

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 October 2024 at 10.15 am

Present:-

Cllr M Earl – Chairman

Cllr M Cox – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr D Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr J Hanna,
Cllr R Herrett, Cllr A Martin, Cllr S Moore and Cllr K Wilson

Also in attendance: Cllr P Canavan and Cllr G Farquhar

Also in attendance virtually: Cllr S Bartlett and Cllr S Carr-Brown

67. Apologies

There were no apologies.

68. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

69. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

70. Public Issues

Cabinet was advised that there were no public issues on this occasion.

71. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet was advised that there were no additional recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on items not otherwise indicated on the Cabinet agenda on this occasion.

72. Westbourne Plus

The Portfolio Holder for Finance 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.

Cabinet was advised that the report presented a proposal to dispose of the former Westbourne Plus site in Alumhurst Road, Westbourne. In relation to this Cabinet was informed that following Cabinet's adoption of the Adult

Day Opportunities Strategy in March 2024 the Westbourne Plus site had been declared surplus.

Cabinet was advised that the proposal to disposal of former Westbourne Plus was considered by the cross-party strategic asset disposal working group on the 4 October 2024, and that the draft minutes of this meeting were presented as a confidential appendix to this report (Appendix B).

Cabinet was further advised that the approved recommendation of the cross-party working group was to endorse the proposal, and that similarly, the proposal had been endorsed by the two local ward councillors who also attended the working group.

Confirmation was sought that there was access to alternative provisions for those who previously used the facilities.

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (a) note the confidential draft minutes and the recommendations of the Cross-Party Asset Disposal Working Group meeting held on the 4 October 2024; and**
- (b) subject to a viable alternative being confirmed before the Council meeting on the 10 December 2024, approve the disposal on an open market basis of the former Westbourne Plus site including St Ambrose Cottage on such terms to be approved by the Director of Finance also acting in his capacity as Corporate Property Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Finance

Reason

To obtain approval for the disposal of the former Westbourne Plus site.

73. Hengistbury Head Visitor Centre Lottery funding

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy 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.

Cabinet was advised that the Hengistbury Head visitor centre was opened in 2014 using significant funds from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and that 10 years on and a visitor centre business resilience and improvement bid for further funding of £203,000 has been successful. The Portfolio Holder advised of the importance of this heritage area and the priorities for the funding. It was hoped that this would raise the profile of the area.

An issue was raised in regarding increasing footfall and the tendering of a pop-up refreshment offer in the area prior to the catering offer being established.

The Cabinet welcomed the grants funding for Hengistbury Head Visitor Centre.

RESOLVED that: -

£203,000 of external grant funds from the National Lottery Heritage Fund is accepted and used as part of a £251,000 project with the balance to be met from Heathland Mitigation funding.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Climate Response, Environment and Energy

Reason

- Delivers against the Corporate Strategy for people and nature, as well as supporting the Heathland Mitigation SPD and priorities within the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Secures important external grant funding
- Match funding is being provided from existing capital funds, no revenue match funding is required
- Supports the business development and resilience of the centre, with an aim of increasing income generation and reducing reliance on revenue funds
- Provides funding to explore and test new business models as well as key improvements such as signage and increasing footfall to the centre
- Enhances the reputation of the centre as a nationally and regionally important for both archaeology and for high quality access to nature

74. Aspire Adoption Annual Report 2023-2024

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills 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.

Cabinet was advised that the report was the seventh annual adoption report presented by Aspire Adoption, summarising the work of the agency in the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, and that it had been written to provide the Council with an opportunity to satisfy itself that the requirements of the Statutory Adoption Guidance 2013 and the Adoption Minimum Standards 2014 had been met.

Cabinet was informed that the report provided a summary of the comprehensive self-evaluation of Aspire Regional Adoption Agency: -

- Aspire were able to recruit adopters for those children who are identified as having characteristics that make them 'harder to place' such as sibling groups, those with additional learning and health needs, and older children.
- The close partner relationships and tracking Aspire undertake with BCP and Dorset means that by the time the Placement Order is made, we will know whether Aspire has suitable adopters or not and can immediately look elsewhere to avoid delay for children.

- 85% of all the children placed for adoption were placed with Aspire adopters.
- Aspire placed 37 children in early permanence placements meaning children were placed once with a family who was likely to become their permanent family, resulting in less moves and more stability for those children.
- Aspire have improved the timeliness of the adoption journey for children, performing better than the national average and our statistical neighbours. Which also means minimal delay for those children whose plans are adoption and to be settled in a 'forever' family.
- Aspire have been able to provide support to adopters and Special Guardians via direct support and using the Adoption and Special Guardian Support Fund (ASGSF), meaning less disruptions for adopters and special guardians.
- There were 965 applications made to the ASGSF fund in 2023/24 which relates to £730,525.60 of funding for therapeutic input for those Adoptive and Special Guardian's within the area.

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills advised that there was an error within the Annual Report and that Cabinet approval was subject to the overspend stated in paragraph 9.2 being amended to '£185,000'.

It was noted that there had been some misunderstanding recently around the establishment of a company with the name aspire, this is separate to Aspire Adoption Services and it was agreed earlier this year to close this company, which had remained dormant, down.

It was seen as a positive that there were more people wanting to adopt than children available for adoption and Aspire could therefore provide adopters for other areas.

RESOLVED that: -

Cabinet approved the Aspire Adoption Annual Report and Statement of Purpose.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Children, Young People, Education and Skills

Reason

Cabinet is satisfied that the Aspire Statement of Purpose accurately describes the activities that the agency discharges on behalf of BCP Council and the Annual Report satisfies that these activities were discharged to a high standard in the last year.

75. Transforming Urgent and Emergency Care Services

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that a system-wide transformation programme to transform and improve urgent and emergency care services for Dorset residents is underway.

Cabinet was informed that the programme involved health and care partners and that it was anticipated that the transformation programme will take 2 years to deliver and should substantially reduce the number of people admitted into hospital when better outcomes could be achieved elsewhere and should result in fewer people waiting in hospital to be discharged while ongoing care is arranged.

Further to this Cabinet was advised that over the medium term, the programme should also deliver financial benefits to the council as fewer people are placed in long term residential care placements and smaller homecare packages are required.

The Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised that the report had not been considered by the Committee and asked the Cabinet to add an additional recommendation to invite the Scrutiny Committee to consider this issue and provide ongoing scrutiny of the agreement as it was important that the public were reassured about this issue. The Portfolio Holder supported the suggested recommendation.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board asked for clarification around the potential financial commitment of the Council should the Partnership agreement go ahead. The financial implications were still being discussed with the partners, BCP Council spend around £198million. Expected that it could deliver financial benefits of around £25million per year in, potential £4.5 million in annual savings. Fee for delivering the services would be a proportion of the savings which are accrued.

It was confirmed that more detail would be provided to the Council in December once further progress had been made. It was confirmed that there was no financial commitment being undertaken by the Cabinet in the decision being considered.

Cabinet made clear that the eventual partnership agreement would need to ensure that the consultancy fees would be more than offset by the financial savings achieved. The Portfolio Holder felt that it was important to ensure that this issue was discussed publicly by the Cabinet particularly in the context of the Council's current financial situation.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) Note the work underway across the Dorset health and care system to transform urgent and emergency care services.**
- (b) Delegate to the Corporate Director for Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of**

Finance, authority to negotiate a Partnership Agreement with Dorset health and care partners to undertake the proposed transformation programme, based on a share of cost and benefits.

- (c) Invite the Corporate Director for Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Finance, to bring forward a Partnership Agreement for ratification by Council, provided that the agreed programme is achievable and affordable and anticipated benefits to the Council are significantly in excess of costs.**
- (d) Invite the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the approach to the partnership agreement and to provide regular scrutiny of progress towards benefits and sustainable change.**

Voting: Nem.Con (1 abstention)

Portfolio Holder: Health and Wellbeing

Reason

To provide authority to continue participating in the system-wide transformation programme to improve urgent and emergency care outcomes of Dorset residents. The additional recommendation was included to ensure that as the programme moves forward over the next 2 years, there was scrutiny of the of the project to check it was working and the individual and financial benefits were being delivered.

76. Urgent Decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution

Cabinet was advised that no urgent decisions had been taken in accordance with the Constitution since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

77. Cabinet Forward Plan

The Leader advised that the latest Cabinet Forward Plan had been published on the Council's website on 24 October.

The meeting ended at 11.27 am

CHAIRMAN