

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 May 2025 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 A Martin,
Cllr S Moore and Cllr K Wilson

Also in attendance: Cllr P Canavan (Chair of the Health and Adults Social Care Overview
& Scrutiny Committee)

Also in attendance
virtually: Cllr K Salmon (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board)

Apologies: Cllr R Herrett

1. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of apologies being recorded from Councillor Mike Cox and Councillor Jeff Hanna.

3. Public Issues

Cabinet was advised that there had been no petitions, questions or statements submitted by members of the public on this occasion.

4. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

In opening the item the Leader of the Council expressed thanks to Councillor Stephen Bartlett who had recently stepped down as Chair of the Board, for all his hard work and thorough scrutiny.

Further to this the Leader welcomed Councillor Kate Salmon as the newly appointed Chair of the Board.

Councillor Kate Salmon addressed the Cabinet also firstly expressing thanks to Councillor Stephen Bartlett for his Chairmanship of the Board for the previous 5 years, and then to advise that the following recommendations had been agreed by the Board at the previous evenings meeting for submission to Cabinet for consideration: -

Overview and Scrutiny Board Agenda Item 11 ‘Arts and Culture Funding’

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed the following recommendations to Cabinet on this item:

- 1. O&S Board recognise the value of the National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs), funded by BCP Council, to health and well-being, youth and the local economy; and urge Cabinet to protect the funding BCP currently provides.*
- 2. O&S Board recommend that Cabinet endorse the work that's been done with schools by the NPOs and take action to encourage all schools to take part.*
- 3. O&S Board recommend that Cabinet explore whether it would be of benefit for a councillor to be appointed as a member on the boards of any or all of the NPO organisations.*

(Unanimous Decisions)

- 4. O&S Board recommend that Cabinet ensure that the Arts by the Sea Festival goes ahead next year.*

(Majority Decision)

The Leader thanked the Board for their recommendations and called on the Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communications and Culture to respond.

Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communications and Culture thanked the Board for their comprehensive discussion and for the recommendations.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board requested that the Board receive a clear response on the recommendations presented today and for future recommendations and in relation to this the Leader advised that the portfolio holders could provide feedback to the Board.

5. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

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 an update on Local Government Funding Reforms and the government Spring Statement.
- Aimed to ensure the council presents a legally balanced 2026/27 budget.
- Proposed a budget planning process and timeline for key financial reports; and
- Proposed a financial strategy to support the delivery of a robust and financially sustainable budget for 2026/27.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor Salmon addressed the Cabinet advising that at the meeting the previous evening the Board following a wide-ranging debate around the item, particularly in

respect of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) had supported the recommendations within the report.

The Chair of the Health and Adults Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Canavan addressed the Cabinet in relation to the scrutiny work which had taken place on the budget. In relation to this Councillor Canavan advised that whilst it had been useful there had been a discussion recently with the Scrutiny Chairs on ways in which budget scrutiny could be carried out differently and the way in which work is prioritised in the future.

A number of Cabinet members spoke on the report highlighting the importance of having the right support from national government particularly with regards to the Dedicated Schools Grant.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) approved the budget timetable and process as set out in Appendix B;**
- (b) endorsed the scenario planning exercise that guides the potential level of activity that may now be needed to present a legally balance budget for 2026/27; and**
- (c) approved the financial strategy designed to support the ongoing delivery of a balanced 2026/27 Budget and MTFP as set out in Appendix C.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Finance

Reason

To comply with accounting codes of practice and best practice which requires councils to have a rolling multi-year medium term financial plan.

To comply with the Councils Constitution and the requirement to have as a minimum a 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan

To provide Cabinet with the latest high-level overview of the medium-term financial plan.

To present a proposed financial strategy to support the ongoing delivery of a balanced budget for 2026/27

6. BCP Local Plan next steps, updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Leader of the Council 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 following Stage 1 examination hearings on the draft BCP Local Plan in January 2025, the Inspectors provided a post hearing letter in early March 2025.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the letter stated that the Council had failed to adequately discharge the Duty to Cooperate, and that this was not something that can be rectified during the examination.

Cabinet was therefore recommended to withdraw the draft BCP Local Plan from examination.

Cabinet was informed that the associated Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule that was submitted for its own examination at the same time is also recommended to be withdrawn due its strong ties with the draft Local Plan.

Cabinet was advised that if Cabinet and Council agree the withdrawal of the Local Plan and CIL Charging Schedule, a new Local Plan will need to be prepared, and that a timetable (Local Development Scheme - LDS) for this new Plan is recommended in Appendix 1.

Cabinet was further advised that to facilitate community involvement and good plan making and development management processes, an updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is also recommended for Cabinet to agree at Appendix 2.

In presenting the report the Leader emphasised the need to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply and of the mandatory housing numbers.

Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet highlighting that the report is due to be scrutinised by the Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting at their meeting the next day and questioned whether this was the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. In addition Councillor Canavan stressed the importance of meeting the mandatory housing targets in order to retain control.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor Kate Salmon advised that whilst the item wasn't on the agenda for the previous evenings meeting of the Board that the item had been raised at the end of the meeting and the question raised as to whether the Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee (E&P O&S Committee) was the appropriate Committee. In relation to this the Chair of the Board advised that whilst it falls under the remit of the E&P O&S Committee that the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be meeting to discuss how all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees could be involved in the scrutiny of this going forwards.

Cabinet members spoke raising concern with regards to the challenging mandatory housing targets and of the importance of ensuring the appropriate infrastructure is in place and that the housing which is built is that which is required.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: -

- (a) recommends to Council that the draft BCP Local Plan be withdrawn from examination;**
- (b) recommends to Council that the draft BCP CIL Charging Schedule be withdrawn from examination;**
- (c) agrees to the publication of a new Local Development Scheme at Appendix 1 and submission to Government, subject to Council agreement to withdraw the draft BCP Local Plan under recommendation a.**

(d) agrees the updated Statement of Community Involvement at Appendix 2.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Leader of the Council

Reason

The draft BCP Local Plan has not been supported by the Inspectors' at examination Stage 1.

Local Authorities are required to produce, and keep up to date, a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the future planning documents the Council will be producing within a three-year period and the timescales and key milestones for their preparation. A new LDS is needed if the Council chooses to withdraw the draft BCP Local Plan and start work on a new BCP Local Plan.

To update the SCI for the purpose of good planning.

7. Our Place and Environment: Consolidated Active Travel Fund 2025/26

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 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the Council has been allocated and accepted £1.459m Consolidated Active Travel Fund (CATF) grant from Active Travel England (ATE) for walking, wheeling and cycling improvements to deliver schemes aligned with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) approved by Council in May 2022.

In relation to this Cabinet was advised that the award comprises £1.128m of capital and £331k of revenue funding.

Cabinet was informed that the report recommended how the grant award should be invested and sought delegation to facilitate delivery.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: -

(a) recommends to Council delegation of the investment of the £1.459m of Consolidated Active Travel Fund 2025/26 to the Service Director for Planning & Transport in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Climate Response, Environment and Energy

Reason

To set out recommended investment of the CATF 2025/26 award and seek Council approval to deliver in line with the constitution and financial regulations delegations.

The investment of the ATF funding is aligned with the LCWIP; Council's Corporate Strategy; and the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

8. Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum Arts Council England (ACE) Museum Estate and Development (MEND) Grant

The Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communications and Culture 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 in August 2024 the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum applied for a grant from Arts Council England (ACE)'s Museum Estate and Development Fund Round 4, to fund urgent repair work on the fabric of the building.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that in February 2025, ACE wrote to confirm success and an allocation of £1,500,817, match funded by £250,000 from CIL and £109,317 from legacies to the Museum charity, making a total project grant of £1,860,134.

Cabinet was advised that this paper informed Cabinet of this success and sought delegation to formally accept the grant and invest awarded money and match funds in line with the application to ACE.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: -

- (a) recommends Council to accept the £1,500,817 from Arts Council England MEND Round 4 and delegates authority to the Director of Customer & Property to complete the formal acceptance process on behalf of the Council**
- (b) notes the match funding of £250,000 from CIL and £109,317 from restricted legacies; and**
- (c) approves their investment in the project outcomes of urgent repairs and renewals outlined in the application to ACE**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Customer, Communications and Culture

Reason

Financial Regulations require the acceptance of external funding and approval of any project over £1million by full Council.

ACE require Cabinet approval before payment can be made.

The grant will be spent on urgent remedial maintenance of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum (of which BCP Council is sole trustee) to ensure it can remain open and survive.

9. BCP Complaints Policy

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

Cabinet was advised that an effective complaints process demonstrates commitment to accountability, fosters trust amongst customers and stakeholders, and provides a structured way to address concerns appropriately and promptly.

Cabinet was informed that recent revisions to the Local Government Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code had introduced changes designed to enhance the efficiency, transparency and responsiveness of local authorities in handling complaints, and that these modifications affect the operations and policies of all UK local authorities.

Cabinet was advised that the BCP Council Complaints Policy had been updated and additionally, a separate new policy had also been prepared regarding Unreasonable Actions, as also recommended by the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor Kate Salmon addressed the Cabinet advising that the Board had thoroughly debated the report at the previous evenings meeting, and that whilst no formal recommendations had been submitted by the Board that the Board had welcomed the report and expressed a need for there to be a joined up approach across the Council.

Cabinet members expressed thanks to officers for their work on this report with the Portfolio Holder advising that he would work with officers as this process goes forwards.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) approves the updated BCP Complaints policy; and**
- (b) approves the Unreasonable Actions Policy**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Customer, Communications and Culture

Reason

These policies now reflect the changes at a national level that are being introduced by the Local Government Ombudsman.

10. 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.

11. Cabinet Forward Plan

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

The meeting ended at 11.55 am

CHAIRMAN