify project processes
- Remove/negotiate barriers to delivery.

3.3.2. The PMO Function

The Regeneration Client Team, will incorporate a Programme Management Office (PMO) function to guide, enable and oversee the work of the **URC**, ensuring that its activities are aligned to the council's **Big Plan** and **Corporate Plan** objectives.



PMO duties include:

- Acting as a critical friend to provide independent challenge to the senior leadership team.
- Managing the Gateway process to ensure that projects are consistently reviewed at key project stages and decisions are taken at the right time by the right people to ensure that the public interest is protected
- Establishing regular and accurate project reporting to provide early warning management information that ensures projects and programmes are delivered on time and to budget
- Monitoring monthly Highlight Reports to confirm that key milestones for the period in question are on track to deliver the outputs and outcomes specified in the PID and that adequate mitigation measures are being implemented to resolve issues
- Reviewing Risk and Issue Logs to provide assurance that appropriate risk mitigation is in place and issues are escalated when necessary.
- Monitoring the URC's common data environment which provides a documented project audit trail.
- Compiling a regular dashboard report capturing key project performance information from the URC and other delivery partners
- Recording project change requests and ensuring that associated documentation is updated accordingly.
- Tracking and recording project closures and maintains a Lessons Learned library
- Channelling and mediating issues arising between the URC and key departments to remove blockages and ensure alignment of interest where possible.

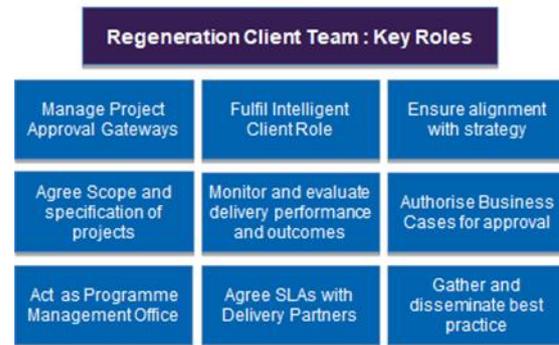


Figure 9: The key roles of the Regeneration Client team.

The PMO will also be responsible for evaluating project success including process evaluation, impact evaluation and value-for-money evaluation. Details are set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy section.

3.4. Ways of Working

For the URC to be a success, an environment of productive partnership working between the URC and relevant Council Service Departments and the Client Team will need to be established. This will require careful investment in staff induction, team building, and regular communications focused on development sites and desired outcomes. Several measures are being put in place to enhance partnership working arrangements between Council Officers and URC staff and these are summarised below.

3.4.1. Common Data Environment (SharePoint)

The need for commercial confidentiality on the part of the URC is well understood. It is the Council's expectation that the URC will make finalised documents available on a Common Data Environment (CDE), which the Council will be able to access as required to enable efficient, collaborative working between the two organisations.

3.4.2. Continuity of Service

To enable the continuity of service in the event of the termination of the URC or an unforeseen resourcing event, the Council will require the URC to make the following documents accessible for each project as they become available in final format:

- Overall programme management and phasing plans
- Project Inception meeting records
- Project Inception Documents
- Strategic Outline Programme
- Strategic Outline Case
- Outline Business Case
- Full Business Case
- Site Development Plans
- Masterplans and Related Documents
- Project Roles and Responsibilities (e.g., via RACI or project organograms)
- Building Handover Logs
- Post-Handover Activity Reports (e.g., Post-Occupancy Surveys).

In the event of the termination of the URC, or as required by the Council, the company will also require access to all project-based information, including but not limited to:

- Project Highlight Reports
- Project Budget Forecasts and Spend Reports
- Risk Registers and Issue Logs
- Programme Audits
- Change Control Records
- Request for Information Logs
- Project Closure Reports
- Post Completion Reviews / Snagging Reports.

4. Section Three: Financial Strategy & Budgetary Control

4.1. Overview of Financial Strategy

The 2021/22 budget set by the Council is a bold, creative, dynamic, responsible, and robust budget which included £1.75m investment in regeneration, a Council priority. The budget includes revenue resources for the internal client team and development management advice procured via the URC.

The Council's five-year Capital Investment Programme (CIP) represents an ambitious strategic medium-term programme of investment in each of the council's priorities. It includes all capital projects for which funding has been secured, including key strategic and regeneration schemes and will develop further as new capital projects are approved.

Any new capital projects not already included within the CIP will require separate approval in line with BCP Council financial regulations and following the URC Investment Gateway Process set out in the Governance Section of this Commissioning Plan.

The URC's advice and guidance will be key to determining the best course of action for regeneration opportunities, ensuring they are realised and value for money is achieved.

4.1.1. 3rd Party Funding

As noted above, subject to BCP Council approval, the URC will consider the most appropriate source of funding (both debt and equity) for URC projects. Although capital may be available from internal or central government sources, it may be desirable to source external capital, e.g., for relationship reasons, operational expertise, or speed of execution. These options will be considered as part of the business case for all URC developments.

4.1.2. Treasury Management Strategy

Cash levels are likely to be modest, but Treasury Management services will be procured from BCP Council and will be invested in line with the BCP Council Treasury Management Strategy.

4.1.3. Financial Regulatory Landscape

It is worth highlighting the changing regulatory landscape that the Council and therefore the URC will have to abide to when making decisions on capital investments and borrowing. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital financing, which governs the system of LA capital financing is introducing the overarching rule that an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. For this reason, all URC projects have been carefully assessed against a requirement to provide either enhanced public realm, increased dwellings or other public good. All are designed to improve the quality of place and provide badly needed homes or facilities for the community. As such they meet this requirement.

In addition the UK government's rules for access to Public Works Loans Board (PWL) lending at the date of this publication require statutory Chief Finance Officers to certify that their Local Authority's capital spending plans do not include the acquisition of assets primarily for yield,

reflecting a view that Local Authority borrowing powers are granted to finance direct investment in local service delivery (including housing, regeneration and local infrastructure) and for cash flow management, rather than to add leverage to return-seeking investment activity. Again, this is not the primary driver of any of the URC projects – they all meet a social, economic regeneration or housing need for the community. The fact that many are expected to be value-accretive is a measure of the perceived value to the community and not the primary driver for the projects.

The government are also consulting on changes to the Local Authority Capital Finance Framework which will see further regulation of Councils' capital and borrowing plans and the potential introduction of debt caps if authorities continue to operate outside of the regulations. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities also plan to better constrain the risks associated with complex capital transactions. This includes credit arrangements, such as PFI deals or income strips, and financial derivatives. These types of arrangement can, if not properly managed and understood, carry more risk than traditional forms of financing. The URC has been carefully resourced to ensure it has the right expertise to support effective decisions and risk management should such financing become necessary or desirable in the future.

4.2. Financial Regulations

As a Teckal Company, the URC will adhere to the prevailing BCP Council financial regulations which are defined in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution. This is reviewed annually when consideration can be given to any specific conditions or exceptions the new company may require.

4.3. Scheme of Delegated Authority

The URC will follow the same delegation parameters as BCP Council. The Managing Director will have the equivalent status as a Service Director with the Managing Director's direct reports having the equivalent Head of Service status.

4.4. Internal Audit

The URC has Teckal status and, as such, will be subject to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

The Internal Auditing Function is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

The detailed work of Internal Audit is set out within the risk based Internal Audit Plan (IAP) which is designed to support the Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Internal Audit Opinion and Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

Both the URC and the role of the Client Team will feature in the IAP in the same way as any Council service and may or may not therefore be audited on an annual basis. The IAP is aligned to the financial year so any *planned* audits will be built into the annual business plan for the URC. However, the IAP is a dynamic document, based on risk, so there may be a

requirement for additional unplanned audits. Should this be the case then the Internal Audit Team will liaise with the Client Team as early as possible to prevent duplication and make best use of limited resources.

5. Section Four – Communications & Stakeholder Engagement

5.1. Communications

As part of the Annual Business Plan approved by Cabinet, the URC will produce a Communications and Marketing Strategy to support the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Council's Big Plan and will include:

- Details of its proposed programme of work for the year ahead
- A summary of its achievements over the preceding year.
- Opportunities for joint working with the Council on inward investment and the promotion of place
- any support it may require from the Council's Communications Team to enable it to pursue its business objectives.

The URC will be required to follow the specific requirements below.

5.1.1. BCP Council's Media Relations Protocol

All media enquires received by officers must be referred to the Council's press office via press.office@bcpcouncil.gov.uk.

Officers should always be mindful of comments made when attending public meetings, as these may be recorded by the public or press, attended by the media and legitimately quoted as on the record comment. Likewise, comments made via social media can equally and legitimately be used by the media. Officers should be mindful that there remains scope for these comments to be used out of context by others.

5.1.2. Pre-election periods

During the 'purdah' period between the notice of an election and the election itself, local authorities must not publish any publicity on controversial issues or report views or proposals in such a way that identifies them with any individual members or groups of members.

5.1.3. Branding

A set of brand guidelines for the URC are being developed in consultation with the Council's Communications and Marketing Directorate which will set out the brand hierarchy between the Council and the URC in relation to URC activities.

5.2. Stakeholder Engagement

The Client Team will work closely with the URC to ensure that strategically important relationships with partner agencies are managed in such a way as to optimise strategic alignment and operational efficiency.

The URC will be committed to stakeholder-led engagement on strategic schemes to involve communities and stakeholders in the inception, briefing and design development of projects:

- Where there is a Neighbourhood Forum the URC will work with the Neighbourhood Forum as an ongoing partner in scheme development
- As proposals for individual sites evolve the URC will engage with local communities and stakeholders through a variety of consultation and engagement techniques. (Charettes, 360-degree engagement, design workshops, on-line tools, exhibitions)
- The URC will be able draw on the Research & Consultation team for support in running stakeholder engagement and workshops.

5.3. Consultation

It is anticipated that the URC will provide advice to the Council in relation to any statutory consultation for development projects and sites, as outlined in its business plan.

The URC will be expected to follow the principles of the BCP Council's Research and Consultation Governance Framework which is available on the Council's intranet.

6. Section Five: Risk Management

The URC will be required to maintain an updated risk register for each of the sites it is responsible for delivering and a high-level corporate risk register that deals with those risks which if they were to crystallise could imperil the Company's overall operations. Risk categories should include strategic/existential, operational, financial, external market risks, planning risks, and reputational risks.

Risks should be assessed by the probability/ likelihood of their occurrence and the impact at project and corporate level that would arise in the event that they were to crystallise. The mitigation and management of risks will be pivotal to the success of the URC's operations. A process by which risks are identified and sorted by consequence and probability is a first necessary step. Once this is in hand, then mitigation strategies for those that can be reduced or eliminated can be implemented, and management strategies can be put in place for those that cannot.

The exact form of the URC risk register will be for its Board to determine and set out in its business plan. For projects that proceed through business case development into implementation it is expected that for each identified risk a sensitivity analysis will be performed covering quantifiable outcomes or estimated for non-quantifiable outcomes, considering the break-even magnitude of impact required to reduce project return to zero, and consideration of the size of this outcome relative to the size of maximum likelihood outcome.

6.1. Conflict of Interest / Commercial Sensitivity

The URC and its staff will necessarily have access to commercially sensitive information, which may be of significant value to other market participants. As such, both conflict of interest will need to be appropriately managed.

With regard, to information management, BCP Council IT will be responsible for ensuring that URC systems are secure, and that access can be controlled to strictly authorised staff on a timely basis. All staff will be required to sign an appropriate NDA, reminding them of their responsibilities and obligations on a periodic basis. Although such an agreement could be embedded in an employment contract, the real value is in the "nudge" and "reminder" of re-signing periodically.

All engagement with the press and digital channels will be managed by the URC communications and engagement team, in coordination with the BCP Council Communications Department.

It is recognised that members of the URC team will of necessity and by virtue of their relevant experience have extensive relationships within the developer community. A conflict-of-interest policy will need to be developed in conjunction with the BCP Council's Legal and HR departments (see *Ways of Working*) to address this. Similarly, it is likely that some URC staff will have outside interests in real estate – ranging from family dwellings within the BCP area, to other property interest further afield. Any dealings in property within the BCP area will be strictly controlled, and subject to a requirement to declare interests beyond a family home. The URC Board will be required to include declarations of potential conflicts of interest as a standing item at the start of each Board Agenda. Individual Board members may be excluded from the Board for the purposes of discussing and reaching decisions on items where members have declared such a conflict of interest.

7. Appendix

7.1. Model Documentation (Templates & Checklists)

- Theory of Change Model
- Project initiation Document
- Strategic Outline programme
- Strategic Outline Case
- Outline Business Case
- Full Business Case
- Highlight Report
- Risk & Issue Logs
- Project Change Request
- Project Closure Report
- Post Completion Review
- Annual Review Checklist
- Annual Performance Report

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