

Notice of Stour Valley and Poole Partnership Joint Committee

Date: Monday, 23 May 2022 at 2.00 pm

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



Membership:

Chairman: TBA

Vice Chairman: TBA

Cllr D Brown
Cllr L Dedman
Cllr M Haines

Cllr L Lewis
Cllr A Brenton
Cllr A Kerby

Cllr M Parkes
Cllr A Starr

All Members of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership Joint Committee are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

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

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=5337>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Nicky Hooley, 01202 128737 or email democratic.services@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 454668 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

13 May 2022

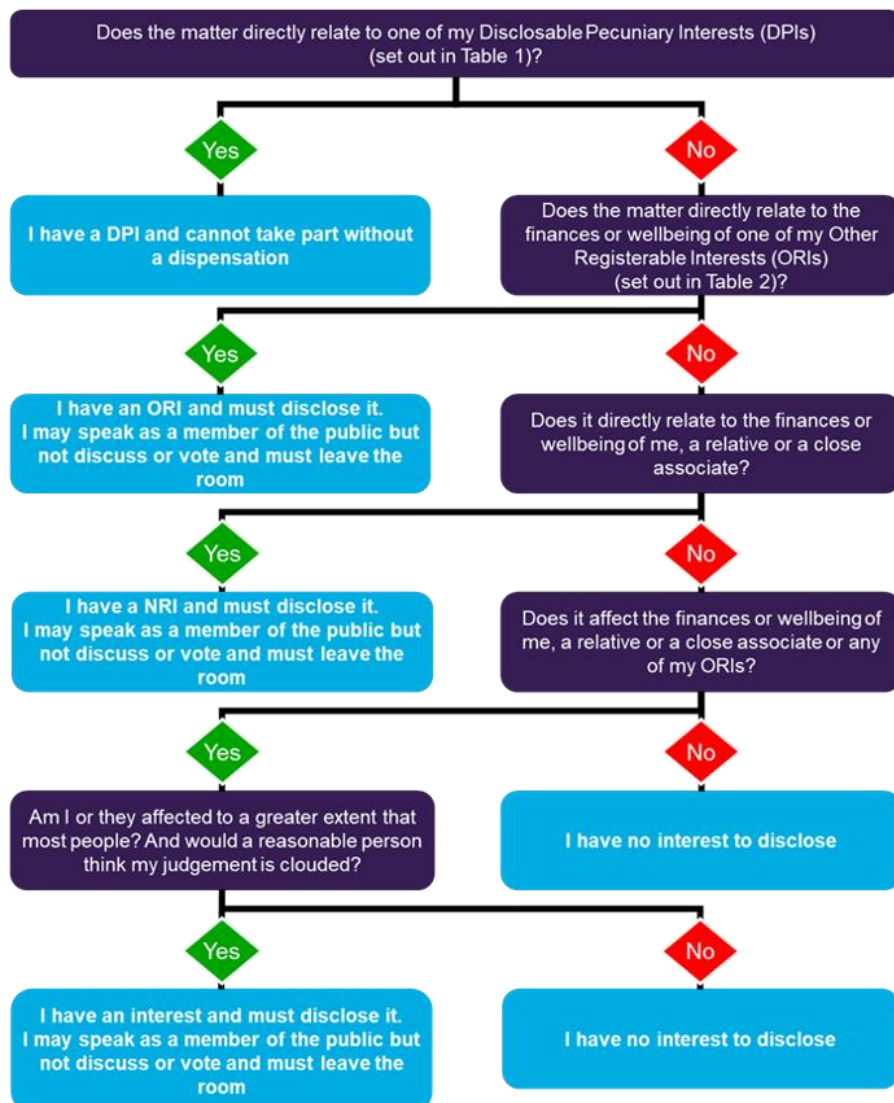


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

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



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. Election of Chairman 2022/23
To elect a Chairman of the SVPP Joint Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year. | |
| 2. Election of Vice Chairman 2022/23
To elect a Vice Chairman of the SVPP Joint Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year. | |
| 3. Apologies
To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors. | |
| 4. 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. | |
| 5. Confirmation of Minutes
To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 as a correct record. | 1 - 2 |
| 6. Budget and Performance 2021/22
To review the budget, processing and collection performance of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) | 3 - 14 |
| 7. Dissolution of Stour Valley and Poole Partnership and transfer of functions to BCP Council and Dorset Council
To acknowledge the timetable for the dissolution of SVPP by 31 March 2023 | 15 - 26 |
| 8. Forward Plan
To note the SVPP Forward Plan. | 27 - 28 |

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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STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 21ST MARCH, 2022

Present: Councillor May Haines in the Chair

Cllr A Kerby (Vice-Chairman), Cllr D Brown and
Cllr L Dedman

Apologies: Cllr T O'Neill, Cllr A Brenton, Cllr M Parkes and
Cllr A Starr

9 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Brenton, O'Neill, Parkes and Starr.

10 Declarations of Interests

There were no declaration of interest received on this occasion.

11 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2021 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Voting: unanimous

12 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2021/22

The Head of SVPP presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Committee were asked to review the budget, processing and collection performance of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP).

The Committee were advised that a report detailing a summary of the years break downs would be presented to the next meeting.

It was explained that it had been an exceptional two years, which the staff had worked through. It was hoped that staff would be able to direct callers to using the online services as we return to 'normal'.

It was highlighted that when the £150 customer rebates were issued it would provide a challenging time for call handlers, as SVPP would be expected to offer support. Library staff could also offer assistance.

The Committee expressed their thanks to the SVPP Staff for all their efforts during an exceptional time, and asked that their recognition be passed on to the staff.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

(a) acknowledged the performance of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership to end of Quarter 3 of 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix 1;

(b) noted the budget position of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership to 31 December 2021/ end of Quarter 2 2021/22;

(c) Receive an annual summary of Business Rates at the next meeting; and

(d) Formal thanks from the Joint Committee be passed to the staff of SVPP.

Voting: Unanimous

13 **SVPP Budget 2022/2023**

The Head of SVPP presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Committee was asked to agree the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) operational budget for the 2022/2023 financial year.

The Committee was advised that they would normally expect to receive the annual budget and business plan at the next meeting, however, instead the exit plan will be presented at the next meeting. An amicable letter will be produced by the end of the month for both parties to sign. A report detailing the dissolution of SVPP will be brought to the next meeting.

Councillor Kerby advised that the dissolution of SVPP was not what he wanted and so he would abstain from voting on this matter. He highlighted that an external bailiff system would be used, but that SVPP already had an excellent enforcement system already. He advised that he would go back to Dorset Council and seek assurance on this in the future, as this approach would be the best for the public and the Council.

Following a request, it was agreed that the Head of SVPP would give this Committee a progress update by the deadline for signing the amicable letter.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the draft budget for Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) for 2022/2023 be set at £5,058,051;**
- (b) the income expectation for the Stour Valley Enforcement Agency (SVEA) for 2022/23 be reduced from £175,000 to £Nil with a view the service seeks to cover operational costs in its final year of operation;**
- (c) the Collaboration Agreement, Schedule 1 functions as detailed in Appendix 2 be adopted by the Partnership;**
- (d) any amendments to these budgets required to support service delivery in the final year of the partnership and to support the transfer of functions to the partner Councils be delegated to SVPP Board to agree and presented to the next meeting of Joint Committee for acknowledgement; and**
- (e) The Committee be informed of the outcome of the signing of the amicable letter.**

Voting: 1:0 (3 Abstentions)

14 **Forward Plan**

The Head of SVPP presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Committee was asked to consider the latest version of the SVPP Forward Plan.

The Committee noted the SVPP Forward Plan.

Voting: Unanimous

Duration of the meeting: 2.00 - 3.00 pm

Chairman at the meeting on
Monday, 21 March 2022

STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP SVPP JOINT COMMITTEE

Report subject	Budget and Performance 2021/22
Meeting date	23 May 2022
Status	Public
Executive summary	To review the budget, processing and collection performance of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP)
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that members:</p> <p>(a) acknowledge the performance of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership for 2021/22 as detailed in the report presented to Scrutiny Panel (Appendix 1)</p> <p>(b) agree that the Partnership underspend in 2021/22 of £665,953 be returned to the partner councils in line with cost share agreement</p>
Reason for recommendations	Members to review the performance and budget of the SVPP for 2021/22
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable - SVPP
Corporate Director	Not applicable - SVPP
Contributors	Paul Hudson. Partnership Manager.
Wards	All
Classification	Note and Comment

BACKGROUND

1. Members of Joint Committee request to review Performance at each of their meetings.
2. Performance and Budget monitoring is a role of the Scrutiny Panel on behalf of Joint Committee.
3. Attached to this report as Appendix 1 is the 2021/22 Performance and Budget Review presented to Scrutiny Panel on 18 May 2022.

REVIEW BY SCRUTINY PANEL

4. At the time of producing this report Members of Scrutiny Panel had not yet met to review performance and budget. The details of their review will be presented at the meeting of Joint Committee.

Summary of financial implications

5. The 2021/22 operational budget actually represents the final 'full service operational' year of SVPP.

6. The 2021/22 Budget set for the Partnership was £4,951,000

The outturn position of budget is:

Service Area	Total SVPP £	BCP Council	Dorset Council
SVPP Budget 2021/22	4,951,354	3,234,224	1,717,130
SVPP Outturn 2021/22	4,714,197	3,079,314	1,634,884
SVPP Underspend 2021/22	237,157	154,911	82,246
New Burdens Income to budget costs 2021/22	428,796	280,089	148,707
Total Underspend 2021/22	665,953	435,000	230,953

7. The SVPP Board met on 10 May 2022 and approved the above year-end position of the budget. As the partner Councils have agreed formally through the dissolution process that any underspends or overspends in 2022/23 will be met in line with cost share agreement it was considered the return of the 2021/22 underspend to each Council would be appropriate.

Summary of legal implications

8. Not applicable to this report.

Summary of human resources implications

9. Not applicable to this report

Summary of environmental impact

10. Not applicable to this report.

Summary of public health implications

11. Not applicable to this report

Summary of equality implications

12. Not applicable to this report

Summary of risk assessment

13. Not applicable to this report

CONCLUSION

14. The Partnership in 2021/22 worked to budget and delivered an underspend. Performance of the Partnership continues to be monitored by Scrutiny Panel.

Appendices

1. Report to SVPP Scrutiny Panel 18 May 2022

STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY PANEL

2021/22
Performance and
Budget Review

Date of Meeting: 18 May 2022

Lead Member: Not Applicable – SVPP Scrutiny Panel

Lead Officer: Paul Hudson. Partnership Manager SVPP

Executive Summary:

To review the budget and performance of the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) for the 2021/2022 financial year.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

Not Applicable to this report

Budget:

Operating Budget for SVPP for 2021/22 £4,951,000

Risk Assessment:

Not Applicable to this report

Other Implications:

Not Applicable to this report

Recommendation:

That members:

- (a) note and comment on the performance and budget of the SVPP
- (b) support the proposal by SVPP Board that the underspend for 2021/22 year be returned to the Partner Councils in line with cost share agreement
- (c) receive a report at the next meeting which reviews telephony services and request that the BCP Director of Customer Services and Business Delivery or their representative attend the next meeting to support this process

Reason for Recommendation:

To review, and note for SVPP Joint Committee, performance of the Partnership to its budget and performance targets.

Appendices:

A: Budget Report 2021/22

Background Papers:**Officer Contact:**

Name: Paul Hudson – Email: paul.hudson@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Performance and Budget monitoring is a role of the Scrutiny Panel on behalf of Joint Committee.
- 1.2. This report provides a summary of the position for the 2021/22 year for review by members.
- 1.3. The Partnership's delivery of services has been and continues to be impacted in the year by Covid 19 measures and additional responsibilities placed upon the service by Government to provide support to residents and businesses.
- 1.4. The Partnership and the BCP Customer Services (SVPP CAT) have through the year been impacted by staffing shortages and the need to prioritise Business Grants and Test & Trace support as required by Government.

2. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 2.1. Data on the processing of new claims and changes in circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support are extracted monthly.
- 2.2. Data on percentage of collected Council Tax and Business Rates is a local indicator which has been retained by the Partnership and is used by each Council & Precepting Authority for budget setting purposes. The indicator is in respect of "in-year collection".
- 2.3. SVPP deliver services for the Christchurch and Poole areas of BCP Council and the East and North areas of Dorset Council. Performance of the SVPP, where available, is reported alongside the targets set by BCP Council and Dorset Council.
- 2.4. The way in which the Partnership delivers services has changed as each council now has their own methods of delivering services and SVPP no longer has aligned procedures or processes.
This change to process means staff in the Customer Access Teams and across SVPP must log into to two different versions of each system, one at BCP and the other at Dorset and process forms and accounts in the format required by each council.
- 2.5. The staff have demonstrated what a strong and resilient workforce they are and have supported the Partnership and both BCP and Dorset Council in every task requested of them.
- 2.6. As advised to members at the meeting of 9 March 2022, for the Dorset Council area the partnership can no longer review its performance for East & North areas individually as they form part of the combined Dorset Council database.
- 2.7. The 2021/22 year will be the last year for formal monitoring of SVPP performance as services will in 2022/23 transfer from SVPP to either BCP Council or Dorset Council and performance be monitored directly by each Council.

3. BENEFIT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 3.1. The Benefits service has continued with the trend of working closely to target.
 3.2. Benefit processing performance for 2021/22 year was:

Average time taken (calendar days) to process a new claim

New Claims	2020/21 Year	2021/22 Year	Target
SVPP BCP	16 days	17 days	19 days
SVPP DC	17 days	Not Available	
BCP Council	*18 days	*15 days (Q3)	16 days
Dorset Council	*17 days	*22 days (Q3)	19 days

*DWP Data on speed of processing for each Council on housing benefit processing

Average time taken to process a change in circumstances

Changes	2020/21 Year	2021/22 Year	Target
SVPP BCP	4 days	6 days	10 days
SVPP DC	4 days	Not Available	
BCP Council	*5 days	*9 days (Q3)	6 days
Dorset Council	*3 days	*8 days (Q3)	7 days

*DWP Data on speed of processing for each Council on housing benefit processing

- 3.3. As Dorset Council now have one combined database, the Partnership no longer have data available from Dorset Council for East & North areas of SVPP.
 3.4. The Benefit Service has through 2021 processed claims and supported both Business Grants and Test and Trace payments for BCP Council.
 3.5. Whilst new burdens funding has been made available by Government to support these processes the Benefit Service have relied on external support from Capita to process changes as it has also seen a reduction in staff.
 3.6. The Service is not able to recruit experienced staff currently or devote resources to training new staff. External support has been exhausted and cannot be increased further.

4. COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES COLLECTION

- 4.1. The 'in-year' collection rate target for SVPP is 98% of all Council Tax and Business Rates to be collected within the financial year. Prior to 2020 'overall collection' is estimated to be between 99% and 99.5%, but the service monitors in-year collection closely to ensure funds are collected in a timely manner for each Council.
 4.2. In March 2020 recovery and court action was suspended in line with the National Lockdown. In June 2021 the process of collecting outstanding accounts through the Courts was fully re-established. Many accounts have arrears for 2020/21 carried forward to 2021/22 and the service wherever possible continues to put in measures to support customers in making payments to bring accounts up to date over agreed periods of time. It is expected that it will take up to three years for collection rates to return to pre-pandemic levels.
 4.3. The extensive levels of Grants, Test & Trace payments and rebates have involved all areas of service delivery within Revenues and Collections.

Council Tax collected in Year

CTAX Collection	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Change 19/20 to 21/22
BCP Council	97.2%	95.1%	95.3%	-1.9%
SVPP BCP	97.6%	96.1%	96.8%	-0.8%
Dorset Council	97.9%	95.2%	96.0%	-1.9%
SVPP DC	98.3%	96.2%	Not Available	Not Available

- 4.4. Since the formation of the new Councils, it is now recognised that each Council should be reviewed in line with other Councils of the same size and demographic. For example, for BCP Council it is recognised as being one of the ten largest 'urban councils' in the Country. In that context the average collection rate of the top 10 Urban Councils in 2020/21, following the impact of Covid19 was 93.0%, with BCP achieving 95.1%

Business Rates

- 4.5. For Business Rates the database was significantly changed by the awarding of Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years. The reliefs awarded has significantly reduced the collectable debit for each Council.
- 4.6. The percentage of business rates to collect is therefore based upon the 'collectable debit' after reliefs. Although reduced balance to collect, due to the ongoing impact of COVID to businesses and the reduced ability to undertake recovery action due to ongoing relief and grant adjustments to accounts, there is still a significant impact on in year collection. The year has seen the teams constantly administering grants and reliefs alongside account processing requirements.

Percentage of Business Rates collected in year

Rate Collection	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Change 19/20 to 21/22
BCP Council	98.0%	90.7%	95.9%	-2.1%
SVPP BCP	98.3%	91.7%	96.9%	-1.4%
Dorset Council	98.0%	88.3%	93.2%	-4.8%
SVPP Dorset	98.2%	89.3%	Not Available	Not Available

- 4.7. Rate collection, similarly, to CTAX collection is expected to take three years to return to expected income levels.

5. ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

- 5.5. The Stour Valley Enforcement Agency (SVEA) provides the internal enforcement service for Council Tax and Business Rates for SVPP and from April 2018 for Bournemouth.
- 5.6. The service has been impacted since the beginning of the pandemic with Courts being closed, recovery action being suspended and the inability to carry out face-to-face visits. Throughout this year as in 2020/21 members of the team were allocated to support delivery of Covid-19 support and other service areas in the Partnership, for which staffing costs were met by the main SVPP budget.

- 5.7. The initial recommencement of face-to-face visits and enforcement work, saw some positive months with June and July 2021 seeing a 'catch up' of old prior to new ones being processed through the courts.
- 5.8. Suspension of recovery processes significantly impacts on the SVEA work and fee income. Various factors have meant that suspension of recovery processes has taken place during 2021/22, and at the time of writing this report remains in place for Dorset Council.
- 5.9. The objective of the service for 2021/22 was to achieve a 'break-even' position to cover operational costs and to continue to support delivery of Covid-19 support measures.
- 5.10. The SVEA for the 2021/22 have exceeded expectations and for the financial year have delivered a net surplus of £119,768.

Detail	Value (£)
Enforcement Service Costs 2021/22	324,527
Enforcement Fees Collected 2021/22	444,295
Outturn	119,768

- 5.11 These funds will be returned to both Councils based on service activity inclusive of the Bournemouth area for BCP Council.

This will see £105,414 passed to BCP Council and £14,355 passed to Dorset Council.

6. CUSTOMER ACCESS

- 6.1. The SVPP Customer Access Team in 2020 were, as part of BCP Customer Services department, brought together as one service in BCP Council. The SVPP Customer Access Manager was appointed as Head of Customer Service and all staff restructured in teams within the department.
- 6.2. This change means SVPP no longer have dedicated team of Customer Access staff but are now supported by all BCP Customer Services.
- 6.3. Currently we are aware from customer feedback that delays are being experienced.
- 6.4. As for all SVPP the Customer Access Team are operating with a reduced workforce.
- 6.5. At the last meeting of Scrutiny Panel the following details on call handling was presented:

Telephony Services

SVPP Telephone Demand	2017/18	2018/19	Nov 2021	Jan 2022	Target
Call Demand – Customer Access Team	140,023	128,660	8,964	9,138	To reduce calls
Call Demand – SVPP	68,396	65,040	2,555	2,767	
Total Call Demand	208,419	193,700	11,519	11,905	
Percentage Answered	96%	95%	85%	87%	85%

- 6.6. In April 2022 a review of call handling for BCP Council Corporate Management Board detailed performance outcomes for the Revenues and Benefit Services,

being SVPP CAT and BCP (Bmth) which detailed for the period from October 2021 to March 2022 that 41,243 calls entered the telephony system of which 29,364 were answered. This represents an answer rate of 71%.

The details also identified a large number of 'overflow' calls which were unable to enter the telephony queue system.

- 6.7. Based upon this difference in information, and that the new data does not meet performance standards it is recommended that telephony services are in accordance with the role of Scrutiny Panel fully reviewed at the next meeting and the Service Director for CAT or their representative attend to help support the review.
- 6.8. The SVPP CAT do have their own budget area within the overall SVPP Budget. For 2021/22 the budget allocated was £860,695. The spend for the year was £621,218 resulting in an underspend of £239,477.
- 6.9. In context to performance of telephony services it should be noted that the SVPP CAT spend was only 72% of the budget.

7. BUDGET POSITION

- 7.1. The 2021/22 operational budget actually represents the final 'full service operational' year of SVPP. For 2022/23 the SVPP will be dissolved and throughout the year functions transferred to the Council partners.
- 7.2. The SVPP 2021/22 'Year 7' Budget set for the Partnership by Joint Committee was £4,951,000. This represented a year-on-year reduction in the cost of the service since its creation in 2014.
- 7.3. The outturn position of budget is:

Service Area	Total SVPP £	BCP Council	Dorset Council
SVPP Budget 2021/22	4,951,354	3,234,224	1,717,130
SVPP Outturn 2021/22	4,714,197	3,079,314	1,634,884
SVPP Underspend 2021/22	237,157	154,911	82,246
New Burdens Income to budget costs 2021/22	428,796	280,089	148,707
Total Underspend 2021/22	665,953	435,000	230,953

- 7.4. The SVPP Board (Section 151 officers) met on 10 May 2022 and approved the above year-end position of the budget. As the two Councils in the Partnership have agreed formally through the dissolution process that any underspends or overspends in 2022/23 will be met in line with cost share agreement it was considered the return of the 2021/22 underspends to each Council would be appropriate to support existing Council budgets in 2022/23.
- 7.5. The SVPP Reserves as of 31 March 2022 stands at £672,747 and Board have agreed that this reserve will, as detailed in the letter of agreement for the

dissolution of SVPP be duly held by BCP Council subject to the costs of any referenced redundancies within SVPP.

- 7.6. The SVPP on its formation in 2013/14 had an operational budget of £5,931,000. Since that date the Partnership has for every year delivered an underspend and for this 'final full year' of 2021/22 the operational budget spend (net of New Burdens) was £4,285,401. This represents a 27% reduction in service costs, being £1,645,599 from the 2013/14 position to the 2021/22 outturn.

8. **CONCLUSION**

- 8.1. The SVPP has carried out extensive support for Covid-19 for both Councils.
8.2. Telephony services will be reviewed at the next meeting.
8.3. The Partnership has delivered a considerable budget underspend which is proposed to be returned to the Partner Councils to support their 2022/23 budget positions.
8.4. The Partner Councils have agreed the dissolution of SVPP and a process to support the service in 2022/23.

Appendices

A: Year 7 2021/22 Budget Report

Paul Hudson Partnership Manager. SVPP.

Emma Richens. Project Accountant. BCP Council.

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STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP

2021/22 - Outturn Partner Shares All Services

	Total SVPP £000's	BCP £000's	Dorset £000's
<u>Service Outturn</u>			
SVPP Budgeted Partner Share 21/22	4,951,354	3,234,224	1,717,130
SVPP Outturn Partner Share 21/22	4,714,197	3,079,314	1,634,884
Surplus - Proposed transfer to reserve	237,157	154,911	82,246
New Burdens Balance 21/22 - Proposed transfer to reserve	428,214	279,709	148,505
LA Data Sharing Surplus - Proposed transfer to reserve	582	380	202
Total in year Transfer to reserve	665,953	435,000	230,952
<u>Enforcement Outturn</u>			
Enforcement Costs	324,527	285,624	38,902
Enforcement Fees - collected	(444,295)	(391,038)	(53,257)
Net (Surplus)/deficit on collection	(119,768)	(105,414)	(14,355)
<u>Reserves Position</u>			
Opening Reserve Balance	672,747		
Proposed In year addition 21/22	665,953		
Closing Reserve Balance	1,338,700		

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STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE



Report subject	Dissolution of Stour Valley and Poole Partnership and transfer of functions to BCP Council and Dorset Council
Meeting date	23 May 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To acknowledge the timetable for the dissolution of SVPP by 31 March 2023
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in accordance with the Collaboration Agreement of 1 April 2014 and the Letter of Agreement of 30 March 2022 the SVPP be dissolved as of 31 March 2023 (b) the SVPP Transfer of Functions Plan agreed by SVPP Board on 10 May be duly updated and reviewed to dissolve the Partnership (c) through the transfer of functions the Partner Council contributions to the SVPP Budget will be adjusted to reflect services returning to each Council and that this process may result in 'stranded costs' in SVPP (d) any overspend or underspend of the 2022/23 budget will upon the ending of SVPP be met by the Partner Councils in line with the cost share agreement (e) in accordance with the Letter of Agreement the SVPP Reserves of £672,747 will be held for BCP Council
Reason for recommendations	Joint Committee to oversee the dissolution of the Partnership in accordance with the legal agreement and transfer timetable between BCP Council and Dorset Council
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable - SVPP
Corporate Director	Not applicable - SVPP
Contributors	Paul Hudson, Head of SVPP
Wards	All
Classification	Decision

Background

1. The Joint Committee is required to oversee the management, performance and budget of the SVPP in accordance with the Collaboration Agreement signed in April 2014 and the Deed of Variation between BCP Council and Dorset Council of April 2019.
2. Dorset Council, in accordance with the decision of their Cabinet, duly gave notice to BCP Council to exit the Partnership for 31 March 2023.
3. BCP Council and Dorset Council have agreed that the dissolution of the partnership will take place through 2022/23 by an 'amicable arrangement' and the Partnership will end on 31 March 2023.

Letter of Agreement

4. The Section 151 Officers of BCP Council and Dorset Council signed an 'Agreement' on 30 March 2022 to terminate the Collaboration Agreement.
5. The 'Agreement' is attached as Appendix A

Ending the SVPP

6. In accordance with the 'Agreement' the main actions for the Joint Committee to recognise / oversee are:
 - That the Partnership agreement will terminate on 31 March 2023
 - BCP Council to retain the SVPP Reserve which stands at £672,747 and through this bear the risks of any associated redundancies within SVPP
 - Dorset Council on 31 March 2023 will make an upfront cash contribution of £1,100,000 to BCP Council in recognition of 'sunk costs'
 - The SVPP Pension Fund liability at termination date will be split in line with cost share agreement
 - All SVPP staff, with the exception of the posts referenced for redundancy or where temporary contracts will be terminated will transfer to BCP Council Financial Services.
 - The timetable for transfer of services to BCP Council and Dorset Council aims to have all functions completed by December 2022 and then the SVPP continue with budget review and close-down functions until 31 March 2023 when Section 151 officers formally enact the dissolution process.

Timetable for Function Transfers

7. The SVPP Board on 10 May 2022, in liaison with BCP Council and Dorset Council officers have agreed a dissolution process and for each Council and the SVPP a Transfer Project Plan.
8. The SVPP Transfer Project Plan, which is part of the overall plan is attached as Appendix B.

9. In delivering the Plan each Council will be required to resource appropriately in order to carry out the functions as they transfer.
10. Dorset Council will undertake this in an incremental basis and as functions transfer appropriate budget adjustments will be made within SVPP to support the costs of these services no longer being provided by SVPP.
11. For BCP Council the transfer of functions will be accompanied by the creation of a new Revenues and Benefits service that will bring together the BCP staff and the SVPP staff. This process is likely to take place in one 'tranche' rather than on a phased basis. Staff will be fully consulted throughout the process.
12. To reduce stranded costs to BCP Council there will be some roles that do not transfer to the new Revenues and Benefit service within SVPP and BCP. These roles will be terminated in accordance with BCP Council employment terms and conditions. BCP Human Resources and the Project Team will support this process. It is envisaged that the vacancy control process and temporary contracts will mitigate fully roles that fall outside of senior management in SVPP.

2022/23 Budget

13. The present target budget for 2022/23 is £5,058,051 for the SVPP.
14. The Board of SVPP have agreed that any underspends or overspends within SVPP will be duly dealt with in accordance with the cost share agreement.
15. With services transferring to both Councils there may be areas of 'stranded costs' within the Partnership budget.

Summary of legal implications

16. Not applicable to this report

Summary of human resources implications

17. Not applicable to this report

Summary of environmental impact

18. Not applicable to this report

19. Summary of public health implications

20. Not applicable to this report

Summary of equality implications

21. Each Council will upon designing and delivering their future services review and consider equalities impact assessments to be undertaken.

Summary of risk assessment

22. Risks will be monitored through the 'Agreement' by the SVPP Board until the termination date of 31 March 2023.

Background Papers

- SVPP Budget 2022/23
- DC-BCP-SVPP Transfer Project Plan 10 May 2022 (V5) Board

Appendices

A: Letter of Agreement (the agreement) of 30 March 2022

B: SVPP Transfer Project Plan 10 May 2022 (V5) Board

Date: 30 March 2022
☎ 01305 224177
✉ aidan.dunn@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

CONFIDENTIAL

BY EMAIL AND FIRST CLASS POST

Adam Richens
Director of Finance
Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole
Council
Civic Centre
Bourne Avenue
Bournemouth
BH2 6EB

Dear Adam

Letter of Agreement (the 'Agreement') relating to the Termination of the Collaboration Agreement for the Joint Provision of Services – The Stour Valley and Poole Partnership dated 1 April 2014

Background

The Collaboration Agreement between Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council and The Council of the County and the Town of Poole (the 'Collaboration Agreement') established a single joint committee known as the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership Joint Committee and a Joint Revenues and Benefits Service known as the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership ('SVPP').

With effect from 1 April 2019, in accordance with the provisions in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (Structural Changes) Order 2018, Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council ('BCP') assumed responsibility for the obligations of Christchurch Borough Council and The Council of the County and the Town of Poole under the Collaboration Agreement, and Dorset Council ('DC') assumed responsibility for the obligations of East Dorset District Council and North Dorset District Council under the Collaboration Agreement.

We have agreed to vary and terminate the Collaboration Agreement with effect from the date of this Agreement on the terms set out below.

Notice to Terminate Collaboration Agreement

DC hereby gives twelve (12) months' notice to terminate the Collaboration Agreement with effect from 31 March 2023 ('the Termination Date').

Termination of Collaboration Agreement

We have agreed the following terms with respect to the termination of the Collaboration Agreement and the transfer of the services. These terms replace the existing termination provisions in the Collaboration Agreement:

1. BCP will retain the SVPP reserve.
2. BCP will bear the risk associated with any SVPP redundancies. It is agreed that DC will not bear any cost or liability in relation thereto and BCP will indemnify DC against any successful claim arising in respect thereof.
3. BCP and DC agree that recruitment will be carried out in accordance with the Revenue & Benefits Vacancy Protocol attached at Appendix 1, the terms of which are incorporated into this Agreement.
4. DC will make an upfront cash contribution of £1.1m to BCP on 31 March 2023 in recognition of the sunk costs that BCP will be liable for after the SVPP is terminated.
5. The SVPP Pension Fund liability, as at the Termination Date, will be split in line with the cost share agreement being BCP 65.32% and DC 34.68%.
6. Contracts provided to SVPP by third party suppliers, including key ICT services, will be actively managed by the SVPP Management Team in the expectation that no costs will fall on the parties at the Termination Date.
7. DC will underwrite any costs in relation to paragraphs 3 and 6 above in the expectation that the SVPP Management Team will use all reasonable endeavours to keep such costs as low as possible.
8. The SVPP Management Team will work with the DC Revenue and Benefits Management Team to deliver a successful and orderly exit from the Collaboration Agreement and in doing so avoid the need for any project management or external expertise to be employed or engaged. It will be the duty of both parties to try to minimise any losses arising from the transfer up of the services.
9. DC and BCP have agreed a draft timetable for transferring their services out of SVPP during the course of 2022/23 (as detailed in Appendix 2). The timetable is in an agreed draft format which is subject to change by agreement between the parties and will support discussions during the notice period regarding the transfer of services. The service charge for DC and BCP will be adjusted throughout the year as the direct costs are released as service delivery is transferred. Any under/overspend of SVPP at year end will be shared between BCP and DC based on the cost share ratio of BCP 65.32% and DC 34.68%.

10. Between service of the termination notice and the Termination Date, the parties will continue to observe their obligations under the Collaboration Agreement, ensuring there is no degradation or diminution in the services. Each party will provide such reasonable assistance to the other as may be required and will supply when requested any information which the other reasonably requires in connection with the termination of the Collaboration Agreement.
11. The parties agree that for the purposes of clause 10 of the Collaboration Agreement there will be no relevant transfer of staff for the purposes of TUPE at the Termination Date. BCP agrees to indemnify DC against all liabilities in connection with any claim by any staff employed on the services at the Termination Date (the 'Relevant Transfer Date') arising out of their employment or its termination whether such claim arises before or after the Relevant Transfer Date.
12. Termination of the SVPP Joint Committee will be effective from the same date as termination of the Collaboration Agreement.
13. As clauses 14, 15 and 16 of the Collaboration Agreement are not applicable, DC and BCP confirm they intend to be bound by the terms of this Agreement and accordingly agree that clause 3.1.2 will not apply.
14. As the terms of this Agreement are agreed to be in settlement of all liabilities between the parties arising at the Termination Date or thereafter, DC and BCP confirm they intend to be bound by the terms of this Agreement and accordingly, contrary to the provisions of clause 3.2, clauses 8 (Indemnities), 19.11 (Exploitation of Developments) and 19.14 (Redundancy Costs) will not survive termination of the Collaboration Agreement. All other provisions of the Collaboration Agreement, including any which are expressly stated in the Collaboration Agreement as surviving its termination, or which might otherwise have done so by implication, will also not survive termination, with the exception of clause 23 (Confidentiality) which shall remain in force.
15. With effect from the Termination Date and subject to paragraph 13, DC and BCP are released from their respective obligations under the Collaboration Agreement.
16. In the event of conflict between the terms of this Agreement and the terms of the Collaboration Agreement, the terms of this Agreement shall take precedence.

Yours sincerely




Aidan Dunn
Executive Director for Corporate Development



Dorset
Council

I agree the above terms for and on behalf of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council

Signature  (authorised signatory)

Name (print) Adam Richens

Position Chief Finance Officer

Dated 31 March 2022

Appendix 1

Revenue & Benefits Vacancy Protocol

All DC Revenue and Benefits vacancies will be advertised internally in the first instance, in accordance with the DC vacancy management protocol. Any vacancies that remain unfilled after the internal recruitment process has been completed will be advertised externally.

For the purpose of Revenue and Benefits vacancies only, 'internal' will include all employees of DC and those employed to undertake Revenue and Benefits work at BCP. This does not impact in any way employment conditions at BCP Council or Dorset Council, but would simply allow BCP staff in Revs & Bens to be able to apply for roles at the initial stage of advertising, prior to external advertisement for Dorset Council. If a BCP employee was selected for a role they would follow existing protocols for leaving BCP and joining another employer – being Dorset Council in line with their external recruitment processes.

This Protocol does not affect the duty of DC to give prior consideration to those at risk of redundancy within its own workforce

DC and BCP will cease to be bound by the terms of this Protocol with effect from 1 April 2023.

Appendix 2

Draft Timetable for Transfer of Services out of SVPP to Dorset Council

It has been agreed that the draft timetable detailing the phased return of East and North work to Dorset Council can follow once the Letter of Agreement is agreed and after a meeting has taken place at BCP Council on 5 April 2022.

SVPP TRANSFER TIMETABLE

SVPP Operational Area	Headline Task	Comment	Phase 1 April 2022	Phase 2 May- June 2022	Phase 3 July- Aug 2022	Phase 4 Sept- Oct 2022	Phase 5 Nov 2022	Phase 6 Dec-31 March 2023
Senior Management Team	Appointing Senior Managers from BCP / SVPP Senior Management Team to Head of Service roles providing cover support to SVPP throughout service area transition	Billing Services Development & System Support Services Income Collection & Enforcement Services Welfare Services						
	<i>Dorset Council not applicable</i>	Not applicable						Not applicable
Development & Business Support	Processing of Postal Payments	Transfer of function to BCP Financial Services - includes technical staff processing payment & reconciliations There are manageable numbers to transfer as early as possible to support both administrations						
			30-Apr					Task Completed
Collections - Debtors SVPP	BCP & CBC Debtors & Housing Benefit Overpayment administration and all areas	Transfer of function with BOP/CBC Debtors Specialist Service staff to BCP Income Collection & Enforcement Services						
	Housing Benefit Overpayment administration all areas	Difficulties splitting work between administrations	25-Apr					
Collections - Recovery	Breathing Space	Aligns with BCP Income Collection & Enforcement Services						
		Aligns with DC Finance Team	Apr-22					Task Completed
	All stages including enforcement	Transfer of function to BCP Income Collection & Enforcement Services The two administrations differ in the placement of Recovery stages within teams, this area will need to be handled over a four month period and will have the added restrictions of timetables and court dates. There will be some areas of work such as AOE and Write offs that could be transferred first then the full transfer including enforcement would be programmed over the full period in scope at this stage of recommendations						
Stour Valley Enforcement Agency	Enforcement Agency	Phased transfer of functions to BCP Income Collection & Enforcement Services and file completion for DC - closing of SVEA service in SVPP DC decision TBA						
SVPP - ASC Financial Assessment	Bmth & CBC Team	Transfer of staff to BCP - Team to be established Transfer of staff to BCP - Team to be established						
Social Services Financial Assessment	BOP Team	Transfer of staff to BCP - Team to be established						
Benefits	VEP - Verify Earnings and Pensions	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Difficulties splitting work between administrations						
			Apr-22					Task Completed
	HBAA - Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services New work for both administrations, appropriate to absorb from commencement of HBAA						
			Apr-22					Task Completed
	HBMS- Housing Benefit Matching Service	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Can be accommodated ahead of main phase HB/LCTS work						
	ATLAS - Automated Transfer to Local Authorities System	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Can be accommodated ahead of main phase HB/LCTS work. Daily electronic						
	DHP- Discretionary Housing Payments	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Could possibly be pulled forward?						
	Quality Assurance checking	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Suitability ahead of main phase to discuss						
	Appeals	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services suitability ahead of main phase to discuss						
	Main processing HB/LCTS New Claims and Change of Circumstances	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Final main phase completing all transfer of processing work						
	UCDS - Universal Credit files from DWP	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Needs to align with main phase processing						
	Rent Officer Referrals	Transfer as a 'whole service' to BCP Welfare Services Aligns with final phase						
Revenues & Operations	NFI - All areas (Excl SPD)	Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services SVPP resource limitations, seek return of work						
	NFI - Single Person Discounts	Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services SVPP resource limitations, seek return of work						
	Benefit Visits/welfare/HBAA new duties	Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services Aligns with other tasks transferring back						
	Fraud and Compliance/ DWP liaison	Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services						

		Aligns with other tasks transferring back	
Web moves		Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services Identifiable area of work	
Deaths		Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services Identifiable area of work	
NDR - All Areas of Administration		Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services No value in splitting suggest whole scale move reflecting on nationally required Revaluation	
New property Valuations		Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services Aligns with Inspections and VOA	
Main processing for Council Tax		Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services Align with main phase of HB/LCTS	
BID (Business Improvement Districts)		Transfer of function as a 'whole service' to BCP Billing Services New work to DC R&B and essential recruitment required	
User Administration		Transfer of function to BCP Development & System Support BCP/SVPP full list of users both Academy and Enterprise, User administration which will diminish through phases	
CT/OP/HB/NR/NRBD System Integrities		Transfer of function to BCP Development & System Support BCP/SVPP full list of users both Academy and Enterprise, User administration which will diminish through phases - Impacts all other DC R&B Teams	
Insight Reports		Transfer of function to BCP Development & System Support Aligns with Cloud Project	
Complaints		Contained in each service area administration Some already supported	
BACS related resulting administrations		Transfer of function to BCP Development & System Support ADDACS/AUDIS/ARRUDS	
CT- VO- Valuation Office Reports		Transfer of function to BCP Development & System Support Aligning with VOA completion	
Development & Business Support	Whole of SVPP Service Support Team - including Scanning and Indexing	Transfer of Business Support Team to BCP Development & System Support & maintain support to SVPP to termination date	
	Scanning and Indexing	Work has already been transferring following the Data Merge, this will significantly escalate following annual billing and tail off until a final positioning for customers	
BCP CAT provisions to SVPP	Customer contact and admin functions	Separate budget area and will continue until end SVPP Will reduce as a consequence of other areas of transfer and customers migration to DC	
SVPP SMT / BOARD / JOINT COMMITTEE	Budget monitoring/performance monitoring & Governance / Board etc	All phases of transfer	
SVPP Staff / Temporary contracts	Where not selected to BCP issue notice to end contract	Ending of fixed Term contracts for 31/3/23 or transfer to BCP through vacancy control	
External Contracts	Where contract not inherited by BCP	Terminate upon review for end of SVPP SouthWest Comms 0345 number Civica Enforcement Software Victoria Forms (remove DC) Northgate (remove DC & new BCP)	
Alignment of SVPP & BCP Staff	SVPP STAFF TRANSFER	Establish BCP HR Working Party Agree BCP Staff Budget (Post SVPP) Interim Alignment of Debtors Teams Structure Sign off HR & Dir Finance Consult Staff transfer on Structure Staff Transfer to BCP R&B Roles	Task Completed

SVPP FORWARD PLAN – DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP 2022/23

Report title	Author	Meeting	Meeting date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal acknowledgement of 'notice to end SVPP' by amicable separation. SVPP / BCP / DC Transfer of Functions – Project Plan Performance & Budget Review 2021/22 Forward Plan – Final Year SVPP 		SVPP BOARD MEETING	2.00PM -10 May 2022
		SCRUTINY PANEL	18 May 2022 6.00PM - SVPP Boardroom
		JOINT COMMITTEE	23 May 2022 2.00PM – Civic Suite Poole
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of Functions – Review Phases & adjustments SVPP / BCP Workforce transfer consultation SVPP Performance & Budget 2021/22 & 2022/23 		SVPP BOARD MEETING	10.00 AM - 8 June 2022
			TBA - August 2022
		SCRUTINY PANEL	7 September 2022 6.00PM SVPP Boardroom
		JOINT COMMITTEE	12 September 2022 2.00PM – BCP Civic Centre
<div>Page 27</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of Functions – Review Phases and adjustments Performance & Budget Review Update on staffing transfers from SVPP to BCP Contracts register review <p><i>End of Quarter 3 (31 Dec 2022) objective is transfer of all operational functions from SVPP to BCP / Dorset service delivery.</i></p>		SVPP BOARD MEETING	TBA Sep 2022
			TBA Nov 2022
		SCRUTINY PANEL	7 December 2022 6.00PM - SVPP Boardroom
		JOINT COMMITTEE	12 December 2022 2.00PM – BCP Civic Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Transfer of Functions & SVPP Dissolution procedure – Phase 6 (including termination of roles by BCP for SVPP) Agree closedown of accounts for SVPP Update on final budget for Q3 and year-end estimate 		SVPP BOARD MEETING	TBA Jan 2023
		SCRUTINY PANEL	6.00 PM - 18 Jan 2023 SVPP Boardroom
		JOINT COMMITTEE	2.00PM 30 January 2023 BCP Civic Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal Dissolution 'sign off' meeting S151 Agreement to produce at a set time formal closure accounts of SVPP in accordance with Agreement 	AR	Special Meeting S151 Officers and Chair SVPP Joint Committee & Scrutiny Panel	31 March 2023 TBA – Formal Closure SVPP

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