

Notice of Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 26 November 2025 at 10.15 am

Venue: HMS Phoebe, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY



Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr M Earl

Vice Chairman:

Cllr M Cox

Cllr D Brown
Cllr R Burton
Cllr A Hadley

Cllr J Hanna
Cllr R Herrett
Cllr A Martin

Cllr S Moore
Cllr K Wilson

All Members of the Cabinet 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=6068>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Sarah Culwick (01202 817615) on 01202 096660 or email democratic.services@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

AIDAN DUNN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

18 November 2025

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

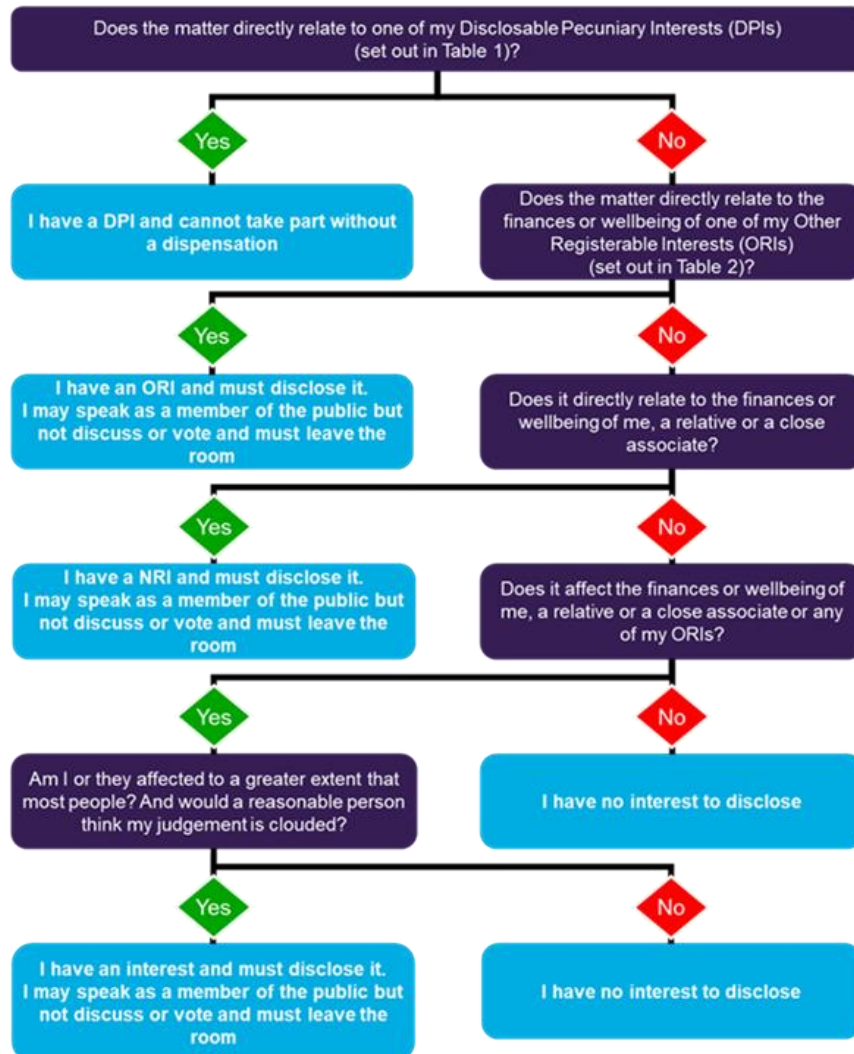


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

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



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

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 Councillors.

2. 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.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 30 October 2025.

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4. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution. Further information on the requirements for submitting these is available to view at the following link:-

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

The deadline for the submission of public questions is mid-day on Thursday 20 November 2025 [mid-day 3 clear working days before the meeting].

The deadline for the submission of a statement is mid-day on Tuesday 25 November 2025 [mid-day the working day before the meeting].

The deadline for the submission of a petition is Wednesday 12 November 2025 [10 working days before the meeting].

5. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

To consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny committees on items not otherwise included on the Cabinet Agenda.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

6. Council Budget Monitoring 2025/26 at Quarter Two

21 - 60

This report provides the quarter two 2025/26 projected financial outturn information for the general fund, capital programme, housing revenue account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

The quarter one position was a projected overspend of £3.7m reflecting the increasing financial challenges facing local government from social care demand within both adults and children's services. Demand in these areas has grown further over the second quarter but with reduced expenditure in other services limiting the increase in the projected overspend to £4.2 million.

7. Individual Performance Framework Update	61 - 72
BCP Council's individual performance framework seeks to improve employee engagement, productivity, efficiency, and innovation. The framework emphasises career development, wellbeing, and retention to achieve better outcomes and services for communities and residents and deliver our shared vision for BCP Council. As set out in our People and Culture Strategy 2023-2027, BCP Council aims to develop a high-performance culture, and to increase fairness and transparency in our performance decisions. The purpose of this report is to review the effectiveness of BCP Council's individual performance management framework introduced in April 2024 and outline plans to enhance the framework over the next 12 months.	
8. Vitality Stadium land - draft heads of terms	73 - 146
AFC Bournemouth approached BCP Council in relation to their plans to expand Vitality Stadium at Kings Park. On 1 October 2025 and on 14 October 2025, Cabinet and Council respectively approved the recommendations that officers negotiate Heads of Terms in relation to Option C (two leases) and then return to Cabinet and Council for a decision relating to those Heads of Terms. This report presents the negotiated Heads of Terms and associated values (agreed in principle, without prejudice and subject to contract and Council approval) agreed with AFC Bournemouth and recommends that they are accepted. This report requests authority for officers to instruct BCP's property legal team accordingly and progress the leases to completion. The information in the appendices is commercially sensitive. It is requested that the appendices are treated confidentially.	
9. BCP Homes Asset Management Plan and Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan	147 - 176
This report presents the BCP Homes Asset Management Plan and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan principles for approval. The HRA Business Plan is a strategic financial framework that ensures the long-term sustainability of council housing by aligning investment in existing homes, compliance, decarbonisation, and new housing supply with prudent financial management. The plan is underpinned by robust stock condition data, prudent financial assumptions, and a sustainable borrowing strategy. It supports the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35, significant investment in existing stock, and ongoing compliance with regulatory standards. The plan prioritises financial resilience, risk management, and alignment with corporate priorities such as decarbonisation and tenant engagement. Adoption of these recommendations will ensure BCP Homes continues to provide safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes, while maintaining the financial viability of the HRA and supporting the Council's wider social and environmental objectives.	

10.	Poole Crematorium - update and next stage opportunity	177 - 184
	To feedback to Cabinet summary results of early market engagement completed in April 2024 and current service performance. To seek Cabinet approval to go to market to procure a concessionaire to operate Poole Crematorium, enabling the reintroduction of cremation services at the site through a third-party provider.	
11.	Sea Cliff and Chine Management	185 - 194
	Along the BCP coastline there is approximately 15.5 miles of sea cliffs and chines. The responsibility for much of the management of the sea cliffs and chines falls to BCP Council (either as landowner or leaseholder). In order to address cliff slips and falls, past engineering efforts during the 20th century have introduced various forms of cliff drainage and stabilisation works including pinning and netting, slope regrading and installation of over 700 sand drains along large sections of the BCP coast. Engineering that would cost many tens of £millions at today's prices Ongoing work to develop a new BCP cliff management strategy has identified that costs for cliff management along the BCP frontage over the next 20 years are currently estimated to be in excess of £41m. In order to address some of the issues being identified in the immediate term, one-off funding of £1.446m has been allocated by the finance team for cliff management over this financial year and next. It is planned to prioritise this funding on items identified through the Cliff Management Working Group.	
12.	Home to School Transport	195 - 264
	This report presents the findings of a strategic review undertaken by an external provider into the Local Authority's home to school transport arrangements focussing on our arrangements and provision for children and young people pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The key objective of the review was to identify strategic and operational opportunities that support the development of independent travel options and make improvements to how home-to-school transport is delivered with a focus on potential efficiencies and service improvement. It identifies key opportunities to introduce travel options that meet individual needs and help prepare young people for adulthood and promote long-term independence. Key issues include the complexity of transport arrangements, market capacity challenges, and the need for improved commissioning models that deliver better outcomes and value for money. The report presents a range of options and opportunities for future delivery and contained details of the investment necessary to achieve cashable savings and cost avoidance. This report seeks approval to proceed with a formal tendering exercise to commission an external provider to implement a phased delivery of change proposals that encourage independent travel, build independence and reduce journey times for children and young people. The approach will be supportive of young people's development to help young people gain confidence and practical skills for travelling safely on their own will result in making school transport more efficient and sustainable.	

13.	Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-2026	265 - 334
To present the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26. There is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. This report summarises the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26, with a copy of the Plan appended. The Youth Justice Plan needs to be approved by the full Council.		
14.	Exclusion of Press and Public	
In relation to the item of business appearing below, the Committee is asked to consider the following resolution: - ‘That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs such interest in disclosing the information.’		
15.	Poole Business Improvement District (BID)	335 - 362
Poole Business Improvement District’s (BID) second 5-year term will finish in June 2026. The BID is currently preparing for a new ballot on 16 March 2026 for a third term. This report seeks Cabinet approval to allow Poole BID to go to ballot for a third term.		
16.	Urgent Decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution	
The Chief Executive to report on any decisions taken under urgency provisions in accordance with the Constitution.		
17.	Cabinet Forward Plan	363 - 380
To consider the latest version of the Cabinet Forward Plan for approval.		

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.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 October 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 R Herrett, Cllr A Martin, Cllr S Moore and Cllr K Wilson

Also in attendance: Cllr P Canavan

Also in attendance virtually: Cllr J Butt, Cllr S Carr-Brown and Cllr K Salmon

59. Declarations of Interests

The Leader, Cllr M Earl declared an other interest in agenda item 8, BCP Council Libraries – Draft Library Strategy due to founding and involvement with the Branksome and Rossmore Community Fridge and in agenda items 11, 12 and 13, BCP Homes related Cabinet reports due to involvement with the Phylton Close Defibrillator Fundraising Committee.

The Leader, Cllr M Earl also declared an other registerable interest in agenda item 9, Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) closure as the current Chair, they would leave the meeting for the duration of this item.

Cllr S Moore declared an other interest in agenda item 8, BCP Council Libraries – Draft Library Strategy as a member of the friends of Branksome Library.

The Leader, Cllr M Earl declared an interest in agenda item 14- Vehicles and Plant Replacement- Building Maintenance and Construction Works Teams as they were a member of Seascope Homes.

Cllr K Wilson declared other interests in agenda item 14, Vehicles and Plant Replacement- Building Maintenance and Construction Works Teams as he was a member of Seascope, Seascope Homes and BBML

60. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to an amendment to the second paragraph of clause 48 on the Residents' Card to insert the word 'surface' prior to car-parks.

61. Public Issues

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

62. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet was advised that one recommendation had been received from the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on items not otherwise indicated on the Cabinet agenda.

63. 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:

- (a) Aimed to ensure the council presents a legally balanced 2026/27 budget;
- (b) Presented an update on the MTFP position of the council;
- (c) Presented an update on the letters of the Leader of the Council and Director of Finance in writing to Government to seek assurance around the council's ability to continue to cashflow the significant and growing Dedicated Schools Grants deficit within the statutory framework; and
- (d) Provided details of the council's responses to two government consultation documents namely the Local Government Fair Funding Review and Modernising and Improving the administration of council tax.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor Kate Salmon addressed the Cabinet advising that at their recent meeting the Board had considered the Budget report and they had also considered a number of issues as part of the Scrutiny of the budget setting process and recommended to Cabinet that as part of the Budgetsetting process. consideration be given to utilising receipts from the existing surplus asset disposal programme for 2026/27 to address some of the repairs and maintenance of publicly facing assets.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) acknowledged the ongoing progress being made to address the funding gap for 2026/27;**
- (b) endorsed the latest position regarding the developing 2026/27 Budget and MTFP position;**
- (c) noted the update on the conversation with government around the impact that the DSG deficit is having on the financial sustainability of the council; and**
- (d) continue to express concern to government at the existential challenge to the Councils ability to set a legally balanced**

budget for 2026/27 posed by having the lack of cash to fund the special educational needs and disability service (SEND);

- (e) Request the Leader and CEO to write to the Ministers for Education and Local Government to demand a meeting to resolve how BCP finances the DSG deficit in such a way as the Councils general fund is not affected**
- (f) Ask BCPs local MP's to write in support of the above at 'e'.**

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 provide Cabinet with the latest high-level overview of the 2026/27 Budget and 3-year medium-term financial plan.

To provide an update on the letters submitted to MHCLG in July 2025 regarding the difficulties presented by the accumulating DSG deficit.

The reason for the additional recommendations at 'e' and 'f', was the serious concerns of the Cabinet regarding the DSG deficit and ongoing cashflow issues to fund the deficit position interest which had now reached £6million.

64. Upton Park Farm - Surrender of lease

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 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report presented a proposal to agree to the surrender the whole of the lease of Upton Park Farm, Poole Road, Poole BH16 5LW dated 5 June 2014 and made between (1) The Council of the Borough & County of the Town of Poole and (2) William Robert Pennington and Others ("Lease") and simultaneous payment of compensation or premium to the tenant of the Lease (subject to specialist agricultural legal advice).

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (a) note the recommendations of the Cross-Party Strategic Asset Disposal Working Group on 19 September 2025; and**
- (b) approve to purchase the Farm Business Tenancy at Upton Park Farm, on such terms to be approved by the Director of Finance 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 to surrender the Lease at Upton Park Farm.

65. Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) Closure

The order of business was varied to take this item next. The Leader left the meeting for the duration of this item and the Cabinet was chaired by the Vice-Chair. The Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations 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 Government had set out its expectation that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) will receive no further funding and provided guidance as to how their remaining functions should be integrated into Local Authorities.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that Council officers from BCP Council and Dorset Council (the accountable body for Dorset LEP) had worked through the detail, implications and necessary actions to support integration of functions where possible from Dorset LEP (DLEP) and the closure of the LEP.

Cabinet was advised that the report sought approval for the acceptance of the £4,640,160.06 of funds from the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership for the purpose of achieving a benefit to the community in the BCP region, in line with the aims and objectives of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that the newly formed BCP Growth Board would play an advisory role in how funding is allocated, and a further Cabinet report would be brought for consideration of its recommendations as part of the BCP Growth Plan required for delivery in March 2026.

The Portfolio Holder set out a number of minor amendments to the recommendations as set out in the report and also noted a minor recommendation that paragraph 29 should refer to paragraph 28.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) **In its capacity as a Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (CIC) company member, to ratify the decision to transfer and accept the following funds to BCP Council, subject to approval of the 24-25 DLEP accounts by the DLEP board. (Please note, that interest continues to be applied until the payment is made to BCP upon agreement. The figures below include interest up to 31st March 2025.)**

£866,951.68 revenue

£2,498,208.50 capital

£1,275,000 capital loan repayments due

- (b) **Agrees to ringfence funds for the benefit of the community and to delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial**

Operations to allocate funding in consultation with the BCP Growth Board.

- (c) Notes the resignation of the Leader of the Council from the DLEP Board on successful transfer of the above funds.**
- (d) Notes that Dorset Council will formally close the DLEP following successful transfer of the above funds.**
- (e) Delegates authority to the Director of Law and Governance to finalise any legal documentation required**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations

Reason

The acceptance of the revenue and capital funding for community benefits in the BCP Council area will help deliver the Council's Corporate Strategy and wider economic and social objectives:

- Our inclusive, vibrant and sustainable economy supports our communities to thrive
- Revitalised high streets and regenerated key sites create new opportunities Employment is available for everyone and helps create value in our communities
- Skills are continually developed, and people can access lifelong learning

Cllr M Cox left the meeting at the conclusion of this item at 11:13am.

66. BCP Council Libraries – Draft Library Strategy

The Portfolio Holder 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 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report updated on the progress which had been made with the future library strategy following two previous reports in February and December 2024.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the report set out the key drivers for the library strategy, detailing the suggested future focus of the library service, the priorities for investment, and the action plan required to ensure we can continue to deliver an efficient and comprehensive service for the future.

Cabinet was informed that the work to underpin the strategy had provided a clearer understanding of where to target investment to bring improvements for our communities, increasing access, and modelling provision within clusters.

Cabinet was advised that the vision was an ambitious one, focussed on delivering improvements and cementing the value of libraries within our communities, and that whilst there is undoubtedly a resource challenge, as

there is in delivering all council services, the strategy remains an ambitious statement of intent.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that working with partners, the community, and internal teams, the council will develop preparedness for funding opportunities and focus on greater collaboration to ensure libraries deliver in a time of financial stress and even greater societal challenge, and that it was anticipated that following endorsement of the draft Library Strategy, any changes of provision to be proposed within the life of the strategy will undergo a second stage consultation process, as appropriate.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor Kate Salmon addressed the Cabinet advising that at their recent meeting the Board had considered this report and supported the recommendations as set out in the report but also made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That as part of the Library Strategy it looks to maintain staffed hours in libraries, especially in the afternoon period, as open access is rolled out further in the future.
2. That the Library Services put together a list of smaller neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Bids to put to Councillors and Neighbourhood Forums immediately upon the opening of future CIL rounds

The Portfolio Holder acknowledged that there was no intention to reduce staffed hours in BCP Libraries as the open access provision was rolled out.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) endorse the draft Library Strategy as an ambitious plan to ensure our libraries remain at the heart of our communities and open to all;**
- (b) supports the implementation of Open Access technology in 4 libraries to aid the ability for them to be in use when otherwise they would be closed;**
- (c) support the clustering of libraries within 4 geographical areas;**
- (d) endorse the approach to work up plans for the remodelling of Hamworthy, Rossmore, Southbourne and Charminster libraries as community hubs to enable wider use and understand the options for Winton Library;**
- (e) endorse the development of options appraisals in relation to Creekmoor and Parkstone libraries, in time, as required;**
- (f) support the continued creation of Friends' Groups and volunteer roles in supporting the library offer;**
- (g) endorse the high-level action plan which will be developed to support strategy delivery;**
- (h) support consultation needs on a project-by-project basis over the life of the strategy;**

- (i) delegate authority to the Director of Customer and Property in conjunction with the Portfolio Holders for Culture and Communities, in relation to decisions arising from the strategy and action plan; and**
- (j) recognise the key role that arts, culture, creative health and public health can play in the future flourishing of our libraries and support ongoing work with Arts Council England to explore NPO status over the lifetime of the Strategy.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Customer, Communications and Culture

Reason

To ensure that the Library Strategy for BCP over the next five years is implemented.

67. Poole Bay, Poole Harbour & Wareham FCERM Strategy Review

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 'E' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the existing Poole Bay, Poole Harbour and Wareham Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy had been completed in 2014 and set out a sustainable approach to managing the risk of coastal flooding and erosion to over 10,000 properties up to 2115, and that since then, the programme of projects it identified for the next 15-20 years has been progressed, with many either delivered or in the process of being delivered.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that there had also been many changes in climate change, environmental guidance, and funding rules, as well as new risk mapping and more monitoring data, so it was timely to review and update the FCERM Strategy to account for these factors and look further into the future to assess if the envisioned 2115 coast suggested in the 2014 Strategy is still correct, or if adjustments are needed on the pathway to long term sustainable coastal flooding and erosion risk management.

Cabinet was advised that the report sought approval to progress procurement of specialist consultancy services to develop the strategy using FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA) funding which has been secured from the Environment Agency, and that this work will ultimately lead to an updated FCERM Strategy approved by the Environment Agency against which subsequent studies, schemes and beach management plans can be developed, without the need to assess the strategic options on a site-by-site basis for each scheme. This will provide the basis for future FCERM-GiA bids for schemes to mitigate the risk of flooding or erosion to the residents and businesses in the Poole Bay and harbour area. There will be zero net cost to BCP council in producing the Strategy.

RESOLVED that Cabinet gives approval to: -

- (a) proceed with the recommended option of undertaking a review and update of the 2014 Poole Bay, Poole Harbour & Wareham Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy in partnership with Dorset Council and the Environment Agency, using funding from FCERM-GiA (£650,000 has been secured);**
- (b) proceed with procuring a consultant to produce the FCERM Strategy update via the South Coast FCERM Framework administered by Havant Borough Council on behalf of the Southern Coastal Group area, which includes BCP Council; and**
- (c) delegate authority to the Director for Commercial Operations, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to agree the terms of any funding, progression of the technical case and associated future submission.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Climate Response, Environment and Energy

Reason

To review and update the existing strategy for mitigating flood and erosion risk over the next 100 years taking into account the effects of climate change (such as sea level rise and increased storminess) and changes to national funding rules and other guidance that have changed since the existing Strategy was completed in 2014. This supports achievement of the BCP vision for where people, nature, coast and towns come together in sustainable, safe and healthy communities, by contributing the delivery of the following objectives:

- Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice
- Our green spaces flourish and support the wellbeing of both people and nature.

68. BCP Homes Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

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

Cabinet was advised that the report provided information on the council's handling of complaints related to the provision of landlord services to council tenants and leaseholders.

Cabinet was informed that the report complied with the requirements within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code that landlords must produce an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report for scrutiny and challenge.

Further to this Cabinet was advised that the report must be published on the section of the council's webpages relating to complaints, and that Cabinet's response to the report must be published alongside this.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that in line with the Complaint Handling Code, the report sets out:

- The annual self-assessment against the code
- A qualitative and quantitative analysis of complaint handling performance
- Any findings of non-compliance with the code by the Housing Ombudsman
- Service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints
- Any annual report about performance from the Housing Ombudsman
- Any other relevant publications or reports produced by the Housing Ombudsman in relation to the work of the council in dealing with complaints.

The Portfolio Holder advised that this report and the following report had been considered by the Environment and Place O&S Committee and that the only informal recommendation made by the Committee was that there should be more positivity around this issue. The service had received double the number of compliments as complaints.

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) the content of the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report be noted and that a response be provided for publication on the Council's website; and**
- (b) The self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code at Appendix 1 be approved for submission to the Housing Ombudsman and for publication on the Council's website.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

To ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

69. BCP Homes Performance Update

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

Cabinet was advised that the report provided performance information on how services are delivered to council tenants and to support councillors oversight in ensuring that the council:

- Provides good quality homes and services to all tenants
- Makes best use of its resources to deliver what it is required to do as a landlord

- Resolve issues promptly and effectively when things go wrong.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that the report provided an update against key performance indicators and performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures for quarter 1, 2025-26.

The Portfolio Holder advised that this report and the preceding report had been considered by the Environment and Place O&S Committee and that the only informal recommendation made by the Committee was that there should be more positivity around this issue. Some concern was raised on voids and this was being actively addressed.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) noted the content of this report and raises any issues for consideration by officers; and**
- (b) agreed that future performance reporting on BCP Homes will be integrated into the council's corporate performance framework and the Corporate Strategy Group.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

To support councillors in ensuring that council services provided to tenants are managed effectively.

70. BCP Homes Governance review, Resident Engagement and Communications Strategy and Resident Engagement for High-Rise Buildings Strategy

The Housing and Regulatory Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'H' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report presented the findings from the BCP Homes Governance Review and outlined an action plan aimed at enhancing the assurance, transparency, and accountability in the delivery of the council's housing management services, collectively as BCP Homes.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that the review highlighted the importance of strong governance and resident engagement in social housing management, and that key recommendations include strengthening the integration and oversight of the Advisory Board, developing a comprehensive resident engagement strategy, and establishing a formalised assurance framework.

Cabinet was advised that the Resident Engagement and Communication Strategy, along with the Resident Engagement for High-Rise Buildings Strategy, are central to this plan, and that these strategies aim to empower residents, improve communication, and ensure that residents' voices are heard and valued. In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the successful implementation of these strategies will be instrumental in

achieving high standards of service and engagement, marking a significant milestone in BCP Homes' journey towards excellence.

In addition, Cabinet was informed that the report also included a detailed delivery plan for the implementation of these strategies, ensuring that the council meets regulatory requirements and addresses residents' needs effectively, and that the strategies are designed to foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and active resident participation, ultimately enhancing the overall governance framework of BCP Homes.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) approved the Governance Review Implementation Action Plan at appendix 2;**
- (b) approved the Resident Engagement and Communications Strategy at appendix 3 and associated delivery plan at appendix 4; and**
- (c) approved the Resident Engagement for High Rise Buildings Strategy at appendix 5.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

The recommendations for Cabinet approval are based on the findings and action plans outlined in the BCP Homes Governance Review. These recommendations are crucial for enhancing governance, transparency, and accountability within BCP Homes, ensuring regulatory standards are met and residents' needs are effectively addressed.

- (i) Governance Review Implementation Action Plan (Appendix 2):** This plan addresses key recommendations from the Governance Review, aiming to strengthen governance by enhancing the Advisory Board's role, developing a formalised assurance framework, and improving communication and feedback mechanisms. Implementing this plan will ensure greater transparency and accountability within BCP Homes.
- (ii) Resident Engagement and Communications Strategy (Appendix 3) and Delivery Plan (Appendix 4):** This strategy and its delivery plan are central to empowering residents and improving communication. They outline measures to enhance resident participation, provide transparent communication, and establish formal feedback processes. Successful implementation will foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and active resident participation.
- (iii) Resident Engagement for High Rise Buildings Strategy (Appendix 5):** This strategy is tailored to meet the specific needs of residents in high-rise buildings, ensuring they are informed and involved in building safety decisions. It includes measures to protect residents from safety risks and aligns with the requirements set by the Building Safety Regulator.

Approving these recommendations will demonstrate the Cabinet's commitment to enhancing governance, transparency, and accountability within BCP.

71. Vehicles and Plant Replacement- Building Maintenance and Construction Works Teams

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 'I' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report related to the purchase of vehicles and plant to fulfil service delivery requirements, and that vehicle purchase as opposed to lease or rental will ensure best value for money, and also allows for vehicles to be fitted out to meet essential health and safety, and operational requirements.

Cabinet was informed that the building maintenance service currently has fifteen vehicles on long term hire in order to meet the longer term demand resulting from the insourcing of services for;

- Damp and Mould investigation and treatment
- Water quality testing
- Repairs and maintenance for the Poole area (previously Poole Housing Partnership)
- Increased budget for kitchen and bathroom refurbishments
- Requirement to meet EPC to C standard

Further to this Cabinet was advised that the service had also expanded its disabled adaptations fitters in order to meet demand and delivery targets within Grant funded disabled adaptations work.

Additionally, the Construction Works Team currently have one hire vehicle for a bricklaying post that has now been filled.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the need for vans is based on the longer-term needs of BCP Homes, which are supported by budget provision within the HRA (20 vehicles) and the requirement for an extra vehicle for the Construction Works Team (CWT), and that these purchased vans will replace the currently rented vehicles and also provide for additional posts necessary to fulfil service requirements. Each operative typically requires a van to satisfy the requirements of their role, including safe tool and materials transportation and storage, and out of hours response.

Cabinet was advised that the Construction Works Team plant replacement strategy recommends the purchasing of a JCB 535/125 or equivalent Telehandler and 9 Tonne Excavator, partly funded by the sale of three existing, older items of plant that are nearing the end of their usable life and that there is a requirement to prudentially borrow up to £46,000 to meet the funding shortfall. It was advised that this will be repaid over the next three years from income generated by the team through the work it delivers, and that this will ensure that the service avoids high rental costs, have the right

specification plant for the works undertaken, can partly fund the new vehicles through resale of old plant and have reliable safe plant for future development.

In addition Cabinet was informed that the repayment of the prudential borrowing required for both areas will be fully funded by the service and included within its recharging rates to services and customers, and that both the Building Maintenance and Construction Works Team operate on a full cost recovery basis.

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet recommends that Audit and Governance Committee:

- (a) Approves the use of prudential borrowing not exceeding £525,000 for 21 vehicles to be purchased by fleet management to support the work of the Building Maintenance and Construction Works Team service. These vehicles to then be managed within the council's fleet management strategy.**

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet and Audit and Governance Committee:

- (b) Note that CWT plant purchases with up to £46,000 prudential borrowing requirement have been progressed under urgency powers due to health & safety considerations.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Finance

Reason

To ensure the vehicle and plant requirements of the council's maintenance and construction teams is provided in a cost effective and safe way, allowing the services to contribute to the council's wider aims, whilst being self-funded.

72. Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy

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 'J' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy (2025-2030) sets out 5 key strategic priorities to reduce, delay or prevent the need for long term care and support for people living in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the strategy has been shaped by the views and experiences of local people, carers, the voluntary and community sector and partners, and that it aims to develop a sustainable approach to prevention in adult social care.

Cabinet was advised that the strategy emphasises early intervention, the promotion of wellbeing, and collaboration with key partners, to not only prevent the development of long-term needs, but also to enhance the overall quality of life for people living in the BCP Council area.

The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet advising that at their recent meeting the Committee had supported the overall recommendations in the report but noted that the pressure on the Council in terms of long-term care was significant and was likely to increase.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) approved the Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy, contained in Appendix 1 to this Report;**
- (b) approved an investment of £203,000 on-going funding for the ASC Prevention Strategy, to counteract the effect of temporary funding not being available from April 2026 and protect the current level of service delivery; and**
- (c) approved an investment of a further £441,000 over a 3-year period (£147,000 per year in 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29) to be drawn down via flexible use of capital receipts in order to increase the total ASC Prevention Strategy envelope to the required level**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Health and Wellbeing

Reason

The Strategy:

- i) Delivers a sustainable, preventative approach to delaying, reducing, or preventing the need for long-term care and support services. It contributes to improved outcomes for people while generating financial benefits for adult social care through more effective demand management
- ii) Meets the requirements of the Care Act (2014)
- iii) Supports the priorities of the Corporate Strategy and Adult Social Care Strategy; and
- iv) Supports the Fulfilled Lives transformation programme

73. 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.

74. Cabinet Forward Plan

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

The meeting ended at 12.28 pm

CHAIRMAN

CABINET



Report subject	Council Budget Monitoring 2025/26 at Quarter Two
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report provides the quarter two 2025/26 projected financial outturn information for the general fund, capital programme, housing revenue account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The quarter one position was a projected overspend of £3.7m reflecting the increasing financial challenges facing local government from social care demand within both adults and children's services. Demand in these areas has grown further over the second quarter but with reduced expenditure in other services limiting the increase in the projected overspend to £4.2 million.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: A. Note the budget monitoring position for quarter two 2025/26. B. Request a detailed report to December Cabinet from the Corporate Director for Children's Services on the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant expenditure forecast and available mitigation measures in 2025/26. This report will need to seek Council approval for any additional resources over the approved 2025/26 budget. C. Request the council's senior leadership team and portfolio holders consider what further action can now be taken to ensure the actual financial outturn is within the Council approved budget for 2025/26, including bringing forward any planned savings already approved by Council for 2026/27 that can be delivered early.
Reason for recommendations	To comply with accounting codes of practice and best practice which requires councils to regularly monitor the annual budget position and take any action to support the sustainability of the council's financial position. To comply with the council's financial regulation concerning approval for budget virements.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr. Mike Cox, Finance
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive

Report Authors	Adam Richens, Director of Finance and Chief Finance Officer Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Finance Officer Matthew Filmer, Assistant Chief Finance officer
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. In February 2025 Council agreed the 2025/26 annual general fund net revenue budget of £356m, and a capital programme of £136m. The revenue budget included delivery of £9.6m of itemised service and transformation savings. Budgets were also agreed for the ring-fenced housing revenue account (HRA) and Dedicated School Grant for school funding.

Revenue Outturn Projection 2025/26 at Quarter Two

2. The council is projecting an overspend at outturn of £4.2m after releasing the contingency of £2.8m. There is no specific contingency this year to counter non-delivery of programmed savings.
3. A summary of the year end projection is included in the table below. The table summarises the total variances by directorate and includes the impact of the savings not expected to be delivered by the year end. The detail of savings delivery was included in the quarter one report and there are no changes to report at quarter two.

Table 1: Summary projected outturn as at quarter two

Q1		Outturn Forecast at Quarter two					
Variance Forecast £000's	Corporate Directorate	Gross Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Total Variance £000's	Savings undelivered £000's	Other Variances £000's
2,452	Wellbeing	336,988	137,557	141,225	3,668	0	3,668
1,674	Children	130,501	99,966	102,701	2,735	0	2,735
1,415	Operations	186,291	59,745	60,047	302	871	(569)
200	Resources	58,667	50,422	50,219	(203)	0	(203)
(2,062)	Central	33,712	9,832	7,481	(2,351)	0	(2,351)
	Funding		(357,522)	(357,522)	0		
3,678	Total	746,159	0	4,151	4,151	871	3,280

4. Pressures identified at quarter one in adults and children's social care services have grown further over the second quarter. The updated forecast for services within Operations and Resources show an improved net position. The offset from the centrally held general contingency reduces the overall overspend to £4.2m.
5. Within operations services the main pressures are from reduced planning income (continuing the trend from last year), and emergency repair and cleaning costs in facilities management. Reduced expenditure in other service areas reduce the overall overspend for the directorate.

6. Within the Resources budget area, only law and governance services are indicating an overspend which is related to increased staff costs and reduced income from land charges, with mitigations provided by other services.
7. Appendix A1 provides the detail and reasons for the main projected budget variances in each service area.
8. Appendix A2 provides a summary revenue outturn statement.
9. No corporate resources have been set aside to cover the quarter two forecast £4.2m overspend. The freeze on non-essential expenditure and staff vacancies implemented as a result of the quarter one forecast have not covered the growing deficits in the Wellbeing and Children's Directorates. To prevent this situation having a permanent impact of the financial health and sustainability of the council further action is required. The council's senior leadership team working with their cabinet portfolio holders will now consider the additional steps that can be taken to ensure the quarter three forecast is back within the parameters of the council approved budget for 2025/26.

Savings Monitoring 2025/26

10. Delivery of budgeted savings of £9.6m is an important part of a balanced in-year position and a sustainable medium term financial plan (MTFP). The position reported at quarter one is unchanged for quarter two with the progress of savings from service reductions, additional resources, transformation and efficiency programmes at 90% delivery expected by the year end. Amounts not expected to be delivered are included in the budget variances in Appendix A1.
11. An amount of only £0.1m has been determined as definitely unachievable as the savings are dependent on events that will not now take place until later in the year.

Reserves Monitoring for 31 March 2026

12. Table 3 below summarises the projected movement in reserves during the current financial year.

Table 3: Summary of projected movements in reserves

	Balance 1 April 2025	Balance 31 March 2026	Movement
	£m	£m	£m
Un-earmarked reserves	27.3	27.3	0
Earmarked reserves*	55.7	39.2	16.5
Total reserves	83.0	66.5	16.5

These reserves do not include revenue reserves earmarked for capital, school balances or the negative DSG reserve.

13. The above table assumes that the mitigations to address the current projected overspend will be successful. This will need to be reviewed as part of future budget monitoring reports.
14. Earmarked reserves are those that have been set aside for specific purposes. The main movements in earmarked reserves include drawing down government grants in line with the latest profile of their application and progressing priority corporate projects.

15. Appendix B provides a summary of earmarked reserves projected for 31 March 2026.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

16. The ring-fenced DSG in 2025/26 was budgeted at £405m and is provided to fund early years providers, schools, a small range of central services and provision for pupils with high needs. The high needs funding within that total was £64.5m with expenditure projected to be approaching double. A funding gap of £57.5m was budgeted and included in the estimated accumulated deficit for March 2026.
17. High needs funding has been reduced by £0.5m in-year to reflect the growth in the number of placements in the year since January 2024 for provisions hosted by the DfE. The adjustment is unusually high for 2025/26, reflecting the significant growth over 2024/25 in the number of children and adults up to age 25 in these provisions, with the number in specialist post-16 institutions doubling.
18. The final 2024/25 settlement for the DSG early years block to reflect the January 2025 census, was received in August. This provided an additional £1.9m compared with the estimated clawback in the year end accounts. This was mainly due to funded places for children aged under two being higher than estimated.
19. At quarter one an anticipated overspend of £11.1m in the high needs budget was projected with an accumulated deficit at March 2026 of £180.5m. At quarter two the year end projection is an overspend of £13.7m with an accumulated deficit of £183.1m.

Table 4: Summary position for dedicated schools grant

Dedicated Schools Grant	£m
Accumulated deficit 1 April 2025	113.3
Prior year additional funding – early years	(1.9)
Budgeted high needs funding shortfall 2025/26	57.5
High needs funding reduction 2025/26	0.5
High needs overspend 2025/26 - TBC	13.7
Projected accumulated deficit 31 March 2026	183.1

20. There remains a large number of assumptions in the projection with data quality in the service still needing to improve. There is no indication yet that the special education needs improvement strategy and plan is changing the trajectory of demand or reducing the average cost of provision.
21. The government has delayed the publication of the Schools White paper, which was expected to address the high needs budget issues, from autumn 2025 to sometime in 2026. Meanwhile, national and local conversations are on-going with representatives of the DfE and MHCLG in seeking an immediate solution to the drain on cash flow and cash balances the DSG deficit is having on general fund resources. The statutory override to prevent the deficit being considered against the council's reserves position has been extended to March 2028 but a longer-term solution has yet to materialise.
22. The council's DSG deficit management plan is in the process of being updated to reflect the most recent trends and any further actions to be implemented in the autumn to impact in future years.

Capital Programme

23. The total resources for the 2025/26 capital investment programme have increased from the £136m agreed in February to £173m at quarter two. Significant movements over quarter two include new schemes for flood defences and the Port of Poole funded by government grants and the community infrastructure levy. Also added is the 2025/26 allocation from the Department for Education for SEND projects.
24. The major parts of the programme are within the Operations directorate for £141m (82%) and children's services for £24m (14%). Only £8.5m of the latter is currently committed to schemes underway with the remaining balance part of a three-year strategy.
25. The total spend to date is relatively low at 13%. Reasons include that the spend for some schemes is planned for the second half of the financial year, there are some invoices received and awaiting resolution plus the uncommitted funding noted above. During quarter three a reprofiling exercise for current schemes will be undertaken and slippage estimated for reflection in the 2026/27 medium term financial plan.
26. Appendix C provides monitoring information for the capital programme at quarter two.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

27. The HRA is a separate account within the council that ring-fences the income and expenditure associated with the council's housing stock. The HRA does not therefore directly impact on the council's wider general fund budget.
28. The 2025/26 HRA budget was approved by Council in February 2025. It budgeted for total income of £58.5m for the year and a net surplus of £4.1m.
29. The overall net surplus is forecast at £0.1m ahead of the £4.1m budgeted.
30. The forecast outturn for dwelling rents is in line with budget.
31. Repairs & maintenance expenditure is projected at £1.1m overspent primarily due to the very high volumes of response repairs being undertaken by the in-house team as well as and those referred to third party contractors. A review is being undertaken in quarter three to identify any possible savings.
32. Supervision and management costs are £0.7m lower than budget due to savings on utility costs, feasibility studies, and staff vacancies. Interest charges are £0.7m lower than budget as reserves were higher than budgeted for the start of year reducing the need to borrow.
33. The forecast for the capital programme is unchanged from quarter one, with the new build element of the programme expected to be achieved as well as the slippage from last year.
34. Appendix D provides a summary of HRA budget monitoring for both the revenue and capital account at quarter one.

Scenarios

35. The projected outturn is prepared based on estimates and assumptions, with the most likely outcome included in budget monitoring reports.

Summary of financial implications

36. This is a financial report with budget implications a key feature of the above paragraphs.

37. The growing DSG deficit is a significant risk to the financial position of the council with the accumulated DSG deficit greater than the total of the council's earmarked and unearmarked reserves on 31 March 2025. The forecast that the in-year funding gap is continuing to grow will inevitably bring forward the date when the council exhausts its cashflow position which is currently providing the resources to cover the excess high needs budget related expenditure.

Summary of legal implications

38. The recommendations in this report are to comply with the council's financial regulations with attention drawn to significant budget variances as part of good financial planning to ensure the council remains financially viable over the current year and into the future.

Summary of human resources implications

39. There are no direct human resources implications from the recommendations in this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

40. There are no direct sustainability impacts from the recommendations in this report.

Summary of public health implications

41. The council is seeking to maintain appropriate services for the vulnerable as well as improve the sustainability of services important for the wellbeing of all residents.

Summary of equality implications

42. Budget holders are managing their budgets with due regard to equalities issues.

Summary of risk assessment

43. The projected outturn is prepared based on estimates and assumptions, including that mitigation plans for current general fund budget pressures will be successful. Budget monitoring corporately will continue to be reported quarterly to manage these variances and other significant issues emerging throughout the year.
44. The most significant risk to the council's financial sustainability continues to be the current level and growth of the accumulated deficit for the DSG. The annual funding gap will continue to grow unless current trends can be reversed. Central government will need to take action to address the national problem but in the meantime the council must continue to take steps to minimise the financial problem as far as possible.

Background papers

45. The link to the budget papers at February Council for 2025/26 is below:
[Welcome to BCP Council | BCP](#)
46. The link to the budget monitoring report 2025/26 at quarter one is on the link below:
[Welcome to BCP Council | BCP](#) item 46

Appendices

- Appendix A A1 Revenue Projected Budget Variances by Service Area 2025/26
 A2 Revenue Outturn Summary 2025/26

Appendix B	Earmarked Reserves Projection for 31 March 26
Appendix C	Capital Programme Monitoring 2025/26
Appendix D	HRA Projected Outturn 2025/26

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Appendix A1: Projected Revenue Budget Variances by Service Area 2025/26

1. The projected outturn for each directorate is shown in the tables and narrative below.

Wellbeing – £3.7 overspend (2.6%)

2. The Wellbeing directorate is projected to overspend by £3.7m due to additional net expenditure in adult social care services.

Q1 Variance £000's	Service	Working budget £000's	Projected Outturn £000's	Q2 Variance £000's
	Adult Social Care Services			
4,120	Care packages – all ages and needs	191,028	198,243	7,215
321	Employees	27,747	27,810	63
(1,172)	Client Contributions	(32,442)	(34,364)	(1,922)
(302)	Health Funding: CHC/JF/Sec117/BCF	(28,043)	(29,111)	(1,068)
0	Income from NHS (Section 256)	0	0	0
4	Other Funding: grants, other authorities, NHS	(17,670)	(17,740)	(70)
19	Other services: training, running costs, etc.	375	443	68
2,990	Total Adult Social Care Services	140,995	145,281	4,286
	Commissioning			
(6)	ASC: Care and contracts (including Tricuro)	30,238	29,811	(427)
(31)	ASC: Employees	3,105	3,051	(54)
(107)	ASC: Client contributions	(1,624)	(1,384)	240
(150)	ASC: Health Funding: CHC/JF/Sec117/BCF	(9,020)	(9,151)	(131)
0	ASC: Income from NHS (Section 256)	0	0	0
(17)	ASC: Grants and other income	(35,948)	(35,960)	(12)
(8)	ASC: Other services/voluntary sector/ projects, etc.	670	658	(12)
(317)	Total Commissioning	(12,579)	(12,975)	(396)
	Housing and Public protection			
0	Asset Management	(2,280)	(2,280)	0
0	Housing and Community Management	230	230	0
(60)	Public Protection	3,293	3,233	(60)
(161)	Strategic Housing and Partnerships	6,643	6,482	(161)
(221)	Total Housing and Public Protection	7,886	7,665	(221)
	Public Health and Communities			
0	Community Engagement and Safety	1,254	1,254	0
0	Public Health – ring-fenced grant funded	0	0	0
0	Total Public Health and Communities	1,254	1,254	0
2,452	Wellbeing Total	137,557	141,225	3,668

Adult Social Care

3. The Adult Social Care (ASC) service unit is projected to be overspending by £4.3m at the end of second quarter of the financial year.
4. The most prominent component of the above position is attributable to cost of care and care packages driven by demand for adults aged 65+ and high-cost placements for service users with learning disability and autism related needs.
 - a. Short term trend analysis suggests that between April and end of September demand for care home placement for adults aged 65+ increased by 7.8%. This volume increase is mainly from hospital discharge and quicker than anticipated private service users' capital depletion. There is also significant impact on cost of care from service users accessing council commissioned care where such arrangements are backed with service users' assets.
 - b. Close to £0.3m of cost increase within community care for adults aged 65+ is an effect of accepting an ordinary resident case from Hampshire (retrospective payment back 6 years).
 - c. Cost of care estimate for adults aged 65+ assumes operational actions to bring the caseload down to budgeted level by the end of the year. An estimate of £1.0m is already built into the projection to allow for the success of demand management.
 - d. Cost of care home placements for younger adults was adversely affected by a high-cost case transferred Adults from Children Social Care at a cost of £15,000 per week. As a result of Adults Social Care putting the case at Director level forward for CHC / joint funding the ICB agreed a 50-50 cost split. And furthermore, with adults bringing the case to Court of Protection (COP) it was possible to move the case to a better value placement. This enabled a reduction of the cost to the Council to £0.2m (expected further cases to materialise).
 - e. The number of specialism cases in community care or approved for such care exceeds planned activity by 8%, whilst the cost of such care, driven by needs complexity, exceeds planned level by 15%. Specialism care home placement fees are being reviewed on an individual basis. Outstanding uplift negotiations are continuing in the autumn and the projection includes £0.25m to allow for these changes.
5. The rising demand for care noted above has an impact on the level of contributions collected with client contributions 6% more than the planned level. The number of service user contributions recorded between April and September where providers are paid gross are improving the position according to assessed charges. This area now reflects all care contributions backed by service users' assets.
6. Staffing turnover has slowed with fewer vacancies than usual in the second quarter. Agency spend cost controls and the vacancy freeze implemented in quarter two have resulted in a lower annual staffing projection with the variance now only £60,000 overspent, which is a reduction compared with the first quarter of over £0.25m.
7. Due to the rising volume of service users in care, the number of cases where cost sharing with the health authority is in place or fully funded within NHS has also continued ahead of budget, estimated at £1.1m. This projection includes newly agreed joint funded cases and recharges to the NHS following ordinary residence agreements and high-cost transition case mentioned in paragraph 4. More cases are being shared also with out of area health authorities.

Commissioning

8. The Commissioning service unit is projected to underspend by £0.4m, a small increase since quarter one.
9. Contractual arrangements have been reviewed with block bed commitments reconfigured to achieve in-year efficiencies or allow for demand changes where beds are not being fully used. This underspend alleviates cost of care pressure in Adult Social Care.
10. There are a small number of health care eligible service users in commissioning-led block contracts in the council-owned (Tricuro) care homes. The full cost of the service is recovered, and this is linked to the care packages overspend in ASC services noted above, with income of £0.13m more than planned.
11. Service user contribution variance was amended from the first quarter to reflect deferred contributions backed by a service user's property.

Public Health & Community Engagement and Safety

12. Public Health, including the smoking cessation service, is fully funded by external Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) grant and currently is projected to spend all resources on planned services.
13. Early this financial year, the service received an assurance visit from Regional Director of Public Health (RDPH) to assess the council's use of grant funding. The RDPH was assured the planned use was consistent with the DHSC expectations and grant conditions. Preparations and conversations during the visit clearly indicated that future national funding growth will be limited and robust scrutiny of current budgets and reserve management will be necessary to make sure sustainable public health services can be delivered in the coming years.
14. Community engagement and safety is primarily funded through grants, community initiatives, and strategic partnerships, with allocations confirmed for the year. The service continues to operate within budget with no forecast variances anticipated, consistent with the previously reported position.

Housing & Public Protection

15. Strategic Housing is maintaining a projected underspend of £0.161m. This is mainly due to the use of targeted grant funding to support specific homelessness initiatives, which has reduced reliance on base budget provision. The service continues to face in-year challenges, including meeting borrowing repayments associated with temporary accommodation stock, managing bad debt linked to a vulnerable client base, and addressing repairs and maintenance needs on older housing assets. While these pressures persist, the grants are expected to be fully utilised within the financial year, helping to mitigate some of the cost pressures and support ongoing service delivery.
16. Public Protection continues to report a small surplus, consistent with the position outlined in the previous quarter. This is supported by one-off funding towards operating costs, helping to offset pressures around income generation and staffing. These challenges are being actively managed to maintain financial stability within the service.
17. Asset Management includes income and maintenance responsibilities related to photovoltaic (PV) panels and garages. While an in-year surplus from PV income is possible, this is subject to change due to the need for ongoing investment in the asset base to sustain future income generation. Additionally, there is a timing lag in PV income receipts, with only one quarter of actuals received to date. By the next reporting period, a further quarter of income will have been receipted, providing a more robust basis for forecasting.

Children's Services – £2.7m overspend (3%)

18. The forecast overspends for Children's Services at quarter two is £2.7m, an increase of £1m since quarter one.

Q 1 Variance £000's	Service	Working budget £000's	Projected Outturn £000's	Q2 Variance £000's
821	Commissioning, Resources and Quality	20,293	19,794	(498)
4,660	Children's Social Care	65,327	71,052	5,725
-	Education and Skills	24,213	24,625	412
(3,807)	Service Management	(9,866)	(12,770)	(2,904)
1,674	Children's General Fund Total	99,966	102,701	2,735

19. The overspend is driven primarily by increased number of children in care & increased costs, including for special guardianship orders (SGOs). There is the potential for this level of overspend to grow if recent trends continue but the service is working to curtail further growth where possible. It is worth noting that the increase for the total number of children in care this year from the beginning of April to end of September was 32 compared with the growth of 17 throughout 2024/25.

20. The forecast also includes approximately £0.9m relating to cost of young adults (over 18 years) who continue to be funded by Children's Services, despite being more appropriately aligned to housing or adults social care budgets.

21. Commissioning, Resources and Quality: This area is forecast to be underspent by £0.5m due to staffing budget underspend.

22. Education and Skills: The forecast overspend of £0.4m is due to employee costs and additional legal costs linked to SEND cases.

23. Service Management: The underspend of £2.9m is due to savings in staff budgets and general grant and other income and use of reserves (£0.7m) that provides funding for expenditure across a range of service areas.

Operations – £0.3m overspend (0.5%)

24. The budget projection for Operations is an overspend of £0.3m and a variance against the budget of 0.5% at the end of quarter two. This is an overall improvement of £1.15m since quarter one. The table below summarises the position.

Q1 Variance £000's	Service	Working budget £000's	Projected Outturn £000's	Q2 Variance £000's
	Commercial Operations			
0	Director	1,091	490	(601)
0	Flood and Coastal Erosion	1,041	1,152	111
0	Head of Commercial Operations	100	50	(50)
0	Leisure and Events	839	1,018	180
0	Parking Services	(18,971)	(18,849)	122
31	Seafront	(6,674)	(6,942)	(268)
31	Commercial Operations	(22,574)	(23,081)	(507)
	Environment			
18	Service Management	604	622	18
402	Neighbourhood & Grounds	17,229	17,504	276
(205)	Passenger Transport	244	(91)	(335)
(14)	Bereavement & Coroner	889	683	(206)
0	Strategic Waste	8,332	8,242	(90)
0	Greenspace	546	519	(27)
50	Transport & Operating Centres	5,159	5,209	50
250	Environment	33,001	32,687	(314)
	Planning & Transport			
0	Planning Management	478	478	0
373	Planning Operations	1,002	1,594	592
(30)	Strategic Planning	1,726	1,694	(31)
0	Planning System	122	122	0
130	Transport Policy / Sustainable Travel	12,691	12,727	36
474	Planning & Transport	15,857	16,494	636
	Investment and Development			
0	Housing Delivery	139	124	(16)
0	Regeneration Delivery	1,050	1,050	0
0	Smart Places	122	122	0
(13)	Operations Strategy	78	51	(27)
(13)	Investment and Development	1,389	1,347	(42)
	Customer & Property Operations			
0	Business Support	8,345	8,391	46
0	Culture	3,235	3,235	0
0	Customer Services	2,867	2,866	(1)
163	Libraries	4,527	4,690	163
0	Bournemouth Library PFI contract	1,659	1,659	0
(177)	Engineering	4,525	4,278	(246)
687	Facilities Management	8,110	8,647	537
0	Property Maintenance (CWT & IHT)	(1,358)	(1,358)	0
0	Telecare	161	192	31
673	Customer & Property Operations	32,071	32,600	529
1,415	Operations Services	59,745	60,047	302

25. The services are actively trying to mitigate costs and drive income wherever possible to obtain a balanced position by the financial year end.

Commercial Operations

26. Director of Commercial Operations is reporting a surplus of £0.6m in respect of the 2025-26 pay award as the distribution across the relevant services, where there are equal and opposite pressures currently showing, needs to be established.
27. Parking services are reporting a forecast deficit of £0.1m for quarter two. Whilst quarter two income has been comparable to previous years, this is less than the budgeted income expectation. However, discretionary expenditure has been frozen to mitigate the income shortfall. This position also reflects the net income of £0.2m relating to the PCN trial, which is currently being held in an earmarked reserve.
28. The Leisure & Events service are showing a £0.2m overspend mainly due to staffing pressures and business rates liabilities associated with Kings Park leisure centre.
29. Despite the good weather, seafront services are experiencing a fall in income mainly due to the cliff slip impact on income generating services such as the land train, beach huts, cliff lifts and catering of £0.4m, however this loss of income is due to be offset by use of the cliff reserve and freezing, wherever possible, discretionary budgets, including staffing, equipment and repairs and maintenance, which has allowed the service to turn the position around and report a £0.3m surplus. Cost-of-living pressures for customers and additional cost pressures for staffing and products are still inherent. There are also some seasonal pressures as a response to the anti-social behaviour, with the service attempting to contain within their current budgets, such as in staffing of the multi-agency control centre (MACC) and an increase in body worn cameras.

Environment

30. Neighbourhood services and grounds are forecasting a £0.3m pressure due mainly to the salaries and unbudgeted overtime payments needed within the waste and cleansing teams. Within highways there is lower demand for dropped crossings resulting in lower income, and a pressure for road markings on main roads as they naturally wear, but this has been partly offset by lower Tarmac costs. Since quarter one the service has been able to reduce the forecast overspend by £0.1m and this is primarily within the parks operations service where they have attempted to further cut spending in some of their supplies and services budgets in response to the spend freeze and in holding vacant posts.
31. The passenger transport service has forecast a £0.3m underspend. This is primarily related to vacant driver posts underspending on supplies and services from the spend freeze.
32. The bereavement & coroners service is forecasting a surplus of £0.2m primarily due to holding vacant posts and lower costs associated with postmortems as a result of a slight decrease in the number required to be undertaken following the introduction of Medical Examiner legislative changes.
33. The strategic waste position is forecasting a £0.09m surplus position, however, within that there are some individual pressures and savings. The waste disposal contract recycling price is lower than budgeted for in quarters one and two, and the recycling sales income is higher. This is offset by pressures in external haulage fees, employee costs due to absence and overtime payments.
34. There is an overall £0.05m pressure within the transport & operating centres, on parts, external works, tyres and vehicle hire budgets, partly offset by underspends on salaries due to vacant fitter posts. This position remains unchanged from quarter one. The service has now secured two apprentice positions and filled a vacant fitter role which will increase in-house capability.

Planning and Transport

35. The forecast pressure within planning operations is mainly due to the lower demand for planning applications and the associated income derived from this activity. This follows on from the reduction seen last financial year and is consistent with the national trend. The planning service are actively trying to mitigate this downward trend where possible.
36. The increase in the deficit position of £0.2m is due to pressures driven by the tree maintenance costs, from the requirement to fulfil statutory duties. There is a backlog of tree maintenance work and to be compliant and avoid further costs this work needs to be completed.
37. Concessionary fares expenditure (statutory service) has increased due to higher demand for bus journeys as reported in quarter one, likely attributable to the better weather in the first half year. It has been forecast that this trend will continue leading to a pressure of £0.4m. This has been partly offset by many small underspends across the transport service with only a small net overspend remaining.

Investment and Development

38. Investment & Development have forecast a small underspend of £0.04m.

Customer & Property Operations

39. Within library services a forecast pressure of £0.16m is mainly related to £0.13m of unrealised savings from delayed opportunities for vacating corporate properties. There is also a smaller pressure of £0.03m from additional security required at Bournemouth central library as a direct result of anti-social behaviour.
40. Engineering services have forecast a saving of £0.2m, the majority being attributable to the Dorset PFI street-lighting contract from lower rates for electricity. The remaining savings are due to holding vacancies and delaying recruitment partly offset by an income pressure within the building control service.
41. Facilities management have forecast a pressure of £0.5m due to the growing demand, year on year for emergency/essential building repairs and maintenance across the council's estate, including the leisure centres and waste transfer stations brought in house last year. Works of £0.16m have been capitalised with funding provided by a small contingent fund in capital reserves under officer delegations. The cleaning contract is also forecasting a pressure of £0.5m and this is mainly due to a centralised budget that was too small in addition to the annual inflation and national living wage increases from the external contractor. The quarter two position has improved by £0.15m due to holding vacancies within the service.
42. The Construction Works Team (CWT) within Property Maintenance has adapted well following the strategic realignment of the CHNAS programme. The team has successfully identified new project opportunities and is now broadly on track to achieve full cost recovery. Work continues to review resource agreements to ensure that recharges remain appropriately aligned with service delivery.
43. From 1 April, the In-House Team (IHT) for repairs and maintenance implemented a revised operating model to ensure transparent and accountable charging to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). These services are now delivered through the BBML company. As part of this transition, work is underway to right-size budgets and charging arrangements within the general fund, ensuring they reflect the new delivery model and support a balanced financial position.

Resources – £0.2m underspend (0.4%)

44. Executive and Resources provide professional support services to the council and undertake tax collection and housing benefits administration.

Q1 Variance £000's	Service	Working budget £000's	Projected Outturn £000's	Q2 Variance £000's
0	Executive	924	924	0
200	Law and Governance	5,711	6,041	330
0	Marketing, Comms and Policy	2,554	2,551	(3)
0	People and Culture	5,106	5,106	0
0	Finance, Estates and Benefits	17,353	17,183	(170)
0	IT and Programmes	18,774	18,414	(360)
200	Executive & Resources Total	50,422	50,219	(203)

45. Resources overall are currently operating within budget. Services have implemented vacancy management, deferred expenditure, and used reserves where appropriate to help offset overspends. These actions have helped maintain a stable financial position.
46. Law and Governance is reporting a projected overspend of £0.3m. This includes a £0.2m shortfall in land charges income, which continues to be monitored closely. However, as this income is dependent on external market activity, there is limited scope to increase revenue. A local by-election has resulted in a minor cost pressure, for which no external funding is available. Additionally, Registrars are experiencing staffing pressures of £0.14m, although this is partially offset by a small surplus in income. The service is actively reviewing these staffing challenges and considering the options to address them.
47. Legal services continue to manage locum usage, and plans are in place to create a more stable staffing base and reduce reliance on temporary arrangements.
48. Marketing, Communications and Policy services are operating within budget. The service has continued to implement its mitigation strategy from quarter one, with the aim of delivering a balanced outturn. Income generation remains a challenge, but the service is managing its expenditure accordingly and through appropriate use of reserves.
49. People and Culture is currently managing its position through the allocation of staffing costs to the Pay and Reward project. While this has reduced pressure on the core staffing budget for now, the service is also experiencing wider cost pressures linked to the delivery of this project and other priorities.
50. Finance, Estates and Benefits is projecting an underspend of £0.2m. This reflects vacancy management across the service, with finance currently £0.1m under budget. Estates and procurement are also underspending because of the recruitment freeze and vacant posts. Revenues and benefits services are maintaining a balanced position through the planned use of allocated reserves which has helped support the overall budget position.
51. IT and Programmes is forecasting an underspend of £0.4m. This includes a £0.2m saving from the desktop replacement programme, which has been deferred to 2026/27. In addition, efficiencies in photocopying, telephony and mobile costs have resulted in a further £0.15m saving. These savings are partially offsetting pressures within the service, but overall IT and programmes continue to maintain a stable financial position while supporting the council's digital transformation agenda.

Corporate Budgets

52. The table below provides a summary of the variances:

Q1 Variance £000's	Service	Working budget £000's	Projected Outturn £000's	Q2 Variance £000's
160	Pay related costs	(338)	0	338
(2,842)	Contingency	3,145	355	(2,790)
(300)	Interest Payable	9,408	9,108	(300)
0	Investment Income	(655)	(655)	0
0	Pay & grading project	1,916	1,916	0
0	Debt Repayment - MRP & VRP	12,044	12,044	0
900	Housing Benefits	(1,323)	(423)	900
0	Contribution from HRA	(3,743)	(3,743)	0
0	Investment Properties	(5,301)	(5,301)	0
0	Vacant Properties	552	632	80
0	Dividend Income	(316)	(316)	0
0	Levies	658	658	0
0	Apprentice Levy	782	782	0
0	Parishes / Town Precept / Chartered Trustee	1,491	1,491	0
0	Earmarked Reserves use	(8,440)	(9,020)	(580)
0	Pension Backfunding	3,716	3,716	0
0	Admin Charged to Grant Income	(1,820)	(1,820)	0
0	One off Corporate Items	(1,943)	(1,943)	0
(2,062)	Corporate Items	9,832	7,481	(2,351)
	Funding			
0	Council Tax Income	(281,232)	(281,232)	0
0	Parishes / Town Precept / Chartered Trustee	(1,491)	(1,491)	0
0	New Homes Bonus	(246)	(246)	0
0	Revenue Support Grant	(4,416)	(4,416)	0
0	NNDR Net Income	(43,243)	(43,243)	0
0	NNDR 31 Grants	(26,215)	(26,215)	0
0	Estimated Deficit Collection Fund - NNDR	(678)	(678)	0
0	Estimated Surplus Collection Fund - CTAX	0	0	0
(2,062)	Corporate Total	(347,689)	(350,040)	(2,351)

53. An overall £0.3m pressure in pay related costs combine an underspend in the budget set aside for national insurance increases (£0.5m) with a £0.8m overspend on the cost of annual pay award which was agreed at 3.2% compared to the budget 2.8%.

54. The underspend of contingency of £2.8m represents the release of all available budget to support overspends across other budgets.

55. An underspend in earmarked reserves of £0.6m represents the release of capital reserves to support expenditure in services not previously planned.

- 56. An underspend of £0.3m from reduced expenditure in the treasury management function from our continued ability to borrow in the local authority market as opposed to needing to take longer term borrowing via the Public Works Loan Board.
- 57. A £0.9m overspend on housing benefit is forecast based on an increase in costs unable to be recovered by government subsidy.
- 58. An overspend of £0.08m in vacant properties is due to higher than budgeted security costs at sites including Constitution Hill and Fairways.



Appendix A2 - General Fund Summary

Directorate	Revenue	Working Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
Wellbeing	Expenditure Total	336,988	346,175	9,187
	Income Total	(199,431)	(204,950)	(5,519)
Wellbeing Total		137,557	141,225	3,668
Children's Services	Expenditure Total	130,501	137,235	6,734
	Income Total	(30,535)	(34,534)	(3,999)
Children's Services Total		99,966	102,701	2,735
Operations	Expenditure Total	186,291	188,764	2,473
	Income Total	(126,546)	(128,717)	(2,171)
Operations Total		59,745	60,047	302
Resources	Expenditure Total	57,618	57,045	(403)
	Income Total	(8,121)	(7,751)	370
Resources Total		49,497	49,294	(203)
Executive	Expenditure Total	1,049	1,049	0
	Income Total	(125)	(125)	0
Executive Total		924	924	0
Total Net Cost of Service		347,689	354,191	6,502
Corporate Items				
Pay award 2025/26		(338)	0	338
Budget Contingency		3,145	355	(2,790)
Treasury management interest income		(655)	(655)	0
Treasury management borrowing costs		9,408	9,108	(300)
Pay & grading project		2,176	2,176	0
Prudential Borrowing		2,920	2,920	0
Vacant properties		552	632	80
Benefits		(1,323)	(423)	900
Earmarked Reserves		(8,440)	(9,020)	(580)
Investment Properties		(5,301)	(5,301)	0
Council Tax Income		(281,232)	(281,232)	0
Other Corporate Items		(68,601)	(68,601)	0
Net Position		0	4,150	4,150

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Appendix B - Earmarked Reserves for 31 March 2026

Detail	31/03/25 Actual Balances £000's	Estimated movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated Balances £000's
Application of one-off resources to support the financial sustainability of the MTFP following a fundamental review as part of the process of building the budget for 2024/25	(2,790)	2,790	0
Transition and Transformation Reserves	(3,126)	0	(3,126)
Insurance Reserve	(5,018)	0	(5,018)
Held in Partnership for External Organisations	(3,467)	878	(2,589)
Required by Statute or Legislation	(795)	0	(795)
Planning Related	(354)	(39)	(393)
Government Grants	(18,959)	4,882	(14,077)
Maintenance	(3,231)	(36)	(3,267)
ICT Development & Improvement	(3,637)	474	(3,163)
Corporate Priorities & Improvements	(14,318)	7,566	(6,752)
Total Earmarked Reserve Balance	(55,693)	16,515	(39,179)

One off Business Rates Resources being applied to MTFP Reserve

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Designed to provide the Council with the ability to manage any emerging issues. Includes reserves to enable the management of the MTFP.			
Total One off Business Rates Resources being applied to MTFP	(2,790)	2,790	0
One off Business Rates Resources being applied to MTFP Reserve	(2,790)	2,790	0

Transition and Transformation Reserves

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Resources set aside to support the one-off change costs of associated with creating the new council and meeting the Councils costs associated with the transformation project.			
Pay and Reward funding to support 2026/27 costs	(1,109)	0	(1,109)
Redundancy - Non Transformation Funded	(2,017)	0	(2,017)
Transition and Transformation Reserves	(3,126)	0	(3,126)

Insurance Reserve

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Reserve to enable the annual fluctuations in the amounts of excesses payable to be funded without creating an in-year pressures on the services. Subject to ongoing review by an independent third party.			
Insurance Reserve	(5,018)	0	(5,018)

Held in Partnership for External Organisations

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Amounts held in trust on behalf of partners or external third party organisations.			
Youth Programme	(174)	24	(150)
Music and Arts Education Partnership	(412)	150	(262)
ICS Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health	(85)	85	0
Flippers Nursery	(207)	0	(207)
Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Partnership	(619)	200	(419)
Dorset Adult Learning Service (Specific Bequeath)	(99)	0	(99)
Dorset Adult Learning Service	(686)	0	(686)
FCERM - Shared with East Devon DC	(190)	0	(190)
Adult Safeguarding Board	(216)	46	(170)
Better Care Fund	(326)	248	(78)
UP2U	(74)	25	(49)
Kinson Community Centre - Community Benefit Fund - Enhancement works	(1)	0	(1)
Domestic Homicide Reviews	(10)	0	(10)
- Russell Cotes revenue grant (New)	(367)	100	(267)
Held in Partnership for External Organisations	(3,467)	878	(2,589)

Required by Statute or Legislation

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Amounts which the council is required to hold as a reserve in line with current accounting practice or legislative requirements.			
Bournemouth Library Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	(739)	0	(739)
Carbon Trust	(56)	0	(56)
Required by Statute or Legislation	(795)	0	(795)

Planning Related

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Reserves designed to support planning processes and associated planning activity where expenditure is not incurred on an even annual basis.			
Local Development Plan Reserve	(70)	0	(70)
Other Planning Related Reserves	(284)	(39)	(323)
Planning Related	(354)	(39)	(393)

Government Grants

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Amounts which the council is required to hold as a reserve in line with specific grant conditions.			
Government Grants	(18,928)	4,882	(14,046)
COVID 19 Government Grants	(31)	0	(31)
Total Unspent Grants	(18,959)	4,882	(14,077)

Maintenance

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Reserves and sinking funds designed to support maintenance investments in specific services or assets.			
Corporate Maintenance Fund	(2,618)	5	(2,613)
Other Maintenance Related Reserves	(612)	(41)	(653)
Maintenance	(3,231)	(36)	(3,267)

ICT Development & Improvement

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Resources set aside to meet various ICT improvement projects			
ICT Development & Improvement	(3,637)	474	(3,163)

Corporate Priorities & Improvements

	31/03/25 Actual £000's	Actual Movement £000's	31/03/26 Estimated £000's
Purpose: Amounts set a side to deliver various priorities, some of which will be of a historical nature inherited from the predecessor authorities.			
Other Service Priority reserves	(13,121)	6,951	(6,170)
Local Elections Reserve	(369)	(170)	(539)
Revenue & Benefits Reserve	(633)	589	(44)
Covid recovery resources	(196)	196	0
Corporate Priorities & Improvements	(14,318)	7,566	(6,752)

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General Fund Capital Investment Programme (CIP) budget position by service area
Quarter 2 - end of September 2025.

Capital budget Virements

1. There are no budget virements requiring approval this quarter.

Capital investment Programme Summary

2. The tables below show the summary position for capital investment programme (CIP) in the general fund as of 30 September 2025.
3. Summary budget movements are shown in table 1 with the detail by directorate included in table 2. How the programme is funded is included in table 3 followed by narrative detail. The total resources for the 2025/26 capital investment programme have increased from £152 million to nearly £173 million reflecting additional funding approved for major schemes like Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill flood defence and Port of Poole Bridges programme funded from Environment Agency grants and approved use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Other capital programme growth includes smaller grant funded flood and coastal erosion schemes, approved increase for the Poole Museums and confirmed funding for the Russell Cotes MEND4 project, use of CIL heathlands funding as approved in the CIL strategy and new schemes from the CIL neighbourhood 6 awards. The full allocation of the 2025/26 SEND capital grant is also reflected in the capital programme.
4. The total spend to date is relatively low at 13%, the spend of some schemes is planned to happen during the second half of the financial year. During quarter three there will be a reprofiling exercise for current schemes estimated slippage which will be reflected in the 2026/27 medium term financial plan.

Table 1 – Summary of budget movement

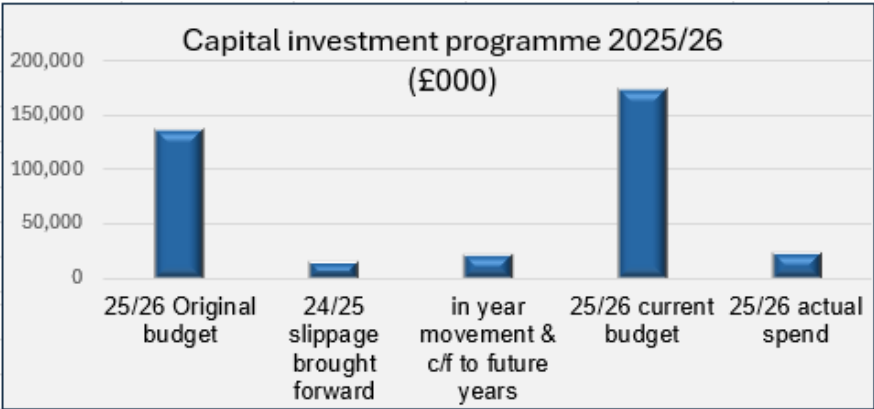


Table 2 – Summary movement and current position by Directorate

Capital Investment Programme	25/26 Original budget £000	24/25 slippage brought forward £000	in year movement & c/f to future years £000	25/26 Current budget £000	Actual 25/26 £000	% budget consumed
25/26 Monitoring						
Operations						
Commercial Operations	34,111	838	11,645	46,594	1,562	3%
Investment and Development	8,644	479	(815)	8,308	275	3%
Customer Arts and Property	34,242	6,322	11,804	52,368	13,422	26%
Planning and Transport	12,667	2,334	(6,644)	8,357	696	8%
Environment	22,189	2,053	1,098	25,340	2,052	8%
Operations Strategy	253	16	(75)	194	3	2%
	112,106	12,042	17,013	141,161	18,010	13%
Children Services						
Education and Skills	16,169	3,214	4,275	23,658	1,509	6%
	16,169	3,214	4,275	23,658	1,509	6%
Wellbeing						
Housing and Community	3,790	(475)	75	3,390	1,542	45%
Adults Commissioning	2,685	92	0	2,777	1,228	44%
	6,475	(383)	75	6,167	2,770	45%
Executive						
IT and Programmes	1,588	202	0	1,790	25	1%
	1,588	202	0	1,790	25	1%
	136,338	15,075	21,363	172,776	22,314	13%

Table 3 – Capital Investment programme funding profile

Capital Investment Programme Funding	25/26 Original budget £000	24/25 slippage brought forward £000	in year movement & c/f into future years £000	25/26 Current budget £000
Prudential Borrowing	(20,087)	(2,640)	(1,615)	(24,342)
Capital Receipts (General Fund)	(1,165)	(23)	(99)	(1,287)
Reserve Funding (General Fund Capital)	(557)	(88)	(74)	(719)
Reserve Funding (General fund revenue)	(920)	(70)	(213)	(1,203)
RCCO	0	(1)	(28)	(29)
BCP Funding Requirement	(22,729)	(2,822)	(2,029)	(27,580)
S106	(458)	(494)	(302)	(1,254)
CIL	(4,110)	(340)	(7,887)	(12,337)
Non-government grants	(1,053)	(622)	(787)	(2,462)
Government Grants	(107,357)	(9,886)	(11,005)	(128,248)
Third party contributions	(631)	(911)	647	(895)
External Funding Contributions	(113,609)	(12,253)	(19,334)	(145,196)
	(136,338)	(15,075)	(21,363)	(172,776)

OPERATIONS (£141.2m)

Commercial Operations - £46.6m

- The Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) current budget for 2025/26 is £24.8 million funded mainly from Environment Agency grant and Community Infrastructure Levy. The largest scheme Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill flood defence (£18.8 million for 2025/26 with £0.8 million expenditure) will need reprogramming to comply with environmental and compliance licences. It is estimated that approximately £7.7 million will be spent over the winter months with the remaining budget being reprofiled to future years. The majority of the expenditure for Poole Bay Beach management (£4.3 million for 25/26 with £0.8 million expenditure) is programmed over the winter months, approximately £1 million will likely be reprofiled to future years.
- Seafront Development projects have a planned expenditure budget of £21.1 million for 2025/26 of which £16 million relates to projects funded from the Levelling Up Infrastructure Fund (MHCLG grant) with £0.6 million expenditure to date. BCP council has received confirmation of an extension

to the spending deadline to March 2028. The largest project (Bournemouth Pier works) is currently out to tender; works are expected to start in March 2026 for an 18-month programme. The budget will be reprofiled accordingly.

7. The majority of the remaining budget, £4.7 million (with no expenditure to date) is for Canford Cliffs pavilion and beach huts and Mudeford beach house café. A review is underway revising the business cases for the pavilion and the beach huts at Canford Cliffs, to deliver the original agreed funding outcomes whilst also a more affordable and efficient pavilion and beach hut offer, driving future income growth and job creation at the site.

Investment & Development - £8.3m (excluding HRA)

8. The overall Towns Fund (MHCLG grant) is £21.7 million of which £7.6 million has been utilised up to September 2025 with £14.1 million remaining for the next two years. Of the £4.3 million profiled for 2025/26 £0.5 million has been spent to date.
9. The MHCLG grant allocation of £7.7 million earmarked for Hawkwood Road residential development will be spent within the Housing Revenue Account. The grant needs to be spent by March 2028.
10. The council housing acquisition programme is almost complete – there is still £0.5 million of invoices to cover works carried out in 2024/25 which have not yet been finalised, it is estimated that these will be processed through quarter three therefore the final expenditure of the programme is not yet certain.
11. Poole Dolphin Leisure Centre development options on refurbishment are being explored with the £0.6 million budget carried into 2025/26 of which £39,000 has been spent to the end of quarter two.
12. Holes Bay delivery route is being explored to seek a development partner to take the project forward with £0.3 million budget carried into 2025/26 of which £63,000 has been spent to end of quarter two.
13. Wessex Fields Infrastructure: The link road is nearing completion with £0.4 million slippage reprofiled to 2025/26, of which £51,000 has been spent.

Customer Arts and Property - £52.4m

14. The in-house engineering unit manages nearly £46 million of the highway's asset management, improvement and travel programme on behalf of the planning and transport directorate with nearly £11 million spent to date (24%), a higher level of expenditure is planned over the winter months. A review of the schemes profiled budgets will take place during quarter three.
15. The Poole Museum programme of £3.7 million for 2025/26 reached practical completion in September with a small number of post contract works being finalised. The final accounts are being negotiated, therefore the final financial position is not yet known, however there is no further information available to change previous estimates. There have been further delays in the delivery of the project, the effect of this will not be known until the accounts are finalised.
16. Approximately £1.8 million estates management and accommodation strategy expenditure is planned for 2025/26 of which £0.6 million is spent to date.

Planning and Transport - £8.4m

17. This service leads on the Highways asset management, improvement and sustainable travel programme and transport capital programme management acting as client to the in-house engineering unit within the Customer Arts and Property Directorate.
18. Within the Planning and Transport service direct reporting is £8.3 million profiled spend in 2025/26 including £3.6 million bus service improvement plan and £3.6 million on network management, sustainable travel and transport improvements. The expenditure incurred during the first half of the financial year was £0.7 million. A review of the schemes profiled budgets will take place during quarter three considering the expenditure planned during the winter months.

Environment - £25.3m

19. The fleet and equipment budget profiled for 2025/26 is £11.9 million of this £0.5 million was spent to end of September. Vehicles are replaced, when necessary, therefore the replacement

programme may be delayed due to longer vehicle lifecycle. Unused budget will be reprofiled to future years to continue the replacement programme.

20. Sustainable waste and green infrastructure account for £13.4 million, of which £1.7 million was spent in the first half of 2025/26. The plan for play programme initial work has been around planning and procurement activities with more contractual expenditure to take place in the second part of the financial year with likely slippage into 2026/27. New schemes were added to the capital programme following the allocation of the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy round 6, these will also require initial planning and procurement activities before contractual expenditure. The remaining £5.8 million waste infrastructure grant will be considered for future requirements.

CHILDREN SERVICES (£23.7m)

21. The 2025/26 capital programme has begun to deliver the 3-year children's Services Capital Strategy approved by council in March 2025.
22. The £23.7 million budget represents the total funding available including brought forward grant from previous years. The total spend up to the end of September of the £8.5 million committed to specific schemes, is £1.5 million (18%). The remaining £15.1 million funding will be considered as part of the three-year children services strategy. The costs of individual schemes are being developed in line with RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) best practice and BCP Financial Regulations.

WELLBEING (£6.2m)

Housing and Communities - £3.4m

23. The Disabled facilities Grant usage for disabled adaptations profiled for 25/26 is £2.6 million of which 53% has been expended to the end of quarter two. The service is catching up with backlog of property adaptations and using prior year grant carried forward.
24. The remaining expenditure of £0.8 million relates to CCTV systems, community related activity and tenancy services. £0.1 million has been spent to end of quarter two.

Adults Commissioning £2.8m

25. The majority of spend within this programme relates to the Integrated Community Equipment Store (ICES) funded by the Disabled Facilities Grant. 47% has been expended to the end of quarter two. The council continues to provide support to the community through this means from an annual allocation from the Better Care Fund pooled budget with Health.

EXECUTIVE & RESOURCES (£1.8m)

IT and Programmes Capital - £1.8m

26. The councils ICT investment programme planned spend for 2025/26 is £1.8 million mainly on desktop replacement. Approximately £0.8 million is estimated to be spent in the second half of the financial year with the remaining budget being reprofiled to 2026/27.

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
CHILDREN - CAPITAL						
Education and Skills Capital						
Basic Needs Grant - uncommitted	760	(33)	100	827	-	0%
School Conditions Grant - Uncommitted	3,990	46	(2,936)	1,100	-	0%
SEND Options Appraisal Works- Rolling Programme	200	-	-	200	-	0%
High needs Grant - Uncommitted	7,852	(21)	5,350	13,181	-	0%
Ocean Academy	-	-	-	-	1	
Childcare Expansion - Wraparound	277	13	(242)	48	28	58%
Childcare Expansion - Expanded Entitlement	-	191	104	295	234	79%
Hillbourne - New School	-	416	-	416	(64)	-15%
Condition Surveys (Children's Strategy)	50	-	-	50	1	2%
CS Urgent Work	100	-	-	100	5	5%
Poole High Planned Maintenance investigations	50	54	-	104	35	33%
Old Town & Baden Powell Caretaker property sale reimbursement	-	220	-	220	8	4%
Parkstone Grammar School	252	-	-	252	-	0%
Advanced Design Fees SEND	200	(7)	-	193	6	3%
Broadstone Resource Base/Satellite	100	(49)	-	51	(31)	-61%
Elm Academy	-	99	(99)	-	-	
Victoria Education Centre	90	73	-	163	-	0%
Bournemouth Learning Centre	-	35	(35)	-	-	
Winchelsea temporary office space	28	(28)	-	-	5	
CS URGENT WORK Somerford Primary School	-	-	-	-	6	
CS URGENT WORK Linwood School	-	-	-	-	6	
Planned Repairs and Maintenance	142	-	(142)	-	-	
Somerford safety works (decommissioned)	-	-	-	-	(0)	
Climate Change/Low Carbon Reduction	550	-	(80)	470	-	0%
Winchelsea interim accommodation	32	(32)	-	-	17	
Linwood School Expansion	-	12	(12)	-	-	
Canford Heath Infant Junior SEND Provision	446	540	-	985	67	7%
Linwood at Oakdale SEND satellite	-	27	-	27	-	0%
Link at Bourne Academy SEND provision	-	11	14	25	23	92%
Linwood School Post-16 at Ted Webster	1,000	265	80	1,345	763	57%
Linwood Satellite 1	-	500	(500)	-	-	
Linwood Satellite 2	-	500	(500)	-	-	
Linwood Special School- Stourfield Satelllite	-	72	(72)	-	-	
Christchurch Learning Centre - AP School Satellite	-	200	(200)	-	-	
Linwood at Stourfield Satellite	-	16	(16)	-	-	
Family Hubs Transformation	-	95	102	197	-	0%
Basic Needs Surveys	50	-	-	50	-	0%
Mudeford Wood Preschool (Highcliffe day centre premises)	-	-	30	30	15	51%
Burton Primary School - planned R&M	-	-	370	370	41	11%
Christchurch Learning Centre - planned R&M	-	-	180	180	-	0%
Highcliffe St Mark - planned R&M	-	-	480	480	215	45%
Linwood - planned R&M	-	-	1,070	1,070	-	0%
Mudeford Infant School - planned R&M	-	-	330	330	-	0%
Mudeford Junior School - planned R&M	-	-	110	110	80	72%
Somerford Primary School - planned R&M	-	-	200	200	-	0%
Winchelsea School - planned R&M	-	-	125	125	-	0%
Dingley's promise (Kinson and West Howe)	-	-	25	25	22	87%
Dingley's promise (350 Poole Road)	-	-	60	60	19	32%
Dingley's promise (Somerford Primary bungalow)	-	-	307	307	-	0%
Winchelsea Satellite at Old Town First School	-	-	31	31	11	35%
Somerford Forest Hub Classroom	-	-	41	41	-	0%
Education and Skills Capital Total	16,169	3,214	4,275	23,658	1,509	6%
Children Capital Total	16,169	3,214	4,275	23,658	1,509	6%
EXECUTIVE - CAPITAL						
Finance Capital						
Finance Capital Total	-	-	-	-	-	0%
IT and Programmes Capital						
Enterprise Hosting	60	29	-	89	-	0%
Enterprise Security	-	90	-	90	21	23%
Enterprise Comms (WAN Migration)	148	8	-	156	-	0%
Enterprise Storage & Data	-	26	-	26	-	0%
Enterprise Apps (Applications)	-	81	-	81	5	6%
Enterprise Compute (Platform Modernisation)	150	-	-	150	-	0%
Enterprise Endpoints (Desktop Replacement)	1,195	-	-	1,195	-	0%
Enterprise Comms (Telephony)	35	(32)	-	3	-	0%
IT and Programmes Capital Total	1,588	202	-	1,790	25	1%
Executive - Capital Total	1,588	202	-	1,790	25	1%

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
OPERATIONS - CAPITAL						
Commercial Operations Capital						
3G Artificial Pitch Rossmore Leisure Centre - Feasibility	-	129	-	129	-	0%
Ashdown Leisure Centre Floodlights	-	6	-	6	(27)	-422%
Avon Beach to Highcliffe Beach Management	35	4	-	39	7	17%
BCP Cliff Management Strategy	100	(2)	-	98	71	72%
Beach Road Rear Car Park	-	23	-	23	-	0%
Broadstone Underpass Mural	-	31	(31)	-	-	
Canford Cliffs Pavilion	500	500	-	1,000	-	0%
Christchurch Bay and Harbour FCERM Strategy	67	(9)	-	58	17	29%
Christchurch Town Centre Strategy	64	-	-	64	-	0%
SWMP Scooping Phase	-	-	90	90	19	21%
Sterte Flood Defence Works (pumping station)	-	-	358	358	1	0%
Durley Chine Environmental Innovation Hub	270	(4)	-	265	3	1%
Durlston to Hurst Sediment Resource Management programme	175	(40)	-	135	52	39%
FCERM Partnership Funding	52	(17)	-	35	3	10%
Highcliffe Beach Access Ramps	-	9	-	9	7	78%
Highcliffe Castle, (inc Phoenix Flies Project)	-	32	-	32	-	0%
Inland Asset Management System	-	36	-	36	1	4%
Kinson Catchment Surface Water FAS	35	(1)	-	34	17	51%
Lake Pier Major Refurbishment	-	2	-	2	(7)	-432%
Leisure centre management in-house set up and investment	100	56	-	156	-	0%
MCA Project	3	-	-	3	3	100%
Mudeford Beach House Café	550	-	-	550	-	0%
Mudeford Ferry Pontoon	64	-	74	138	-	0%
Mudeford Sandbanks Beach Management	35	5	-	40	3	7%
New Beach Huts - Canford Cliffs	3,118	-	-	3,118	-	0%
Poole Bay Beach Management 2020-2031	3,639	750	-	4,389	(93)	-2%
Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill (PB2HH)	8,995	(477)	10,274	18,790	788	4%
RNLI Signage and Public Rescue Equipment	80	(23)	-	57	1	1%
Sandbanks Pavilion	4	-	-	4	-	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Alum Chine Cloisters (Feasibility)	43	10	(48)	5	-	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Boscombe Pier (Feasibility)	39	(13)	-	26	-	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Bournemouth Lifeguard Corps (New Building)	-	56	35	91	89	97%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Bournemouth Pier (Future Leisure Offer)	-	116	(16)	100	-	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Bournemouth Pier (Structural Engineering)	9,043	(471)	699	9,272	29	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Coastal Heritage Trail (Culture)	500	(44)	(1)	455	85	19%
SEAFRONT (LUF) East Cliff Lift (Future Leisure Offer)	98	-	(98)	-	-	
SEAFRONT (LUF) East Cliff Lift (Stabilisation Works)	4,189	(206)	(63)	3,920	43	1%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Hamworthy Sea Wall (Repairs)	-	74	(39)	35	-	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Holes Bay Visual Arts Centre	53	-	(53)	-	-	
SEAFRONT (LUF) Project Management & Sundry Costs	-	-	148	148	77	52%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Promenade Infrastructure (Utility & Digital)	687	100	(87)	700	293	42%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Seafront Beach Huts (Repairs & Upgrades)	1,066	(7)	(280)	779	1	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Seafront Toilets (Repairs & Upgrades)	-	69	200	269	4	1%
SEAFRONT (LUF) The Strand (Access, Amenity & Wellbeing)	368	(97)	(68)	203	0	0%
SEAFRONT (LUF) Upton Country Park (Bridge & Cycle Path)	-	-	10	10	10	95%
Upton Country Park - Discovery project	-	-	-	-	4	
Upton Country Park New Play Attraction	-	16	-	16	-	0%
Upton House stabilisation	-	158	-	158	18	11%
Poole Bay, Harbour and Wareham FCERM Strategy	-	41	200	241	18	7%
Whitley Lake Sea Defence Study	60	29	-	89	-	0%
South West Storms Analysis	-	-	68	68	3	5%
Jurassic Coast FCERM Mitigation Study (revenue)	-	-	173	173	11	7%
Debris Screen Health and Safety Works	-	-	100	100	2	2%
Poole Park Tennis Courts Resurface	80	-	-	80	-	0%
Holes Bay Saltmarsh Regen	-	-	-	-	9	
Commercial Operations Capital Total	34,111	838	11,646	46,594	1,562	3%

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Customer, Arts and Property Capital						
A3060 CASTLE LANE WEST (MUSCLIFFE WAY TO BROADWAY R'BOUT)	1,500	18	-	1,518	-	0%
A341 WIMBORNE RD (FERNCROFT RD TO N'BOURNE RD)	600	130	-	730	-	0%
A35 COMMERCIAL RD (PARK RD TO CHURCH RD)	-	71	-	71	-	0%
ATF4 Baiter footpath and cycleway imp	-	-	52	52	58	111%
ATF4 Bournemouth Gardens path	-	475	(60)	414	24	6%
ATF4 School streets permanent measures	-	54	-	54	84	154%
ATF4 Turbary Park Link	-	265	-	265	151	57%
ATF4 Wallisdown Road phase 4 (Bndry to Uni)	-	86	-	86	95	110%
ATF4 Wallisdown Road phase 5 (crossroads)	-	323	-	323	12	4%
Avenue Road Car Park	-	22	-	22	-	0%
B- Wayfinding	152	28	-	180	169	94%
BH Live	518	-	(518)	-	-	
BMS Systems (Building energy management)	-	5	-	5	-	0%
Bridge Maintenance	-	(12)	600	588	47	8%
Bridge Maintenance RETENTION (Poole)	-	33	-	33	-	0%
BSIP Bmth station to Town centre bus priority	2,600	37	1,240	3,877	120	3%
BSIP High street and Bargates Christchurch	700	345	(865)	180	193	107%
BSIP Westbourne bus priority	700	17	(430)	287	33	11%
Bus Priority on TCF Corridors	-	82	-	82	37	45%
C- Bus Infrastructure	-	140	-	140	1	0%
Capital Replacement - Corporate Estates	-	10	-	10	64	650%
Capitalised maintenance Neighbourhood Services (Pru borrowing)	900	121	-	1,021	19	2%
Castle Lane West - Muscliffe to Broadway	2,437	115	-	2,552	2,987	117%
Ceramics Gallery (Poole Museum)	250	64	-	314	54	17%
Christchurch Priory, Wall Repairs	130	2	-	132	35	26%
Civic Centre data centre air con units	100	23	-	123	-	0%
Civic Hub (decarbonisation works)	-	18	-	18	-	0%
Corridor C2 Sections 6 to 8 off line Route Redhill-Airport	25	52	-	77	4	5%
Cycle Corridor Section C2-3A-B Glenferness Ave Bridge	1,502	(935)	-	567	10	2%
DLEP Lansdowne Business District	-	120	80	200	17	8%
Durley Car Park - School Zone (Developer funded)	-	3	(3)	-	-	
Extension Zero + Kinson Hub (from B customer Services above)	162	37	-	199	27	14%
Ferndown, Wallisdown, Poole (FWP) Corridors Phase 3	-	(231)	653	422	112	27%
Fisherman's Walk Cliff Lift	-	17	-	17	-	0%
Gervis Place	-	147	-	147	-	0%
Highcliffe Castle - Draft proofing and BMS	-	13	-	13	-	0%
Honeycombe Chine - waterproofing	-	25	-	25	-	0%
Highways Structural Maintenance - Design Fees	-	-	288	288	116	40%
Highways structural mainatenance - Drainage Improvements	-	-	100	100	142	142%
Highways structural mainatenance - Footways (resurf + slurry)	-	-	150	150	93	62%
Highways structural mainatenance - Resurfacing Programme	300	-	2,526	2,826	484	17%
Highways structural mainatenance - Surveys & software	-	33	144	177	97	55%
ICT investment	53	(2)	-	51	-	0%
Kings Park (inc crossings on Ashley)	-	65	-	65	37	57%
Lamp columns Shore road	-	4	42	46	-	0%
Library Replacement ICT Programme	165	18	-	183	-	0%
Millhams Recycling Centre (Slab remediation)	-	68	-	68	-	0%
Neighbourhood Services (Streetscene) -Pothole investment	1,000	301	(1,301)	-	-	
Neighbourhood Services HMSP Planned pre-patching	200	-	1,301	1,501	543	36%
New BCP Depot	230	(19)	-	211	23	11%
New Inn to Trigon Footbridge	67	(33)	-	34	-	0%
Parkway House (insurance and landlord works)	255	31	-	286	111	39%
Poole Museum - Our Museum project	1,200	501	576	2,277	1,327	58%
Poole Museum - Our Museum project - Activity Plan	80	17	-	97	3	3%
Poole Museum - Temporary Exhibition Gallery	-	69	(60)	9	3	29%
Poole Museum Public Realm - Phase 2	200	21	-	221	200	91%
Poole Museum Decarbonisation (Salix)	-	17	-	17	-	0%
PR 42 - Asset Management BIC	-	-	65	65	21	33%
PR 43 - Asset Management Pavilion	-	-	65	65	7	11%
PR 44 - Asset Management Littledown	-	37	258	295	324	110%
PR 45 - Asset Management Stokewood	-	-	65	65	1	2%
PR 46 - Asset Management Pelhams	-	-	65	65	-	0%

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Principal Inspection Programme (BCP)	-	10	100	110	23	21%
Programme Management	780	(68)	-	712	207	29%
Remodelling BCP Civic space- West Wing	350	11	-	361	82	23%
Ringwood Rd - Controlled crossing only	60	91	544	695	201	29%
Ringwood Rd Sea View to Manning Heath	11,570	1,579	-	13,149	3,407	26%
Road Safety Improvements 20mph schemes	75	64	174	313	17	5%
Road Safety: Casualty Reduction Measures, Cluster Sites	200	242	50	492	19	4%
Road Safety: Safe Routes to School (SRTS)	250	112	500	862	239	28%
Road Safety: Safety Improvements - Pedestrian Crossings	-	248	250	498	36	7%
Russell Cotes MEND Project	-	34	-	34	4	13%
Russell Cotes Museum - roof/balcony water proofing	-	39	-	39	-	0%
S6 Section 1 Magna Road Arrowsmith to Bearcross	-	143	-	143	2	2%
Safer Roads Partnership	700	289	-	989	694	70%
Scaplen's Court Museum	100	(100)	36	36	68	187%
Scaplen's Court Museum Paving works	-	14	-	14	1	6%
Sopers Lane Pedestrian Crossing	-	24	-	24	-	0%
Street Lighting Maintenance	-	72	470	542	166	31%
Surface treatment - Road markings, patching, micro asphalt	150	(36)	950	1,064	116	11%
Thames Street Public Realm	-	80	65	145	7	5%
Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Unallocated	3,931	-	-	3,931	-	0%
Walking and Cycling improvements	-	208	75	283	37	13%
SLM Capital dilapidations	-	287	-	287	43	15%
Wimborne Road - Serpentine to New Inn	50	131	-	181	71	39%
Telecare	-	-	178	178	90	51%
Port of Poole Bridges Programme	-	-	1,000	1,000	-	0%
Crossing at Richmond Road north of Springbourne roundabout	-	-	214	214	0	0%
Crossing at Alder Road near Recreation Rd and Sheringham Rd	-	-	210	210	0	0%
Recreation Road to Coy Pond Quiet Route (incl. Yarmouth Rd crossing)	-	-	479	479	11	2%
Highcliffe Road Toucan Crossing	-	-	350	350	1	0%
Parkstone Rd/Birds Hill Rd Crossing	-	-	300	300	0	0%
Russell Cotes MEND 4 Project	-	-	682	682	-	0%
CWT Plant & Machinery	-	-	145	145	-	0%
Customer, Arts and Property Capital Total	34,242	6,322	11,804	52,368	13,422	26%
Environment Capital						
Alexandra Park Pavilion Refurbishment	-	10	-	10	4	37%
Ashtree meadows access improvements	-	10	-	10	-	0%
Broadstone Rec Play Build	-	6	-	6	-	0%
Canford Heath (East & West) Open Space improvements	80	(15)	-	65	(10)	-16%
Christchurch Legacy Play areas	88	-	-	88	-	0%
Cleaner Greener Safer Equipment	-	219	-	219	-	0%
Coastal Country Park (SANG)	150	(4)	-	146	4	2%
Connecting Christchurch Project	90	34	-	124	26	21%
Fleet Management	10,525	703	-	11,229	426	4%
Hamworthy Park Improvements	-	19	-	19	-	0%
Harbourside Masterplan (Whitecliff and Baiter)	-	46	-	46	-	0%
Harbourside Park Open Space improvement	71	(12)	-	60	-	0%
Hatchpond electricity works upgrade	-	-	-	-	(94)	
Hengistbury Head Visitor Centre	230	21	-	251	6	2%
Iford Meadows and Playing Fields	-	3	-	3	0	9%
Insourcing Ch'ch Recycling and Hurn WTS	-	14	-	14	-	0%
Knyveton Gardens Improvements	40	(3)	7	44	24	56%
Millhams Civic Amenity Site	-	22	-	22	-	0%
Mudford Woods infrastructure improvements	200	(18)	-	182	(1)	0%
Muscliff Natural Burial Ground	107	-	-	107	-	0%
Newtown - Turners Nursery	52	-	-	52	-	0%
Paddleboarding signage	-	2	-	2	-	0%
Plan for Play - Repurpose & Review Ownership	2,163	52	(2,177)	38	-	0%
Poole Park - delivery phase	-	17	-	17	-	0%
Queens Park access improvements	-	1	-	1	1	104%
Sluice Channel infrastructure - Poole Park to Poole Harbour	1,162	(21)	60	1,201	289	24%
Throop Nature Park (Hicks SANG)	130	8	-	138	17	12%
Turbary Common Mire water quality imp	125	(89)	-	36	3	10%
UE1 Footpath	-	4	-	4	-	0%
Underground Refuse Systems	-	20	-	20	9	45%
Waste Bin Replacement	660	(51)	-	609	134	22%
Waste Infrastructure Grant Unallocated	5,765	10	(21)	5,754	-	0%
Weekly Food Waste Collections	552	1,038	-	1,589	1,026	65%
Winton Heathland Mitigation Project (HIP)	-	10	-	10	4	44%
UE1 Housing development Merley	-	-	65	65	-	0%
Branksome Rec	-	-	45	45	-	0%
Street Tree Planting initiative	-	-	62	62	-	0%
Ashley Cross Green, Parkstone	-	-	74	74	-	0%
Plan for Play - Defect Repairs	-	-	435	435	1	0%
Plan for Play - Refurbishment, Replacement & New Play Spaces	-	-	1,710	1,710	102	6%
Plan for Play - Staff costs	-	-	118	118	-	0%
Plan for Play - Surveys and Consultation Materials	-	-	35	35	24	69%

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Chapel Lane potholes (Hurn Waste site)	-	-	21	21	21	100%
Countryside Vehicles	-	-	323	323	33	10%
Fleet Management Additional	-	-	134	134	-	0%
Milhams Mead HIP	-	-	25	25	-	0%
Bourne Valley HIP	-	-	60	60	-	0%
Kinson Common HIP	-	-	61	61	-	0%
A338 Road Crossing Link	-	-	10	10	-	0%
Milhams Common HIP	-	-	20	20	-	0%
Bernards Mead HIP	-	-	10	10	1	9%
The Meridians HIP	-	-	20	20	0	1%
Environment Capital Total	22,189	2,053	1,098	25,340	2,052	8%

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Investment & Development - Capital						
CNHAS - Temporary Accommodation Properties	-	-	-	-	(447)	
CNHAS - Local Authority Housing Fund properties	2,650	-	-	2,650	(21)	-1%
CNHAS - Rough sleepers Accommodation properties	-	-	-	-	(0)	
CNHAS - Single Homeless Accommodation properties	-	65	17	82	45	55%
Holes Bay Development	300	(24)	-	277	63	23%
Poole Dolphin Leisure centre (formerly Heart of Poole)	550	88	-	638	39	6%
Towns Fund - Masterplan Contingency	150	(42)	46	154	-	0%
Towns Fund - Boscombe Digital Connectivity - Phase 2	337	16	21	374	141	38%
Towns Fund - Boscombe Digital Connectivity - Phase 2 REVENUE	-	-	29	29	10	36%
Towns Fund - Boscombe Skills and Digital Hub	79	-	-	79	20	26%
Towns Fund - Boscombe Skills and Digital Hub REVENUE	135	(81)	(81)	(27)	(132)	480%
Towns Fund - Events Programme REVENUE	32	(6)	-	26	16	60%
Towns Fund - Hawkwood Road Community Centre	1,758	-	(972)	786	-	0%
Towns Fund - Hawkwood Road Community Centre Demolition	594	(3)	-	591	171	29%
Towns Fund - High Street	1,208	23	-	1,231	159	13%
Towns Fund - Local Transport	617	44	95	756	85	11%
Towns Fund - Masterplan (Original)	-	-	5	5	2	45%
Towns Fund - Parks in Mind	42	9	-	50	3	6%
Towns Fund - Programme Management	106	19	-	125	62	49%
Towns Fund - Programme Management REVENUE	86	(30)	26	82	6	7%
Wessex Fields infrastructure works	-	402	-	402	51	13%
Towns Fund - Hawkwood Road - Medical Centre	-	-	-	-	2	
Investment & Development - Capital Total	8,644	479	(815)	8,308	275	3%
Operations Strategy Capital						
Public Realm Canford Cliffs	-	10	-	10	-	0%
Town centre strategy (Econ Dev)	-	7	-	7	-	0%
UKSPF District Centres (Capital) E1	-	-	178	178	-	0%
Electric powered Boat for Christchurch Harbourmaster	-	-	-	-	3	
UKSPF Unallocated	253	-	(253)	-	-	
Operations Strategy Capital Total	253	16	(75)	194	3	1%
Planning & Transport Capital						
Active Travel Fund - Baiter/Whitecliff cycleway	-	2	(2)	-	(10)	
Active Travel Fund - Programme monitoring	-	6	-	6	8	145%
Advanced Design for Future LTP Schemes (new code)	-	112	200	312	6	2%
Boscombe Towns Fund	288	132	-	420	53	13%
BSIP Branksome Roundabout (BSIP1)	-	39	(39)	-	-	
BSIP Bus priority at 65 signalised junctions	-	131	(131)	-	-	
BSIP Live stream CCTV bus shelters to control rm	-	16	-	16	11	71%
BSIP New RTI Displays	-	7	561	567	0	0%
BSIP Poole bus station RTP1 inc CCTV	-	10	-	10	4	36%
BSIP Purewell Bus Priority	-	75	-	75	0	0%
BSIP Southbourne bus priority	-	24	-	24	-	0%
Bus Facilities	-	2	-	2	3	161%
Data Collection	-	63	25	88	6	6%
DFT Traffic Signals Funding Bid	-	511	-	511	29	6%
Dropped crossings/Accessibility improvements	-	60	55	115	4	4%
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure	-	29	600	629	0	0%
Employment sites	-	57	-	57	-	0%
Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) & Data Collection	-	82	370	452	129	28%
Local Transport Plan - 24/25 Unallocated	-	230	(180)	50	-	0%
Minor Transportation Works	-	87	80	167	6	4%
National Passenger Travel Information	-	-	25	25	25	99%
Network efficiency measures (Tower Park roundabout)	-	188	75	263	1	0%
Pokesdown Railway Station	30	7	-	37	-	0%
Programme Management Fees	-	(18)	150	133	80	61%
Rights of Way	-	12	75	87	9	10%
SANG - Barn (and General Purpose Building Obligation)	-	26	-	26	1	2%
School Streets	-	111	50	161	0	0%
South East Dorset Multi-modal Transport Model	-	-	65	65	-	0%
STB, DfT, LCWIP, OBC Development & Bidding	-	194	305	499	233	47%
UTMC - Pelican upgrades	-	99	500	599	38	6%
BSIP unallocated	3,257	42	(3,299)	-	-	
BSIP Branksome Roundabout (BSIP2)	-	-	89	89	5	6%
BSIP Bournemouth Interchange to Station Roundabout bus priority on slip road	-	-	780	780	-	0%
BSIP Ashley Road - Upper Parkstone	-	-	30	30	-	0%
BSIP Charminster Road – Charminster	-	-	30	30	-	0%
BSIP Wimborne Road - Winton parking review	-	-	30	30	-	0%
BSIP Poole Bus Station Refurbishment	-	-	200	200	-	0%
BSIP Bournemouth Travel Interchange Refurbishment	-	-	112	112	55	49%
BSIP Shelter upgrade programme, 30 sites	-	-	350	350	-	0%
BSIP Bus fleet to be Zero Emission	-	-	950	951	-	0%
BSIP Raised kerbing and extended bus stop clearways at 35 stops	-	-	392	392	-	0%
Local Transport Plan - Highways Maintenance Unallocated	6,278	-	(6,279)	-	-	
Local Transport Plan - Integrated Transport Block Unallocated	2,814	-	(2,814)	-	-	

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Planning & Transport Capital Total	12,667	2,334	(6,645)	8,357	696	8%
Operations - Capital Total	112,106	12,042	17,013	141,161	18,010	13%

Capital Investment programme 2025/26 project list						
	25/26 Original Budget	24/25 Slippage Brought Forward	In year movement/ c/f to future years	25/26 Current Budget	Actual 30/09/25	% Budget Consumed
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
WELLBEING - CAPITAL						
Adults Commissioning Capital						
Care technology service - equipment	94	56	-	150	-	0%
Disabled Facilities Grant - Integrated Community Equipment Store (BCP)	2,591	36	-	2,627	1,228	47%
Adults Commissioning Capital Total	2,685	92	-	2,777	1,228	44%
Housing & Communities Capital						
Cleaner Greener Safer - additional CCTV	-	66	-	66	-	0%
Cleaner Greener Safer - safer improvements	-	40	-	40	-	0%
Disabled Facilities Grant - Housing	3,675	(1,011)	-	2,664	1,415	53%
Private Sector Renewal-warmth & well-being	115	9	-	124	29	23%
UKSPF Communities and Place E11	-	-	75	75	75	100%
Community Land Trust Project (Affordable housing)	-	421	-	421	24	6%
Housing & Communities Capital Total	3,790	(475)	75	3,390	1,542	45%
Wellbeing - Capital Total	6,475	(383)	75	6,167	2,770	45%
Grand Total	136,338	15,075	21,363	172,776	22,314	13%

Quarter Two 2025-26 HRA Forecast

1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a separate account within the council that ring-fences the income and expenditure associated with the council's housing stock. The HRA does not therefore directly impact on the council's wider general fund budget. Within the HRA the Council manages approximately 9,610 tenanted properties.
2. The 2025-26 HRA budget was approved by Council last February. It budgeted for total income of £58.5 million for the year and a net surplus of £4.1 million.

Revenue account monitoring at quarter two

	2025-26 Budget £000	Full year forecast £000	Variance £000
Income			
Dwelling rents	(54,001)	(54,001)	0
Non-dwelling rents	(276)	(247)	29
Charges for services and facilities	(3,768)	(3,609)	159
Contributions to expenditure	(438)	(365)	73
Total income	(58,483)	(58,222)	261
Expenditure			
Repairs and Maintenance	14,031	15,130	1,099
Supervision and Management	18,373	17,646	(727)
Rent, rates, taxes and other charges	447	382	(65)
Bad or doubtful debts	400	400	0
Total expenditure	33,251	33,558	307
Net operating (surplus) / deficit	(25,232)	(24,664)	568
Capital charges			
Debt management costs	377	380	3
Depreciation	15,300	15,300	0
Net interest payable	5,425	4,725	(700)
Total capital charges	21,102	20,405	(697)
Net (surplus) / deficit	(4,130)	(4,259)	(129)
Appropriations			
Transfer to HRA reserve	4,130	4,259	129
Total appropriations	4,130	4,259	129

Commentary on variances

3. Dwelling rents: The forecast outturn is in line with budget.
4. Charges for services and facilities: Service charge income is forecast to be £0.2m adverse to budget. This is due to lower-than-expected service charges for communal utilities due to the underlying utility costs being lower than budgeted.
5. Other income: The forecast outturn is broadly in line with budget.
6. Repairs & Maintenance: The forecast full-year outturn is £1.1m adverse to budget. The adverse variance is primarily due to the very high volumes of response repairs being experienced. During the first six months of the year the in-house repairs team undertook 18,600 jobs, 45% more than budgeted. Offsetting this, their average cost per job was 18% lower than budget. The volume of repairs that had to be referred to 3rd party contractors was 28% higher than budgeted, contributing to the overall overspend.

The accelerated programme of stock condition surveys being undertaken has contributed to the high volume of response repairs, as has the work being undertaken to address damp and mould issues. During quarter three, a review of work being referred to 3rd party contractors will be undertaken to identify any possible savings.

7. Supervision and Management: Forecast costs are £0.7m lower than budget. This is due to:

	Variance £m
Lower utility costs	0.2
Forecast underspend on New-build feasibility studies	0.3
Staff vacancies	0.2
Total Supervision and Management variance	0.7

8. Depreciation: The forecast depreciation charge of £15.3m is in line with budget and is consistent with the actual charge for 2024/25.
9. Net interest payable: The £0.7m favourable forecast is because start-of-year HRA reserve balances are higher than were expected when the budget was set. The HRA Earns interest on these balances. Also, some of these reserve balances can be used to fund current year capital expenditure, reducing the requirement for new borrowing and the associated borrowing costs.

Capital programme

10. The HRA budget paper set out a capital programme of £43.0m for 2025/25. This included £25.2m investment in new-build projects delivered as part of the council newbuild housing & acquisitions strategy (CNHAS) and £17.2m in planned maintenance.

	2025-26 Budget £000	Full year forecast £000	Variance £000
New-build projects	25,202	27,970	2,768
Purchase of existing houses	500	169	(331)
Other major projects (Admiral, Sterte cladding)	100	93	(7)
Planned maintenance	17,202	17,202	0
Total capital expenditure	43,004	45,434	2,430

11. New-build projects: Actual expenditure on the new-build capital programme in 2025/26 is forecast to be £28.0m, £2.8m higher than the original budget. This is due to the rescheduling of some expenditure that had been expected to be incurred in 2024/25 into the current year, principally in relation to the Hillbourne school development and Constitution Hill demolition works.
12. There are 8 schemes with planned expenditure in the HRA during this financial year: Templeman House, Hillbourne school development, Constitution Hill, Craigmere Avenue, Grants Close, Surrey Road, Oakdale Infill and Hawkwood Road residential.
13. Purchase of existing houses: The forecast spend for the year relates to the buy-back of the last of the leasehold flats at Trinidad Village which took place in quarter one. All six flats have now been bought back. Whilst the HRA receives right-of-first-refusal to repurchase ex-local authority properties, high borrowing costs mean that repurchases are currently not financially viable.

14. Planned maintenance programme: This covers capital maintenance such as kitchen, bathroom and boiler replacements. Activity and expenditure in quarter one were behind budget due to the need to divert labour away from HRA capital programmes to the General Fund purchase and repair programme and servicing programmes. The current forecast assumes that activity and expenditure will return to budgeted level over the remainder of the year. To facilitate this, in-house repairs team resources are being expanded and deployed back to the HRA. Also, a contract with an external contractor for kitchen and bathroom replacements is being extended for a further six months to increase capacity.

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CABINET



Report subject	Individual Performance Framework Update
Meeting date	26 th November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	BCP Council's individual performance framework seeks to improve employee engagement, productivity, efficiency, and innovation. The framework emphasises career development, wellbeing, and retention to achieve better outcomes and services for communities and residents and deliver our shared vision for BCP Council. As set out in our People and Culture Strategy 2023-2027, BCP Council aims to develop a high-performance culture, and to increase fairness and transparency in our performance decisions. The purpose of this report is to review the effectiveness of BCP Council's individual performance management framework introduced in April 2024 and outline plans to enhance the framework over the next 12 months.
Recommendations	n/a report is for information only
Reason for recommendations	n/a report is for information only

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Jeff Hanna, Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Resources
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive

Report Authors	Sarah Deane, Director of People and Culture Katie Tomkins, Head of Talent, Workforce Development and Business Partnering
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	Update / Information

1. Background

1.1 The People and Culture team undertook an employee engagement survey in 2023, seeking the views of our staff on a range of issues, including questions specifically relating to the management of individual staff performance. Some of the responses from staff and some comments from members and staff network groups, indicated that individual performance was not managed as effectively, fairly or consistently as should be the case, across the council as a whole. There was limited data in place to confirm these observations, but the following exemplify findings from the survey which supported that view:

Findings from the employee engagement survey 2023:



1.2 In order to address this issue, a range of performance management strategies were assessed using established best practices, current research, and input from stakeholders to address identified challenges. Recognising the varying degrees of performance maturity across BCP Council, a comprehensive framework was implemented to evaluate and benchmark existing practices and promote continual

improvement in performance management. This initiative was designed to create effective engagement among managers and employees during the initial first year of a three-year programme.

- 1.3 The programme was supported by a comprehensive communication and learning plan. Over 850 people attended a webinar or learning session over the course of year one.
- 1.4 Data and insights have been regularly requested to provide assurance to CMB and Audit & Governance, to ensure individual performance is effectively being managed in BCP Council.
- 1.5 A full review and analysis of the new performance framework's first year has been completed. This review included insights from focus groups, feedback gathered throughout implementation via information webinars and drop-in sessions, and by analysing the data.
- 1.6 The report examines each of the project objectives to evaluate our progress towards them so far.

2. Objective - Align personal goals, service plans, corporate ambitions and culture

- 2.1 The new framework supports BCP council's collaborative culture and uses continuous feedback to promote open communication, trust, transparency, accountability, early problem-solving, stronger relationships, and innovation. It also strongly aligns to the desired culture which is underpinned by BCP Council's Values and Behaviours.
- 2.2 To establish a continuous feedback culture, BCP Council has implemented a holistic programmed approach intended to create multiple platforms for teams and managers to receive feedback. Leadership plays an important role in this feedback model. While informal feedback is encouraged, BCP Council also utilises a structured process through 360 feedback. This feedback approach has been adopted by Directors and above, is currently being extended to Heads of Service, and will be rolled out to all managers at the request of Directorates. The feedback process aligns with the recently developed leadership framework, which outlines expectations for team leaders through to corporate directors.
- 2.3 BCP Council is implementing Clifton Strength assessments, a tool designed to identify strengths and areas for improvement, and to contribute to the organisation's feedback culture.
- 2.4 The performance framework emphasises the significance of providing regular and timely feedback, as well as the continual evaluation of opportunities for improvement.
- 2.5 Performance recognition is addressed through the 'Our Stars' scheme, which acknowledges employees who have demonstrated the BCP values and who have

gone the extra mile. This program is associated with employee engagement and aims to support the organisational behaviours and culture.

- 2.6 BCP Council conducts an employee engagement survey to identify areas for improvement. Future developments include adopting new technologies to enhance feedback mechanisms, such as pulse surveys and other service-related platforms.
- 2.7 Various learning opportunities are available to help managers and leaders give, receive, and request feedback. Plans are underway to update and improve these opportunities, ensuring they support a psychologically safe environment in which to learn and develop. A focus area is equipping colleagues and managers to approach feedback with openness, using it as an opportunity for learning and growth.
- 2.8 Formal coaching has been introduced as part of the learning and development offer, supporting a comprehensive approach to employee engagement and performance. Coaching offerings now include leadership, performance, wellbeing, neurodiversity, and career development. As part of the review of management skills, there will be the opportunity to develop a coaching model for all managers to use which will support continuous feedback improvement.
- 2.9 Additionally, BCP Council is developing career grades and pathways that will connect continuous feedback with career development, supporting colleagues in advancing their careers.
- 2.10 One of the fundamental outcomes was to create a practical framework that aligns individual goals, with broader corporate ambitions, which helps employees see how their daily work contributes to BCP Council's key purpose which is to support residents and our communities.
- 2.11 In 2024, BCP Council launched a new online performance system designed to align individual objectives with overarching corporate ambitions. Leveraging its existing agreement with SkillGate, the provider of BCP Council's e-learning platform, the council implemented this system at no additional cost. The system allows managers and colleagues to access shared performance records and input personal objectives into a digital portal, facilitating regular progress reviews and monitoring.
- 2.12 Additionally, the platform encourages discussions on wellbeing, career development, and supports documentation of one-to-one meetings. Enhanced reporting features have been introduced, with a requirement that objectives be clearly linked to organisational ambitions. Managers are prompted to ensure each team member's personal objectives connect with key organisational aims, promoting meaningful engagement and reinforcing the 'golden thread' between individual contributions and BCP Council's broader goals.
- 2.13 This strategy cultivates a unified culture and offers employees greater clarity regarding their impact on both community and resident outcomes. Furthermore, the council now benefits from improved data and insights, enabling a direct link between collective personal objectives and overall organisational performance, particularly in achieving corporate aims and ambitions.

- 2.14 Following the review of the first year, it was noted that not all managers were utilising the new system for recording objectives online. As a result, CMB has determined that moving forward, all managers are required to document objectives through the online system. This process will be reviewed annually to identify potential areas for improvement.
- 2.15 Feedback from managers identified a challenge around the timing of setting personal objectives and agreeing yearly service plans. It has since been agreed that service plans will be updated every four years in line with new administration and refreshed annually to inform service priorities and therefore annual objectives for employees.

3. Objective - Colleagues have regular and ongoing performance conversations

- 3.1 Performance conversations should be regular and ongoing, emphasising a relational approach. This approach involves interacting and communicating with others based on core values such as respect, inclusiveness, honesty, compassion, focusing on individual strengths, support for wellbeing, and professional/personal development.
- 3.2 There is currently no data to demonstrate the effectiveness or regularity of performance conversations. There are several reasons for this, including the use of other systems and process for recording 1:1 conversations. This is an area that requires further exploration and review because of the complexity of the issue.
- 3.3 A further employee engagement survey took place in July-August 2025. 2,291 employees completed the survey (46% response rate). This response rate was lower than in 2023 which achieved 52% which we believe was due to the necessity to adjust the time of year that the survey went out because of conflicting timescales with the Pay and Reward ballot that was taking place. We are currently sharing the results of the survey with colleagues. We have seen some noticeable improvements in employee's perception of some of the indicators associated with the performance framework since the last survey in 2023.
- My team has clear objectives / targets and knows what it is meant to do (+10% increase from 71% to 81%)
 - I receive regular feedback on my performance (+13% from 60% to 73%)
 - I am able to access the right learning and development opportunities when I need to (+7% from 58% to 65%)
 - BCP Council enables me to develop my career (+9% from 41% to 50%)
 - BCP Council makes the best use of my skills and ability (+7% from 59% to 56%)
 - I make time to progress my own personal development (+7% from 49% to 56%)

- I feel encouraged to share my learning and ideas with others (+7% from 60% to 67%)
 - This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow (+10% from 58% to 68%)
 - There is someone at work who encourages my development (+11% from 57% to 68%)
 - I understand the contribution my team makes to the overall priorities of the council (+8% from 80% to 88%)
- 3.4 Feedback about the new online system showed some barriers to recording one to one conversations using the online system, particularly relating to the format and usability. Development has taken place to remove these barriers and create a simpler process for colleagues and managers

4. Objective

All colleagues receive an end of year performance review

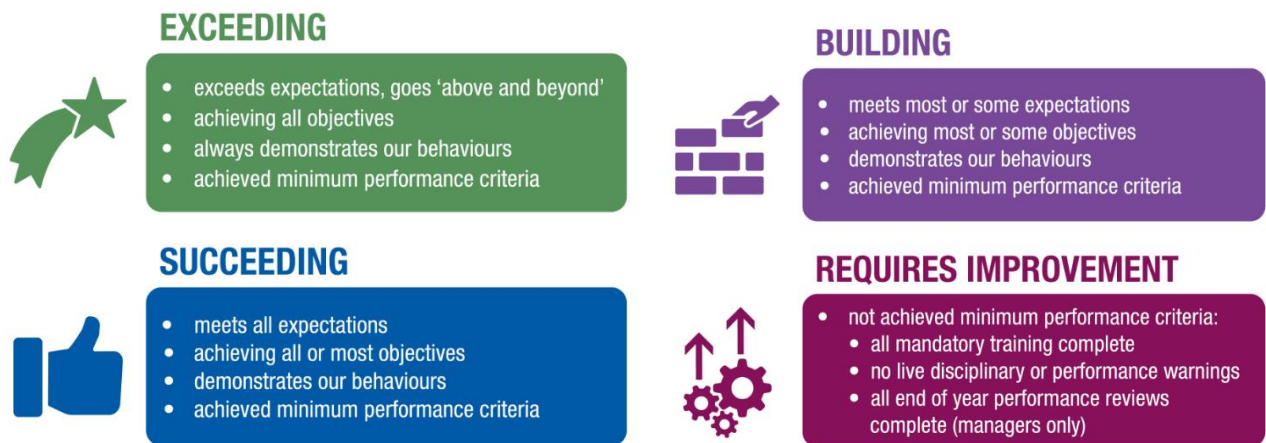
- 4.1 BCP Council achieved an 87% completion rate for end-of-year reviews by the end of February 2025. This figure increased to 92% by the end of March. Approximately 2% of colleagues were considered on long-term absence during this period.
- 4.2 Feedback from colleagues managing large frontline teams indicated that conducting end-of-year reviews was challenging due to remote working or the limited working hours of people in their teams. Examples include staff at the Leisure Centres who are contracted to work for only a few hours a month to deliver classes, and large frontline teams across Environment services which work remotely away from office locations and are managed by a small number of supervisors.
- 4.3 Managers also faced issues with the system, which does not allow delegation to another manager to complete a review on their behalf. System development is being explored, which may then allow an additional or delegated manager to access end of year performance reviews (this may be subject to additional costs).
- 4.4 Additionally, leadership teams do not currently have access to real time data relating to end of year review completion or the performance indicators agreed for their areas. Performance dashboards are being developed, which will provide managers with access to live end of year review completion data.

5. Objective

Create a fair performance framework where decisions are based on evidence

- 5.1 The performance indicators were introduced with the aims to:
- provide a common language

- provide a consistent approach to performance
- provide a benchmark against which to monitor performance
- improve engagement and develop a high-performance culture
- recognise and celebrate colleagues with high performance
- identify colleagues with high potential
- support succession planning
- provide opportunity to discuss development and growth
- clarify our minimum performance criteria
- identify where performance needs to be improved



5.2 A set of minimum performance criteria was introduced. They outline the level of compliance required to achieve satisfactory performance. These criteria are detailed in the box above.

5.3 Colleagues with a performance indicator of 'requires improvement' at their end of year review do not therefore meet the criteria for incremental pay progression. Any exceptions to this must be approved by a Corporate Director.

5.4 People and Culture received the following feedback from managers about the use of performance indicators:

- issuing performance indicators was well received and promoted more performance conversations
- more consistent and robust guidance in assigning performance indicators to colleagues is required, particularly in differentiating between succeeding and exceeding
- minimum performance criteria should be developed to include elements of poor performance (not just those colleagues on a formal performance improvement plan)

- better criteria around what constitutes 'building,' and this should be correlated with the relevant duration in the position
 - moderation should provide constructive challenge about how performance indicators have been applied to achieve fairness and consistency
 - the same standards and expectations should be applied to all colleagues to identify and address inconsistencies or biases.
- 5.5 The review identified that Directors permitted exceptions, allowing colleagues to complete overdue training or reviews in March instead of the February deadline. This increased completion rates for mandatory training (91%) and end-of-year reviews. However, the 'requires improvement' indicator was used inconsistently, resulting in a lack of uniform application of the framework.
- 5.6 The traditional bell curve model divides employees into set performance groups but poses issues for new starters in new roles who are still developing. Newly hired colleagues should not be placed in the "requires improvement" category during their probation or training period. Most employees meet expectations; however, due to moves and promotions, BCP Council should see more staff in the 'building' group. The review found inconsistencies here, and greater clarity and guidance has now been provided for Year Two.
- 5.7 The new framework contains an element of performance related pay; it was decided that withholding of increments would be applied to those colleagues who did not meet the minimum performance criteria and so would remain on their current spinal point (if not at the top of their grade) until these criteria were subsequently met. This was only for colleagues who were not already at the top of their grade.
- 5.8 It was identified that colleagues at the top of their grade are impacted differently to colleagues who are not. To ensure a more fair and consistent approach BCP Council will also be introducing Management and Guidance (MAG) for any colleague who does not meet the minimum performance criteria. MAG is an initial step towards implementing a structured approach for managing individual employee relations issues. The aim is to resolve matters prior to initiating more formal procedures.
- 5.9 Where appropriate, formal improvement procedures are set in place to manage a situation where an employee's performance falls below standard. Formal performance improvement is a documented process which sets out clear, measurable goals and support measures, aiming to correct issues before further action is considered including potential termination of contract. Four formal performance improvement cases have been in progress in the period April 2024 to the date of this report. BCP Council does not formally track informal performance discussions; if improvement occurs informally, formal procedures are unnecessary. The performance improvement framework will be reviewed in 2026/27 to improve overall management of formal performance improvement cases. Considerations will include managerial confidence or skill, organisational or individual risk tolerance, and the complexity of the process.
- 5.10 It is also acknowledged that whilst Pay and Reward is implemented and embedded, the grading structure will erode the bottom pay point of each band and this will mean

colleagues will automatically receive incremental progression if impacted by that. This means that until 2029 when the pay bands no longer overlap, there will be a smaller pool of colleagues that have the potential for an increment to be withheld.

- 5.11 As part of the Equality Impact Assessment, BCP Council have committed to monitoring fairness in the end of year review process. BCP Council has good disclosure rates in relation to disability and ethnicity, but other characteristics have not been analysed in this report due to lower rates of disclosure. Year One provided BCP Council with a baseline of data, which will be used to monitor performance data in relation to protected characteristics.
- 5.12 To ensure a fair and consistent performance framework, it is crucial to apply criteria and exceptions consistently, ensuring all colleagues are given equal opportunities to meet requirements. Clear, transparent processes for granting exceptions and consistent use of performance indicators will create an equitable system. This will not only enhance trust in the process but also support organisational culture and continuous improvement.
- 5.13 The People and Culture Team continue to work with services to encourage colleagues to complete their equalities data on the Dynamics system or, for colleagues without devices, via the Portal. By increasing disclosure rates and therefore having a greater richness of data, further analysis can be carried out to ensure the performance framework is consistently and fairly applied.
- 5.14 In addition, the management development programme outlined in paragraph 7 will include unconscious bias training to support and underpin the day to day decisions of managers.

6. Objective

Provide data, insights and reporting around performance

- 6.1 Due to budget constraints, BCP Council were unable to develop a performance system in Dynamics F&O. Instead, SkillGate was used which, although provides data and insight on individual objectives and reviews, has limitations compared to more comprehensive and sophisticated digital platforms on the market. Such systems tend to improve efficiency and enable more informed data-based decisions such as workforce planning and engagement, but this would require investment.
- 6.2 Feedback has been received about the usability of SkillGate as a performance system. An improvement plan is being developed, which will take into account system constraints, budget and resource within People & Culture and ICT.
- 6.3 With the introduction of pay & reward, and the procurement of a new payroll system it is not feasible to develop further digitalisation of a performance framework currently.
- 6.4 If there is appetite to adopt a more enhanced performance-related pay model in the future, one that recognises and rewards high performance rather than just a focus on poor performance; and one which also incorporates development rates to enable more career growth, and new entry routes into the council to align with various

corporate objectives—then BCP Council will be required to invest in technology to improve accuracy, real-time data, and analytical insights. The planned timeframe should provide sufficient opportunity to establish the necessary framework, and ensure processes are transparent, consistent, and fair across all departments.

7. Objective

Support existing and potential managers to support colleague performance

- 7.1 BCP Council aims to develop leaders and managers who can prepare colleagues for a range of opportunities, enhancing our reputation for nurturing talent both internally and externally. This will strengthen our Employee Value Proposition (EVP), making us a recognised leader in public sector growth and development.
- 7.2 There is currently no corporate management development and training framework available across BCP Council, however, some Directorates offer programs for new and aspiring managers through the workforce development team or ad hoc training including formal qualifications. Various e-learning opportunities and resources are available. Feedback suggests that management training is not offered consistently across the Directorates.
- 7.3 BCP Council needs to adopt a more holistic approach to management development which focuses on developing well-rounded leaders who understand the interconnectedness of various aspects of management, including technical skills, behavioural skills, and the broader context of the organisation, public sector and partners. It goes beyond traditional skill-based training by incorporating self-reflection, mentorship, and real-life problem-solving.
- 7.4 A modular approach is being developed to provide flexibility and cost-effectiveness, enabling managers to select relevant modules tailored to organisational, service, and individual needs. Although modular learning is not a new concept, its benefits align with BCP Council's goal of becoming a learning organisation, while also allowing managers to maintain their regular duties, avoid information overload, and have adequate time to assimilate and apply newly acquired skills.
- 7.5 Through self-assessment and performance conversations, managers choose modules which are most relevant to their needs. This can be delivered in a variety of ways but to ensure that the right outcomes are achieved, learning should be linked to reflective work-based assignments or personal development plans. The key is how they apply this in real-life scenarios to deliver better outcomes for our residents.
- 7.6 Key stakeholders would need to be involved to develop a corporate framework together with a specific directorate element to ensure the right outcomes are achieved and measured.

8. Summary of financial implications

- 8.1 This section is not applicable to this report.

9. Summary of legal implications

- 9.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 in the UK, employers must not discriminate against employees based on protected characteristics. For employees with disabilities, employers must consider if reasonable adjustments are needed to help them meet performance standards before taking any action. All performance evaluations must be objective, fair, and based on clear, evidence-based criteria. Managers should recognise unconscious biases that could affect their performance decisions.
- 9.2 Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, a dismissal for capability (performance) must follow a fair procedure and clearly define performance expectations. A poorly managed performance process can form the basis of a claim for unfair dismissal.
- 9.3 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR governs the performance management system as it involves processing personal data.
- 9.4 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees and must consider how the performance framework might impact an employee's mental health. Work-related stress can affect performance, and employers have a duty to address it.

10. Summary of human resources implications

- 10.1 So as to maintain the momentum and implement the learning from year 1, it will be necessary to ensure continued resource to complete the three-year performance project plan. The People Strategy priorities will need to reflect this demand.

11. Summary of sustainability impact

- 11.1 This section is not applicable to this report.

12. Summary of public health implications

- 12.1 There are no public health implications arising from this report.

13. Summary of equality implications

- 13.1 A full EIA has been completed to date.

Background papers

None provided

Appendices

None provided



Report subject	Vitality Stadium land - draft heads of terms
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	AFC Bournemouth approached BCP Council in relation to their plans to expand Vitality Stadium at Kings Park. On 1 October 2025 and on 14 October 2025, Cabinet and Council respectively approved the recommendations that officers negotiate Heads of Terms in relation to Option C (two leases) and then return to Cabinet and Council for a decision relating to those Heads of Terms. This report presents the negotiated Heads of Terms and associated values (agreed in principle, without prejudice and subject to contract and Council approval) agreed with AFC Bournemouth and recommends that they are accepted. This report requests authority for officers to instruct BCP's property legal team accordingly and progress the leases to completion. The information in the appendices is commercially sensitive. It is requested that the appendices are treated confidentially.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet recommends that Council: a. Notes the decision of the Cabinet meeting held 1 October 2025 and Council Meeting held 14 October 2025 b. Approves the Heads of Terms (HOTs) recommended by officers for the Leasehold disposal of two parcels of land at Kings Park to AFC Bournemouth (Option C) c. Instructs BCP officers to agree the recommended HOTs with AFC Bournemouth, instruct BCP's legal team accordingly and progress the two leases to completion.
Reason for recommendations	This report sets out the heads of terms for the re gearing of existing agreements between BCP Council and AFC Bournemouth at Kings Park to enable expansion of the Vitality Stadium. The regear will result in two leases, the terms of which reflect Best Consideration, in line with BCP Councils constitution and financial regulations.

	By approving these recommendations, it will also: - Enable existing leases to be regeared onto more appropriate terms - allow this significant investment to be made into the area, improving the area for fans and park visitors - and help AFC Bournemouth achieve compliance with Premier League regulations
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike Cox, Deputy Leader BCP Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Gwilym Jones MRICS, Estates Manager Edward Alexander, Planning and Contract Manager, Environment – Greenspace Chris Shephard, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships
Wards	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; East Cliff & Springbourne; Littledown & Iford; Queen's Park
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. AFC Bournemouth (the Club) are a professional football club who compete in the top echelons of English Football, the Premier League, after gaining promotion at the end of the 2021/22 season.
2. The club stadium, the Vitality Stadium, is located at Dean Court in Kings Park, Boscombe, a suburb of the town of Bournemouth.
3. Vitality Stadium is one of the smallest stadiums in the Premier League with a capacity of 11,286 and parking for circa 200 domestic vehicles. There is an area of hardstanding used for fan coaches and media vehicles.
4. Kings Park was transferred to Local Authority ownership, for use as public open space, from two large landowners in the early 20th century. It is one of the largest green spaces within Bournemouth and in addition to the football stadium contains:
 - Community football pitches
 - A cricket square
 - Outdoor bowling green and pavilion

- Play parks
 - Athletics stadium
 - Leisure and Learning Centre
 - Sports pavilion with café
 - Plant nursery (currently closed)
5. The Club's core objective is to bring stadium and parking land under Club control to:
- Cost effectively increase capacity
 - Improve facilities: spectators, players, concessions, club facilities, media, back of house, flexible use/space
 - Review general admission and hospitality provision
 - UEFA and Premier League compliance
 - Minimise disruption to operations and income
 - Manage car parking and travel plans
6. After a lengthy search where several alternative sites were considered, expanding Vitality Stadium was deemed by the Club the most practical and viable to achieve these objectives.
7. The Club will seek to achieve these objectives by:
- Demolishing the existing South Stand and building a new, larger stand
 - Infilling all four corners to create additional capacity
 - Renovating the East and West stands to provide improved player facilities and hospitality
 - Vertically and horizontally expanding the North and East Stands to increase capacity
8. It is planned to occur over three principal phases: Enabling Works, Phase 1 and Phase 2. Additional capacity is desired for the start of the 2026/27 Premier League season (August 2026). However, the project will be phased over a broadly 2- to-3-year period to minimise disruption to football matches during the football seasons. The project programme has been specifically constructed to avoid playing any home games at an alternative venue while construction is underway.
9. The project area comprises the Vitality Stadium, adjacent surface level car parking and the former training pitches.
10. The training pitches are outside of the discussions and are held under a separate management agreement.
11. The Club commissioned Savills as their planning consultants, and in May of this year, entered into a pre-planning performance agreement with the Local Planning Authority. Their aspiration is to submit a full planning application before the end of 2025. If granted, this would give permission to expand the current stadium as outlined in 8.
12. As the landowner, officers have advised the Club of some proposals that would have negatively impacted Park users and therefore would give rise to an objection in a planning application. The Club have acknowledged the feedback and amended their plans.

13. The Greenspace Team in particular has been engaging with the Planning Officer in the pre app stage and will review future planning applications on (or could possibly impact) land under its management including any ecological impacts, and if relevant, will make submissions. Other services will be doing the same.
14. To facilitate the expansion of the stadium, the Club approached Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP) to discuss the existing agreements and opportunity of regearing these to obtain additional land and allow their expansion plans to come forward.
15. Cabinet (1 October 2025) and Council (14 October 2025) agreed with the recommendations that officers negotiate Heads of Terms and once agreed in principle, return to Cabinet and Council for approval. Several issues were referenced at the Council meeting, and these are considered below:
 - The consultation relating to the disposal of open space was not sufficiently visible and that Ward Councillors were not informed in advance.
 - Land that is currently designated as Public Open Space will have its status changed.
16. Responses:
 - It is a legal requirement under the LGA 1972 that BCP advertise a Disposal of Public Open Space for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper that has a local circulation.
 - As well as being in the Echo's public notices section the Notice was on BCP's website ([Public notices of our proposals | BCP](#)) however once a notice 'expires' it is taken down.
 - All views submitted by the public were analysed and an outcome was reached which was detailed in the previous Cabinet report.
 - Officers consulted with Ward Councillors on site in July to discuss the proposals. Ward Councillors were then emailed on 29 July, informing them that the notice was going in the Echo and on their website the following day. A copy of the notice and plan was included in the email.
 - Due to the historic way land in Kings Park had been classified some of the south car park sits within the Council's Public Open Space. There is no plan to change this designation, but because it is Public Open Space, the Council had to legally include it in the disposal notice. This is because new leases, which will include the Public Open Space, are being proposed.
 - Officers consulted again with Ward Councillors on 6 August 2025. This was to explain that there was to be no significant change to the areas involved as they were already under an agreement to the Club. It was also explained that there will be no loss of Public Open Space being proposed but instead a consideration of realignment and updating of current leases.
 - Officers have consulted with Ward Councillors since the work started and continue to do so regularly.

Options Appraisal

17. Option A. Accept the recommendation of this report, that the Heads of Terms noted in confidential appendix A and C are agreed and allow officers to instruct Legal to progress the leases to completion.
18. Option B. Do not accept the recommendations of this report.

Summary of financial implications

19. The Heads of Terms reflect a Market Rent for the Stadium land, and a separate Market Rent for the Car Park land. See summary table in confidential appendix E.
20. The Market Rents reflect independent special valuation advice and should be taken as best consideration. Draft valuation report confidential appendix F. Awaiting final version. Commentary on Best Consideration in confidential appendix G. A formal s.123 commentary will be included in the final valuation report.
21. The Heads of Terms include a rent review mechanism.
22. The payment of a capital premium by AFC Bournemouth with a peppercorn rent has been discounted by the club. The leasing model provides the Club with greater financial agility, enabling investment where it matters most for Premier League Profitability and Sustainability Rules (PSR) compliance, competitive performance, and long-term footballing infrastructure. It aligns financial planning with operational priorities, ensuring the Club can sustain and grow on and off the pitch.

Summary of Legal Implications

23. The Council is empowered to sell land that it holds, and it may do so in any manner that it wishes. The Council is aware that the Secretary of State's consent is needed for any disposal which is considered not to be best value or is to be at an undervalue. It is not considered that the transactions are at an undervalue requiring Secretary of State approval.
24. The council is offering two long leaseholds, the Heads of Terms for which are recommended in this report.
25. Offering the land required via leasehold interest enables BCP to retain an element of control over the land and its use by AFC Bournemouth.
26. The Heads of Terms reflect the terms that exist in the current lease and licence agreement between AFC Bournemouth and BCP Council.
27. The new leases will see new documents drafted with the current ones becoming void upon completion. Upon completion there will be two documents relating to AFC Bournemouth's use of the site and not the five that currently exist.

28. The Heads of Terms have been agreed "without prejudice subject to contract". This means no formal; legally binding agreement exists until the leases are signed by all relevant parties.

Summary of human resources implications

29. There are no direct human resources implications of this decision beyond officer time working on the case.

Summary of sustainability impact

30. There are no sustainability impacts relating to the HOTs. However, there will be impacts relating to the overall project. These are being handled through the independent planning process.

Summary of public health implications

31. Any issues relating to previous landfill of Kings Park will be dealt with through the planning process.

Summary of equality implications

32. An EIA conversation/screening document has been completed. This decision will not have any direct equality implications. The proposed new leases show a change of control rather than loss of space and therefore does not change the current situation. However, mitigation of any future implications is controlled through the Heads of Terms.

Summary of risk assessment

33. By approving the recommendations in this report, which ensure appropriate steps and therefore mitigations are taken, the risk is assessed as being low.

Background papers

34. Council 14 October 2025: AFC Bournemouth stadium expansion. Land requirements and disposal.

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=284&MId=6079&Ver=4>

Appendices

- Confidential Appendix A: Agreed Heads of Terms (without prejudice, subject to contract and council sign off) Stadium Land
- Confidential Appendix B: Stadium Land Plan
- Confidential Appendix C: Agreed Heads of Terms (without prejudice, subject to contract and council sign off) Car Park
- Confidential Appendix D: Car Park Land Plan
- Confidential Appendix E: Rent Summary
- Confidential Appendix F: Draft Valuation Report



- Confidential Appendix G: Best Consideration

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CABINET



Report subject	BCP Homes Asset Management Plan and Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report presents the BCP Homes Asset Management Plan and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan principles for approval. The HRA Business Plan is a strategic financial framework that ensures the long-term sustainability of council housing by aligning investment in existing homes, compliance, decarbonisation, and new housing supply with prudent financial management. The plan is underpinned by robust stock condition data, prudent financial assumptions, and a sustainable borrowing strategy. It supports the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35, significant investment in existing stock, and ongoing compliance with regulatory standards. The plan prioritises financial resilience, risk management, and alignment with corporate priorities such as decarbonisation and tenant engagement. Adoption of these recommendations will ensure BCP Homes continues to provide safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes, while maintaining the financial viability of the HRA and supporting the Council's wider social and environmental objectives.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet recommends to Council to: i) Approve the HRA Asset Management Plan at appendix 1; ii) Approve the Baseline+ scenario for the HRA 30 Year Business Plan; iii) Note that adjustments to the HRA 30 Year Business plans will be made on an annual basis alongside annual HRA budget setting and reported to Cabinet and Council accordingly.
Reason for recommendations	The recommendations are made to secure the long-term financial sustainability and legal compliance of the Council's housing services. By adopting this plan, the Council ensures it can continue to provide safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes, supported by robust stock condition data and prudent financial assumptions. The plan enables the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35 and significant investment in existing properties, all while aligning with corporate priorities such as decarbonisation and tenant

	engagement. Regular review and scenario testing provide resilience against risks like inflation, interest rate changes, and evolving government policy. This approach maintains transparency, accountability, and good governance, ensuring that the Council's housing ambitions remain both affordable and achievable.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Kieron Wilson – Housing and Regulation
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton, Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Kelly Deane, Director of Housing and Public Protection Richard Sumner, HRA Accountant
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account that records all income and expenditure relating to the Council's housing stock. To ensure the long-term sustainability of council housing, local authorities are strongly encouraged to maintain a 30-year HRA Business Plan. This plan sets out the financial strategy for managing and maintaining the housing stock over a 30-year period, including both revenue and capital investment requirements.
2. The importance of the HRA Business Plan has grown since the introduction of self-financing arrangements under the Localism Act 2011, which gave councils full responsibility for managing their housing stock from rental income rather than relying on government subsidy. Councils can now borrow against HRA income to fund improvements and new housing, making robust long-term planning essential.

Why is the HRA Business Plan Important?

3. **Financial Viability:** It demonstrates that the HRA can remain solvent while meeting obligations for maintenance, compliance, and investment. This is critical for councils to manage debt responsibly and avoid deficits, as the HRA cannot legally go into the red.
4. **Strategic Asset Management:** The plan supports decisions on major works, regeneration, and new housing supply, aligning with corporate priorities such as affordable housing and energy efficiency targets.
5. **Risk Management:** Long-term modelling allows councils to test scenarios for inflation, interest rates, and policy changes, ensuring resilience against economic shocks and legislative reforms.
6. **Transparency and Accountability:** Best practice guidance from CIPFA and the Local Government Association highlights that a clear, regularly updated business plan underpins good governance, tenant engagement, and compliance with regulatory standards.

Benefits for Councils

7. Enables planned investment in stock condition, decarbonisation, and new build programmes.
8. Provides a framework for borrowing decisions and treasury management.

9. Supports delivery of wider social outcomes, including improved health, employment opportunities, and community regeneration.
10. Although not a statutory requirement, maintaining and reviewing a 30-year HRA Business Plan is widely regarded as best practice and is strongly encouraged by central government. It ensures councils can make informed short, medium and long-term decisions while safeguarding the financial sustainability of their housing services.

Asset Management Plan

11. A robust 30-year asset management plan is fundamental to the long-term sustainability and strategic direction of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan. It provides the essential framework for ensuring that BCP Homes can maintain, invest in, and improve its housing stock in a way that is financially viable, legally compliant, and aligned with tenant needs and expectations.
12. In order to inform the development of a refreshed asset management plan, BCP Homes has undertaken significant work to deepen its understanding of the condition of its housing stock. This includes completing stock condition surveys in the last 5 years on over 70% of all properties, providing a strong evidence base for future investment planning. This enhanced insight allows for more accurate forecasting of capital and revenue requirements, enabling the HRA business plan to be built on realistic assumptions and priorities.
13. Appendix 1 outlines the proposed 30-year asset investment plan, which has been used as a key baseline for reviewing and shaping the HRA business plan. This alignment ensures that investment decisions are both strategic and responsive, supporting the delivery of safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes while maintaining financial resilience across the HRA.
14. The key aspects of the plan are summarised in the following table;

	30-year spend £m	Per property £
Major Works (kitchens, bathrooms etc)	480.3	50,000
Decarbonisation	72.0	7,500
Disabled Adaptations	42.0	4,372
Environmental Improvements	4.9	510
Compliance	19.2	1,994
Other Capex	19.8	2,063
TOTAL	638.2	66,439

Review of HRA 30 Year Business Plan

15. The review of the HRA business plan for BCP Homes has followed a structured and evidence-based approach, ensuring that the plan is robust, credible, and aligned with both operational realities and strategic objectives. The key steps in this process are as follows:

Stock Condition Data

- Up-to-date surveys and assessments of the housing stock to understand current condition and future capital investment needs.

Financial Data and Forecasts

- Detailed analysis of budgets, reserves, income (e.g., rents, service charges), and expenditure (e.g., repairs, capital works, management costs).
- Long-term projections for income and expenditure, including scenario and sensitivity analysis to test resilience under different assumptions (e.g., inflation, interest rates, rent policy changes).

National Policy and Regulatory Context

- Impact of national rent setting policy, building safety and fire safety regulations, decarbonisation requirements, the Decent Homes Standard, and other statutory or regulatory changes.

Strategic Asset Management

- Alignment with the asset management strategy, including investment in existing homes, regeneration, and new housing supply.

Capital Programme and Investment Needs

- Planning for major works, decarbonisation, and new build programmes, ensuring these are affordable and deliverable within the HRA's financial capacity.

Debt and Financing Strategy

- Borrowing plans, interest rates, repayment schedules, and affordability assessments.

Reserves Strategy

- Use and management of HRA reserves to support financial resilience.

Governance and Compliance

- Ensuring the plan demonstrates strong governance, regulatory compliance, and prudent management.

Stakeholder and Resident Engagement

- Involving residents, portfolio holders, Section 151 Officer, Corporate Management Board, and other stakeholders in setting objectives and reviewing options.

Risk Management

- Identification and mitigation of risks such as non-compliance, operational disruptions, and resident dissatisfaction.

Equality and Diversity

- Considering equality impacts and ensuring fair treatment for all residents.

16. In order to support this complex review, external support was commissioned from Housing Finance Associates. Their report is at appendix 2.
17. In summary, the HRA remains in a strong financial position, providing a solid foundation for continued investment in existing housing stock and the delivery of new homes. Current projections indicate that the Council can achieve its ambition of delivering 937 new homes by 2034/35, including 680 additional homes from 2027/28 onwards. This is underpinned by a series of prudent assumptions, including a permanent 2% reduction in operating costs from 2026/27, increased recovery of service costs through service charges, and rent increases aligned to CPI plus 1% until 2035/36, followed by CPI thereafter. Rent convergence is expected to progress at £1 per week from 2026/27.
18. While the outlook is positive, the projections are sensitive to external factors such as inflation, interest rates, and government policy on rents. Future requirements for decent homes standards and decarbonisation, as well as the availability of external funding, present additional risks. Stress testing demonstrates that the HRA's

resilience could weaken if costs rise without corresponding increases in income or funding.

19. The capital programme prioritises major works, compliance, adaptations, and decarbonisation, with an estimated £50,000 per unit for major works and £7,500 per unit for decarbonisation over 30 years. Financing will draw on the Major Repairs Reserve, retained Right to Buy receipts, grants, and Section 106 contributions, with borrowing used only when other resources are exhausted. Debt is projected to rise from £150 million in 2025/26 to £330 million by 2034/35, peaking at £361 million by 2054/55.
20. Despite the challenges, the HRA demonstrates strong affordability metrics, with operating surplus improving from 16.3% in 2025/26 to 29.8% in 2035/36 and interest cover remaining above minimum thresholds. This provides confidence that the proposed investment programme is sustainable, provided cost control and income generation remain priorities.
21. To maintain this position, the Council must continue to apply downward pressure on operating costs, maximise income through service charges and rent policy, and monitor external risks closely. Should assumptions change, corrective actions such as reducing borrowing, seeking additional funding, or exploring rent flexibility and asset disposals may be required.

Core Baseline Plus Assumptions

22. This report is seeking approval of the baseline plus position recommended as a result of the HRA Business Plan review. The Core Assumptions act as the foundation for the Plan and are as follows;

Inflation (Bank of England projections)

- CPI:
 - 3.75% (2026/27)
 - 2.5% (2027/28)
 - 2.0% thereafter
- Building costs: CPI + 1% annually.

Interest Rates

- Existing loans: 3.92%
- New borrowing: 5.3% long-term average.

Rent Policy

- Rent increases: **CPI + 1% until 2035/36**, then CPI only.
- Rent convergence: Up to £1 per week from 2026/27.
- No rent flexibility assumed.

Stock & Growth

- Opening stock: 9,606 units (2025/26).
- New homes: 937 by 2034/35 (257 by 2026/27, then 85 per year).
- RTB sales:
 - 30 per year (2025/26–2026/27), then 5 per year from 2027/28.
 - Discounts reduced to £30,000 max.

Operating Cost Adjustments

- Permanent **2% reduction** in general management and repairs budgets from 2026/27.

- Additional £100k service charge income from 2026/27.

Capital Programme Assumptions

- Major works: £50k per unit over 30 years.
- Decarbonisation: £7.5k per unit over 30 years.
- Compliance: Ongoing fire safety, asbestos, damp/mould works.

Minimum HRA Balance

- 5% of operating expenditure (excl. capital financing).

Debt & Financing

- Debt rises from £150m (2025/26) to £330m (2034/35), peaking at £361m by 2054/55.
- Financing mix: Major Repairs Reserve, RCCO, RTB receipts, grants, S106, borrowing.

Outputs

23. The Asset Management Plan and 30 Year Business Plan Baseline Plus position provides a robust framework for BCP Homes, ensuring the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35—including 257 homes by 2026/27 and a further 680 by 2034/35—across a mix of social rent, affordable rent, and shared ownership. Over the next 30 years, the plan commits to significant investment in existing homes, with £50,000 per unit allocated for major works and £7,500 per unit for decarbonisation, alongside ongoing funding for compliance, adaptations, and other capital works. These outputs are underpinned by prudent financial assumptions, a sustainable borrowing strategy, and a focus on maintaining strong operating surpluses. This plan is not only a delivery schedule but also the strategic foundation for BCP Homes' future, providing the evidence base and financial resilience needed to support safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes for residents, and guiding decision-making for investment, risk management, and compliance in the years ahead.
24. The Baseline Plus position, in summary, will deliver;

New Homes

- Total: 937 new homes by 2034/35
 - 257 homes delivered by 2026/27 (current development/acquisition programme).
 - 680 additional homes delivered between 2027/28 and 2034/35 (85 homes per year).
- Tenure mix: Social rent, affordable rent, and shared ownership

Investment in Existing Homes

- Major Works:
 - £50,000 per unit over 30 years (based on stock condition data).
- Decarbonisation:
 - £7,500 per unit over 30 years (no external funding assumed).
- Compliance & Safety:
 - Ongoing fire safety, asbestos removal, damp/mould remediation.
- Adaptations:
 - Continuing at 2025/26 levels for disabled adaptations.
- Other Capital Works:

- Includes communal areas, walkways, balconies, garages.

Next Steps

25. The next phase of this work will concentrate on formulating detailed plans aimed at further enhancing the energy efficiency of BCP Homes' housing stock. This work builds upon the decarbonisation commitments already established within the Asset Management and 30 Year Business Plan, ensuring continued progress towards more sustainable, energy-efficient homes.
26. In parallel, BCP Homes will develop a comprehensive strategy to assess and prepare for achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This strategy will ensure that the organisation remains aligned with both national and local climate objectives, setting a clear pathway for future compliance and environmental stewardship.
27. As part of these next steps, efforts will be made to identify and pursue opportunities for external grant funding. The intention is to supplement existing financial resources and maximise the potential for investment in improvement works, thereby extending the impact of the Council's sustainability initiatives.
28. Additionally, the Council's Newbuild Housing and Acquisition Strategy will undergo a review to pinpoint appropriate sites for potential inclusion in the future new build programme. This approach supports the delivery of high-quality, sustainable homes, in line with the Council's commitment to meeting housing needs and environmental targets.
29. All decisions and proposals arising from these workstreams will be presented to Cabinet for consideration and approval. This process ensures that progress remains subject to ongoing oversight and continues to reflect the Council's strategic priorities.

Summary of financial implications

30. The proposed recommendations are based on the latest Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial projections, which indicate that the account remains sustainable over the long term. The plan supports continued investment in existing stock and the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35, funded through a combination of rental income, service charges, retained Right to Buy receipts, grants, and borrowing. Debt is forecast to rise from £150 million in 2025/26 to £330 million by 2034/35, peaking at £361 million by 2054/55. Operating surplus is projected to improve from 16.3% to 29.8% over the same period, and interest cover remains above minimum thresholds, confirming affordability. However, the projections are sensitive to inflation, interest rates, and government policy changes. Any deviation from assumptions may require corrective action, such as reducing borrowing, seeking additional funding, or adjusting the capital programme.

Summary of legal implications

31. The Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to maintain a balanced Housing Revenue Account. Adoption of the proposed recommendations ensures compliance with this requirement and supports delivery of obligations under the Housing Act 1985, including maintaining homes to the Decent Homes Standard. The recommendations also align with the Council's legal responsibilities regarding health and safety, building compliance, and decarbonisation targets under current environmental legislation. Any borrowing undertaken will be in accordance with the Prudential Code and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. Failure to adopt the recommendations could compromise the Council's ability to meet these statutory duties and contractual obligations.

Summary of human resources implications

32. None.

Summary of sustainability impact

33. The Asset Management and 30 Year Business Plan for BCP Homes is designed to support the long-term sustainability of the Council's housing stock, ensuring that homes remain safe, decent, and energy-efficient for current and future residents. The plan's sustainability impact is reflected in several key areas:
- **Strategic Investment in Decarbonisation:** The plan prioritizes investment in decarbonisation measures, with an estimated £7,500 per unit allocated over 30 years. This commitment supports the Council's environmental objectives and helps to future-proof homes against rising energy costs and evolving regulatory standards.
 - **Evidence-Based Asset Management:** By completing stock condition surveys on over 70% of properties within the last five years, BCP Homes has established a robust evidence base for investment decisions. This enables targeted interventions that maximize the lifespan of assets and minimize waste, supporting both financial and environmental sustainability.
 - **Financial Resilience:** The business plan is underpinned by prudent financial assumptions and stress testing, ensuring that investment in sustainability measures is affordable and deliverable within the HRA's capacity. The plan's approach to borrowing, reserves, and income generation is designed to maintain long-term viability without compromising service delivery.
 - **Alignment with Regulatory and Policy Requirements:** The plan supports compliance with current and emerging standards, including the Decent Homes Standard and environmental legislation. This proactive approach reduces the risk of future non-compliance and associated costs, while supporting the Council's broader sustainability commitments.
 - **Continuous Improvement:** The plan is periodically reviewed and updated as new information becomes available, ensuring that sustainability objectives remain central to decision-making and that the Council can respond to emerging risks and opportunities.
34. In summary, the Asset Management and 30 Year Business Plan provides a framework for sustainable investment in BCP Homes' housing stock, balancing financial viability with the need to deliver high-quality, energy-efficient, and future-ready homes for residents.

Summary of public health implications

35. Enhancing housing standards and providing new homes are key to supporting health. The quality, safety, and suitability of housing directly affect physical and mental wellbeing. Upgrading existing and building high-quality homes creates safer, warmer, and more energy-efficient environments, reducing health risks like damp, cold, overcrowding, and poor air quality. Investing in social housing tackles health inequalities by offering secure, affordable homes to those most vulnerable, such as older adults, families with young children, and people with disabilities. Stable, good-quality housing improves mental health and allows residents greater participation in work, education, and community life.
36. Accessible homes and adaptations support independent living for older people and those with disabilities, reducing reliance on health and social care. Regeneration and increased housing supply promote safer communities and local economic growth. Integrating high standards into the Asset Management and 30 Year Business Plan enables BCP Homes to advance public health aims and improve residents' lives.

Summary of equality implications

37. Improving housing through the Asset Management and 30 Year Business Plan offers significant opportunities to reduce health inequalities and tackle poverty within the community. By investing in safer, warmer, and more energy-efficient homes, the plan directly addresses factors that contribute to poor health, such as damp, cold, and overcrowding. Enhanced housing standards and the delivery of new, affordable homes support vulnerable groups—including older adults, families with young children, and people with disabilities—helping to reduce social and economic disparities. Stable, high-quality housing also enables greater participation in work, education, and community life, further supporting efforts to alleviate poverty and promote equality across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Summary of risk assessment

38. The main risks arising from this report include financial uncertainties (such as inflation, interest rates, and changes in government policy), regulatory and policy changes, operational challenges (like non-compliance or resident dissatisfaction), and delivery risks related to new home development and funding. There are also sustainability risks tied to achieving decarbonisation and net zero targets, and governance risks if oversight or prudent management lapses. The plan addresses these risks through regular review, scenario testing, prioritisation of key investments, and ongoing Cabinet and Council oversight. Flexibility to take corrective action—such as adjusting borrowing, seeking additional funding, or modifying the capital programme—ensures the plan remains resilient and sustainable over the long term.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – BCP Homes Asset Investment Management Plan

Appendix 2 – BCP Homes HRA Business Plan Report – Housing Finance Associates

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CAPITAL COSTS ONLY							1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	Totals
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2025/29	2030/34	2035/39	2040/44	2045/49	2050/54	
HRA properties only		5 year cost (£)											
Internal works - main	Kitchen replacements	£3,245,000	£3,657,500	£3,833,500	£2,937,000	£2,717,000	£16,390,000	£15,372,500	£10,147,500	£6,968,500	£20,625,000	£15,383,500	£84,887,000
	Kitchen Extractor Fan	£29,820	£21,420	£19,320	£22,260	£24,080	£116,900	£391,300	£111,020	£54,320	£1,540	£420	£675,500
	Bathroom replacements	£337,500	£387,000	£342,000	£441,000	£252,000	£1,759,500	£2,691,000	£16,483,500	£8,568,000	£8,041,500	£3,393,000	£40,936,500
	Replacement gas Boiler	£809,250	£1,225,250	£1,241,500	£997,750	£962,000	£5,235,750	£1,800,500	£1,807,000	£7,101,250	£3,159,000	£1,807,000	£20,910,500
	Main Heating Distribution	£373,500	£175,500	£69,000	£1,443,000	£1,942,500	£4,003,500	£999,000	£873,000	£1,375,500	£1,482,000	£1,500	£8,734,500
	Electric heating replacements	£120,000	£300,000	£360,000	£450,000	£432,000	£1,662,000	£6,012,000	£6,090,000	£108,000	£120,000	£120,000	£14,112,000
	Rewiring and upgrades	£1,015,000	£2,125,000	£2,125,000	£2,125,000	£2,125,000	£9,515,000	£3,120,000	£5,665,000	£6,775,000	£3,150,000	£585,000	£28,810,000
	Electric consumer units	£60,000	£79,200	£88,200	£99,600	£58,800	£385,800	£846,600	£1,938,000	£1,521,000	£996,600	£566,400	£6,254,400
	External works - structural/main	Windows	£720,000	£711,000	£1,503,000	£1,404,000	£1,071,000	£5,409,000	£1,858,500	£976,500	£3,973,500	£7,132,500	£21,006,000
External Dwelling Door		£489,600	£900,000	£232,800	£654,000	£142,800	£2,419,200	£2,694,000	£940,800	£218,400	£278,400	£3,428,400	£9,979,200
Flatted dwelling Front Door		£272,000	£45,900	£102,000	£657,900	£95,200	£1,173,000	£516,800	£44,200	£49,300	£372,300	£3,542,800	£5,698,400
Re-roofing (pitched)		£1,887,500	£1,087,500	£1,187,500	£575,000	£1,375,000	£6,112,500	£13,262,500	£13,262,500	£2,712,500	£625,000	£4,462,500	£40,437,500
Flat Roof Covering		£690,000	£585,000	£405,000	£870,000	£1,035,000	£3,585,000	£1,905,000	£1,215,000	£555,000	£165,000	£60,000	£7,485,000
Fascias & Soffits		£89,250	£51,850	£50,150	£137,700	£79,900	£408,850	£826,200	£169,150	£258,400	£351,050	£277,950	£2,291,600
Gutters & Downpipes		£100,300	£64,600	£70,550	£160,650	£88,400	£484,500	£965,600	£348,500	£335,750	£270,300	£35,700	£2,440,350
Chimneys (as part of reroof)		£313,750	£293,750	£122,500	£198,750	£535,000	£1,463,750	£2,023,750	£305,000	£222,500	£168,750	£566,250	£4,750,000
Wall fabric and finishes		£1,375,000	£1,525,000	£1,847,500	£2,315,000	£3,722,500	£10,785,000	£3,997,500	£1,212,500	£522,500	£507,500	£1,460,000	£18,485,000
Insulation & decarbonisation	EPC band C works	£2,302,500	£2,302,500	£2,302,500	£2,302,500	£2,302,500	£11,512,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£11,512,500
	Other insulation (lofts/EWI??)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£125,000	£125,000	£125,000	£125,000	£125,000	£625,000
	Decarbonisation 2031 - 2054	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£14,400,000	£14,400,000	£14,400,000	£14,400,000	£14,400,000	£72,000,000
	New DHS	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£4,950,000	£4,950,000	£4,950,000	£4,950,000	£19,800,000
Catch up works up to 2028		£150,000	£500,000	£750,000	£750,000	£650,000	£2,800,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,800,000
Safety	Smoke, Fire and CO detectors	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£9,000,000
	FRA works/Fire alarms	£150,000	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000	£220,000	£1,120,000	£870,000	£11,250	£250	£250	£0	£2,001,750
	Lifts	£0	£1,260,000	£1,260,000	£1,350,000	£1,260,000	£5,130,000	£1,260,000	£180,000	£90,000	£90,000	£0	£6,750,000
Garages and Stores	Store Doors	£57,500	£58,000	£58,000	£58,000	£58,000	£289,500	£110,000	£458,500	£82,000	£213,000	£14,000	£1,167,000
	Store Roof	£12,000	£24,000	£16,000	£14,000	£0	£66,000	£132,000	£44,000	£6,000	£12,000	£12,000	£274,000
	Store Wall	£12,000	£2,000	£4,000	£0	£0	£18,000	£208,000	£40,000	£4,000	£2,000	£2,000	£274,000
Balconies and Walkways External general	Balconies	£12,000	£24,000	£25,000	£23,000	£5,000	£89,000	£2,000	£0	£0	£0	£1,000	£92,000
	Paths and paving	£128,800	£19,600	£35,000	£66,500	£6,300	£256,200	£231,700	£105,000	£42,000	£14,000	£11,200	£660,100
	Boundary Walls	£181,000	£186,000	£77,000	£326,000	£501,000	£1,271,000	£431,000	£147,000	£109,000	£9,000	£584,000	£2,551,000
	Porches and Canopies	£63,000	£69,300	£123,900	£317,800	£480,200	£1,054,200	£378,700	£119,000	£81,900	£39,200	£104,300	£1,777,300
Works to Communal Areas	Staircases, landings etc)	£180,000	£520,000	£570,000	£680,000	£650,000	£2,600,000	£2,600,000	£2,600,000	£2,600,000	£2,600,000	£2,600,000	£15,600,000
	Communal Entrance Door	£4,000	£144,000		£148,000	£148,000	£444,000	£456,000	£192,000	£288,000	£92,000	£92,000	£1,564,000
Other Works	Triple Glazing additional costs	£72,000	£71,100	£150,300	£140,400	£107,100	£540,900	£185,850	£97,650	£397,350	£713,250	£2,100,600	£4,035,600
	Adaptations	£1,400,000	£1,400,000	£1,400,000	£1,400,000	£1,400,000	£7,000,000	£7,000,000	£7,000,000	£7,000,000	£7,000,000	£7,000,000	£42,000,000
	Asbestos Removal Works	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£3,000,000
	Environmental Improvements		£169,000	£169,000	£169,000	£169,000	£676,000	£845,000	£845,000	£845,000	£845,000	£845,000	£4,901,000
	Other Major Works		£1,530,000	£1,530,000	£1,530,000	£1,530,000	£6,120,000	£7,675,000	£7,675,000	£7,675,000	£7,675,000	£7,675,000	£44,495,000
	Other Compliance		£662,000	£662,000	£662,000	£662,000	£2,648,000	£3,300,000	£3,300,000	£3,300,000	£3,300,000	£3,300,000	£19,148,000
	Other Capex		£682,000	£682,000	£682,000	£682,000	£2,728,000	£3,400,000	£3,400,000	£3,400,000	£3,400,000	£3,400,000	£19,728,000
	Damp and Mould Remedials	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£15,000,000

Total annual Investment costs £17,552,270 £24,008,970 £24,564,220 £27,257,810 £28,389,280

Total 5 Year Investment Programme(s)

£121,772,550 £107,393,000 £111,778,570 £91,214,920 £97,428,140 £108,412,520 £637,999,700

Total 30 Year
investment plan

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HRA Financial Projections

Report for BCP Council

Executive Summary

The BCP Council HRA is in a strong financial position. The Baseline financial projections indicate that there is sufficient capacity for the authority to continue investing in its stock and to deliver 680 new homes by 2034/35.

To deliver this level of investment and new homes delivery the authority needs to ensure that it maintains downward pressure on its operating costs. This will require a permanent reduction in its operating budgets for general management and repairs and maintenance in 2026/27. This represents a 2% reduction across its base budget (at 2025/26 levels) for both services. In addition, the authority must increase the level of service costs it recovers via service charges.

The projections include assumptions that are subject to change, but outside of the authority's direct control. These include:

- Underlying rates of inflation
- Interest rates
- Future requirements for investment in decent homes and decarbonisation
- External funding available for future stock investment and new homes
- Government policy on rent convergence

While stress testing of the projections suggests that the authority's HRA is in a strong position, the situation is very sensitive to changes in future costs and income. The financial strength of the HRA weakens if costs rise without a corresponding increase in income or funding. For this reason, the authority needs to ensure that it delivers the revenue cost reductions and additional service charge income that help its ability to finance the delivery of additional new homes.

The council needs to remain alert to the potential effects of the decisions it takes and their impact on the financial capacity of the HRA. It will be important to reassess any changes in key assumptions as they become apparent and adjust the authority's future plans accordingly.

Introduction

Background

It is good practice for a local housing authority to maintain and update long term financial projections for its housing revenue account (HRA) and capital programme. These projections enable the authority to test the financial capacity of its HRA over the short, medium and long terms, while stress testing the results help to illustrate current and potential risks. Armed with this knowledge, the authority is better informed when setting and updating its budget and capital programme

Housing Finance Associates supports BCP Council in preparing and analysing the long term financial projections for its HRA. We provide the authority with our comprehensive financial model, which enables dynamic modelling and testing of long term income, expenditure, investment, resources and debt. We work with council officers to ensure that the modelling assumptions are evidence-based and represent the authority's current position. We also ensure that changes made to the underlying assumptions when stress testing the projections or exploring alternative scenarios are reasonable.

Methodology

The projections outlined in this report have been prepared in consultation with council officers, who met regularly during the process. This iteration of the process started in July 2025 and has involved a wide range of council officers. It has operated through a core group of officers, which has co-ordinated the necessary data collection and provided the main steer when refining the modelling assumptions.

The core officer group was led by the Director of Housing and Public Protection and included heads of service from property services, BCP Homes and Finance.

Our consultancy team initiated data collection in July 2025 and worked with officers to check the information provided and prepare an initial financial model. This was discussed and refined at meetings during August and a first draft was presented to officers on 22 August. Further revisions were then made to prepare a briefing that was presented to an informal Cabinet meeting on 29 September. Discussion at that meeting led to final adjustments to the modelling assumptions that have been reflected in this report.

Housing Finance Associates

Housing Finance Associates is a specialised consultancy, providing financial modelling and associated support to housing authorities in England. We work with a wide range of local housing authorities, of all types and sizes. Our services are provided by a team of highly experienced HRA finance consultants.

Key assumptions

Best available evidence

The HRA financial projections are based on the best available evidence base available to the authority. This includes verifiable data, provided by the council, such as stock numbers, rents and opening balances as at April 2025. The projections also reflect the authority's current spending plans, as described by its current budgets and capital programme.

Supporting Assumptions

We supplement this evidence with a range of assumptions, which draw on other information sources and are developed in consultation with council officers. These assumptions include:

- Future policy on rent increases (based on recent government consultations)
- Inflation (based on Monetary Policy Reports from the Bank of England)
- Future rent loss from voids and bad debts (reflecting local experience and expectations)
- Future right to buy sales (reflecting local experience and expectations)
- Changes in the levels of revenue income and expenditure for future years

The Appendix to this report provides a summary of all the key assumptions made over the first five years of the financial projections. Further information for specific areas of the financial modelling is described in the graphics that follow.

Inflation

The projections include allowances for inflation on both expenditure and income. The underlying rates of inflation used are based on the August 2025 monetary policy report from the Bank of England, which projected CPI at:

- 3.75% in the final quarter of 2025 (applied to projections for 2026/27)
- 2.5% in the final quarter of 2026 (applied to projections for 2027/28)
- 2.0% in the final quarters of 2027 (applied to projections for 2028/29)
- 2.0% thereafter (reflecting long standing government inflation targets)

Most costs allow for inflation to be applied at CPI. For building costs, which have a tendency to increase at higher rates over the long term, inflation has been assumed at CPI +1% each year.

Interest Rates

Assumed interest rates reflect the authority's expectations when the projections were prepared during August 2025. They allow for current rates to be applied to the authority's existing portfolio of HRA-related loans. For new borrowing that is required to finance the capital programme, the projections assume a long term average interest rate of 5.3%.

Capital Financing

The projections allow for the authority to maintain a minimum balance on its HRA, which has been set at 5% of its operating expenditure. This includes depreciation but excludes capital financing charges. Any surplus the HRA generates that takes the balance above this minimum level is made available for use in repaying debt or to finance the capital programme as a revenue contribution to capital outlay (RCCO).

Right to buy sales generate a variety of different types of capital receipt. Allowable Debt receipts that are generated from those sales are held in reserve, for use in repaying the authority's HRA-related loans. Retained right to buy receipts must be used for the supply of new homes and the

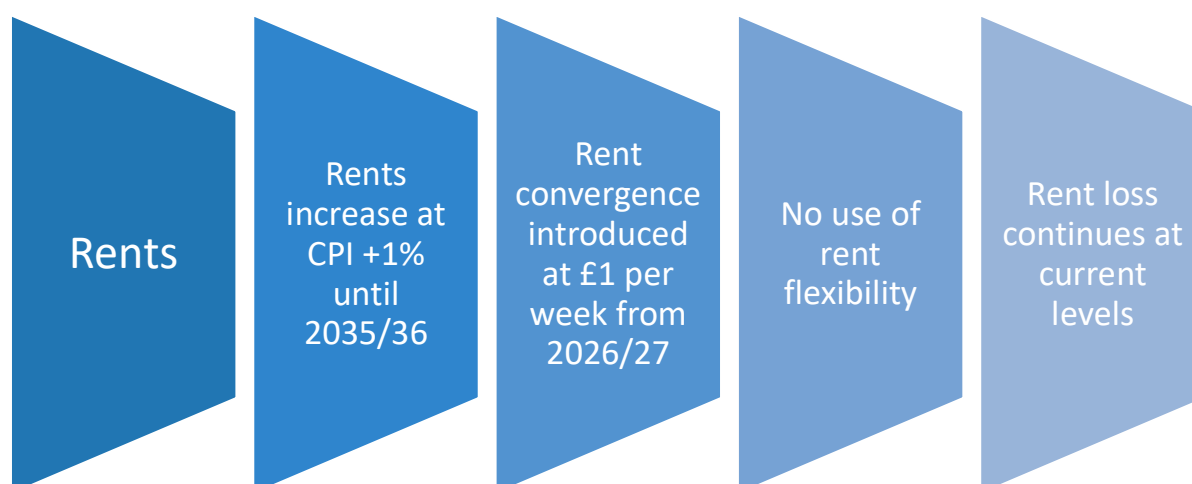
modelling assumes that the authority uses them to part pay for new homes that it delivers itself or (after the medium term development programme) that are provided by a housing association in exchange for nomination rights.

The projections allow for the planned use of Homes England grant, first tranche shared ownership receipts and S106 to help pay for the delivery of new homes.

Other projected capital resources include the major repairs reserve (MRR) and HRA balances that are above the minimum level. Both of these resources are self-generated by the HRA. MRR comes from HRA depreciation charges and HRA balances build up when HRA income is greater than HRA expenditure. The projections allow for the authority to prioritise its MRR for repaying its existing schedule of HRA-related loans. HRA balances above the minimum level are made available to finance the HRA capital programme as a revenue contribution to capital outlay (RCCO).

Rent Assumptions

The principal assumptions that have been used with the authority's existing stock and rents as at 1 April 2025 are described below:



The assumption on rent increases at CPI +1% reflects current government policy, which was first published as a five year settlement in October 2024 and updated to ten years in July 2025. We have assumed that rents would continue to increase at CPI only after that ten year period ends, from 2036/37 onwards.

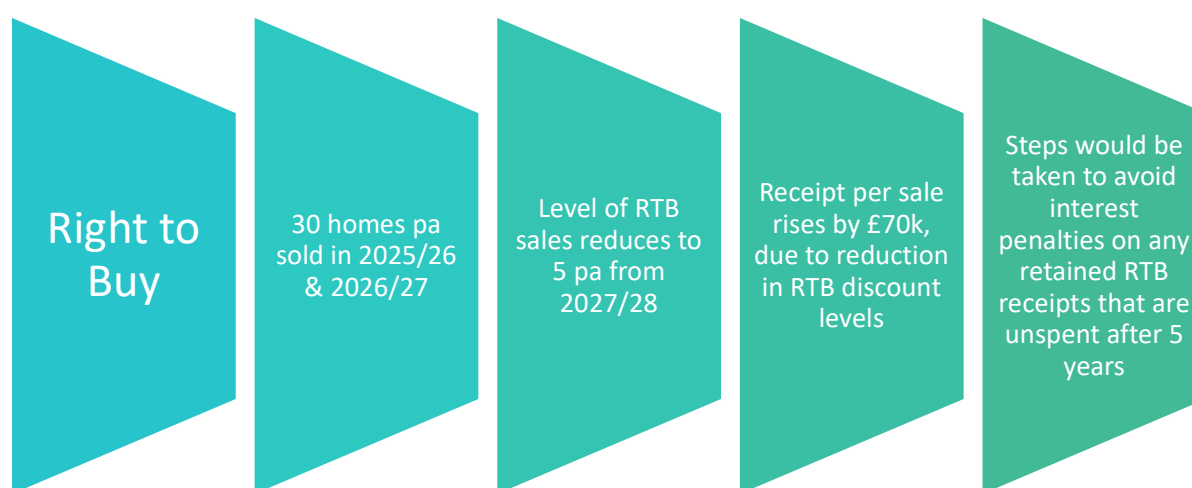
The approach to rent convergence reflects the lower of two specific options that the government consulted on in July 2025. We have allowed for the rents of existing tenants to converge with the formula rent for their homes at a rate of up to £1 per week. Using the authority's own data, this would lead to actual rents converging with formula rents from 2038/39 onwards and generates substantial additional rent income during the period covered by the projections.

Right to Buy Assumptions

The government announced a series of reforms to the right to buy in England in July 2025. These reforms came into effect from 21 November 2024 and included:

- Extending the period required for a tenant to qualify for the right to buy from three to ten years
- Discounts were reduced to pre-2012 levels. This sets the maximum discount for BCP and other authorities in the South West of England at £30,000
- New homes to be exempt from the right to buy for 35 years
- Adjustments to the cash floor, used when calculating a discount
- Discounts may be part-repayable for ten years after the sale
- The council has an indefinite first right of refusal when a property is re-sold

These measures have impacted on the future level of right to buy sales and the receipts they generate. The following graphic describes the main assumptions made:



In addition to the measures outlined above, in July 2025 the government also announced a range of changes to the treatment of future right to buy receipts, some of which extended flexibilities previously announced in July 2024. These changes included:

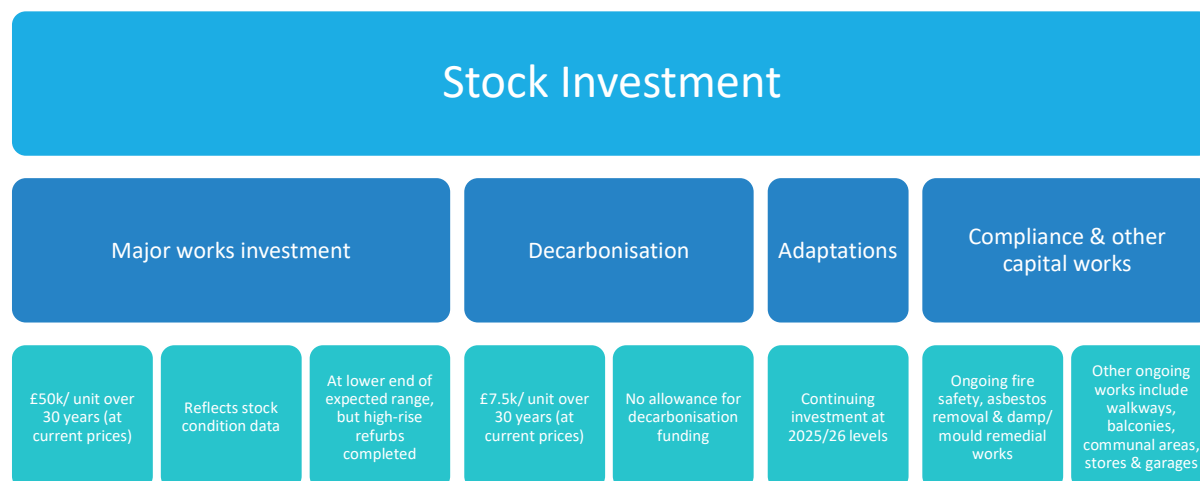
- The ability to use retained right to buy receipts to pay for up to 100% of the eligible cost of providing a new home
- Removal of previous caps on the number of acquisitions that may be made using retained right to buy receipts
- Allowing retained right to buy receipts to be combined with the use of S106 funding
- Allowing retained right to buy receipts to be combined with the use of government grant from 2026/27
- Extending the maximum time period for spending retained right to buy receipts from 5 to 10 years from 2027/28
- Allowing authorities to use retained right to buy receipts to deliver new homes via an ALMO
- Requiring local authority share and buyback receipts from the right to buy to be spent on new homes

These changes have been taken into account when considering how the authority uses its right to buy receipts in future.

Stock Investment Assumptions

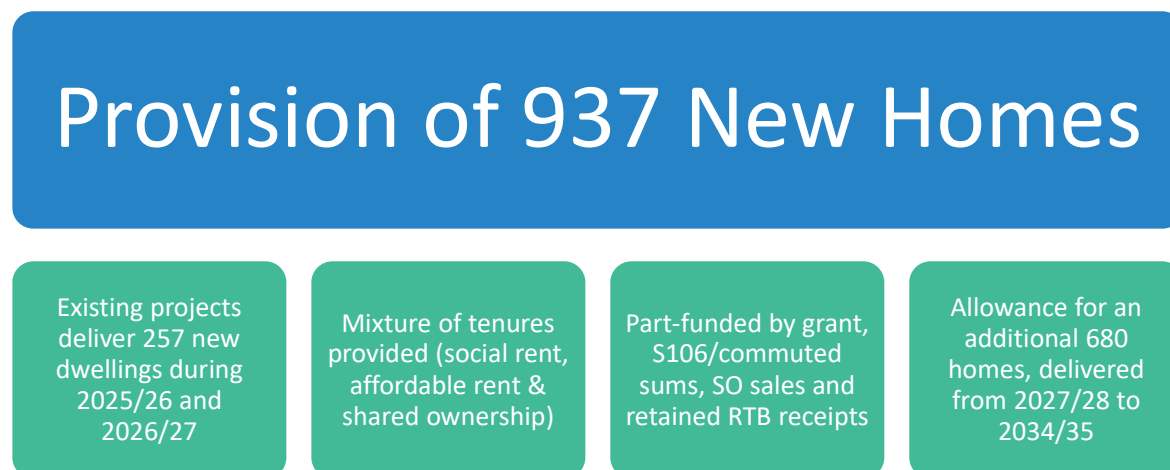
Projections on stock investment are largely based on a combination of the authority's existing capital programme for 2025/26 and, from 2026/27 onwards, the level of investment identified from its stock condition survey. In addition to the results provided from the authority's data we have added a contingency to ensure that stock investment over a 30 year period is at a representative level. This contingency was added in consultation with council officers.

The graphic below summarises these key assumptions:



Provision of New Homes

The Baseline projections allow for the provision of 937 new homes by 2034/35. Of these, 257 would be delivered by 2026/27 as part of the authority's ongoing programme for developing and acquiring new dwellings. The remaining 680 homes would form an extension of the existing programme, which (if approved by the Council) would deliver 85 further homes a year from 2027/28 to 2034/35.



The assumptions made for delivery of the additional 680 homes are as follows:



Baseline Projections

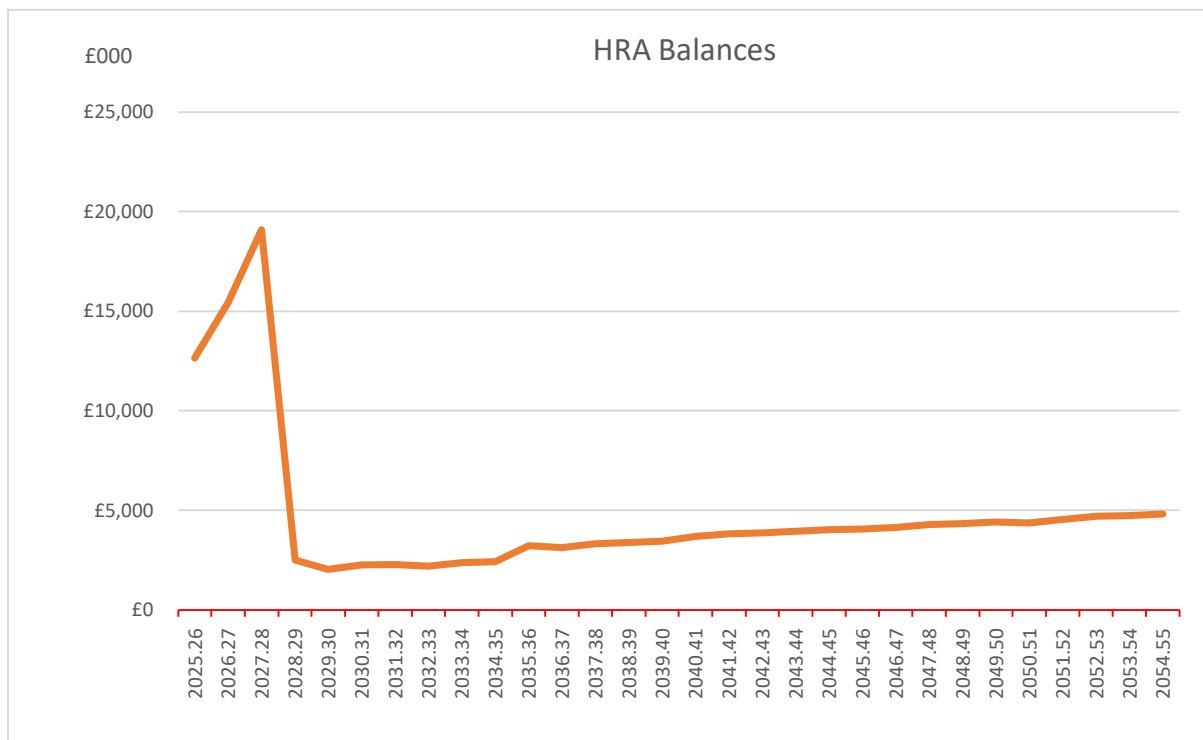
Introduction

The charts that follow summarise the Baseline HRA projections, which have been prepared in consultation with Council officers. Each chart shows a different aspect of the projections, describing the capital investment required, how it is financed and the financial performance of the HRA under the Baseline assumptions, as outlined above.

Revenue Balances

HRA Minimum Balance

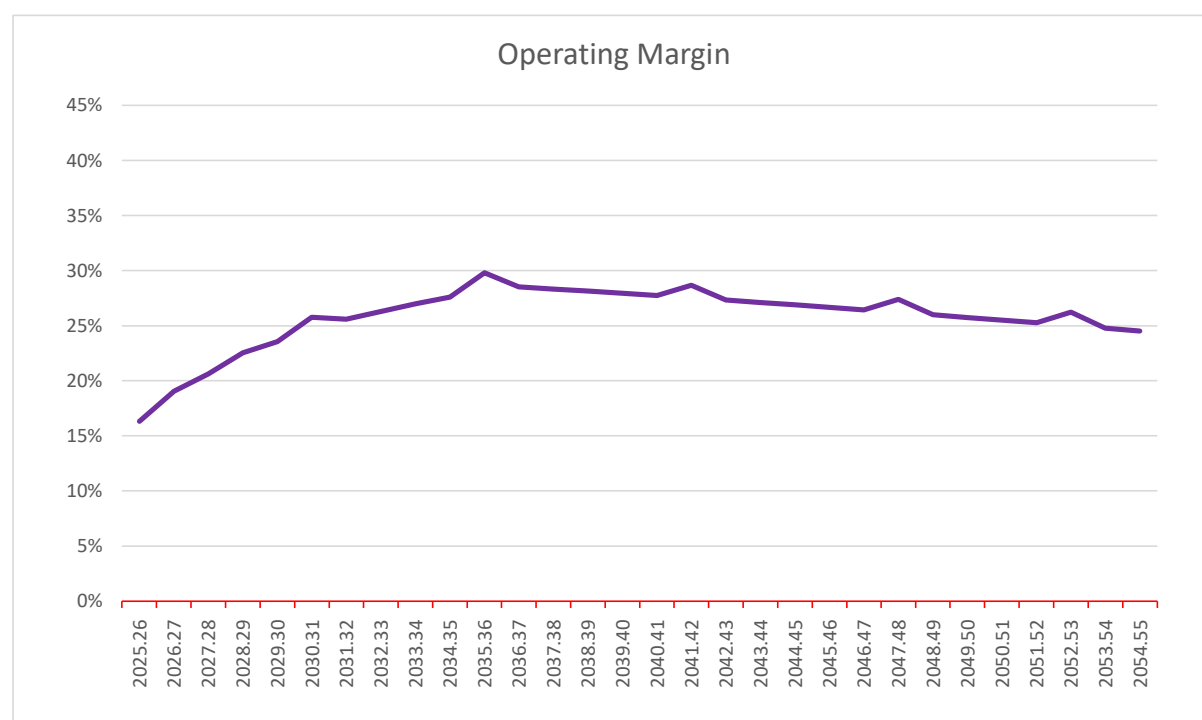
It would be unlawful for the Council to budget for its HRA to fall into deficit. To guard against this, the Baseline projections allow for the authority to maintain a minimum HRA balance that is equivalent to 5% of gross expenditure, excluding interest charges.



This chart shows that the authority can meet this minimum HRA balance requirement. From 2028/29 onwards, the modelling allows for any balances above the minimum level to be used to finance the HRA capital programme (as revenue contribution to capital outlay, or RCCO) or to repay debt.

Operating Surplus

The operating surplus of the HRA is a measure of financial performance. This shows the percentage of income (primarily from rents) that is retained after allowing for the operating costs of the service. These operating costs include general management, repairs and maintenance and charges for depreciation. The chart below shows how the operating surplus varies with changes in the assumptions:



The authority's operating surplus increases from a starting rate of 16.3% in 2025/26, which is representative of the performance we see in many other local authorities. The projected surplus then rises to a peak of 29.8% in 2035/36. This rise is also seen at other local authorities. At BCP, it is driven by the following measures, which have been reflected in the Baseline assumptions:

- A £100,000 increase in annual service charge income from 2026/27 onwards
- A permanent 2% reduction in general management costs in 2026/27
- A permanent 2% reduction in repairs and maintenance costs in 2026/27
- Rents increase at CPI +1% from 2026/27 to 2035/36
- Implementation of rent convergence at up to £1 per week for existing tenants from 2026/27

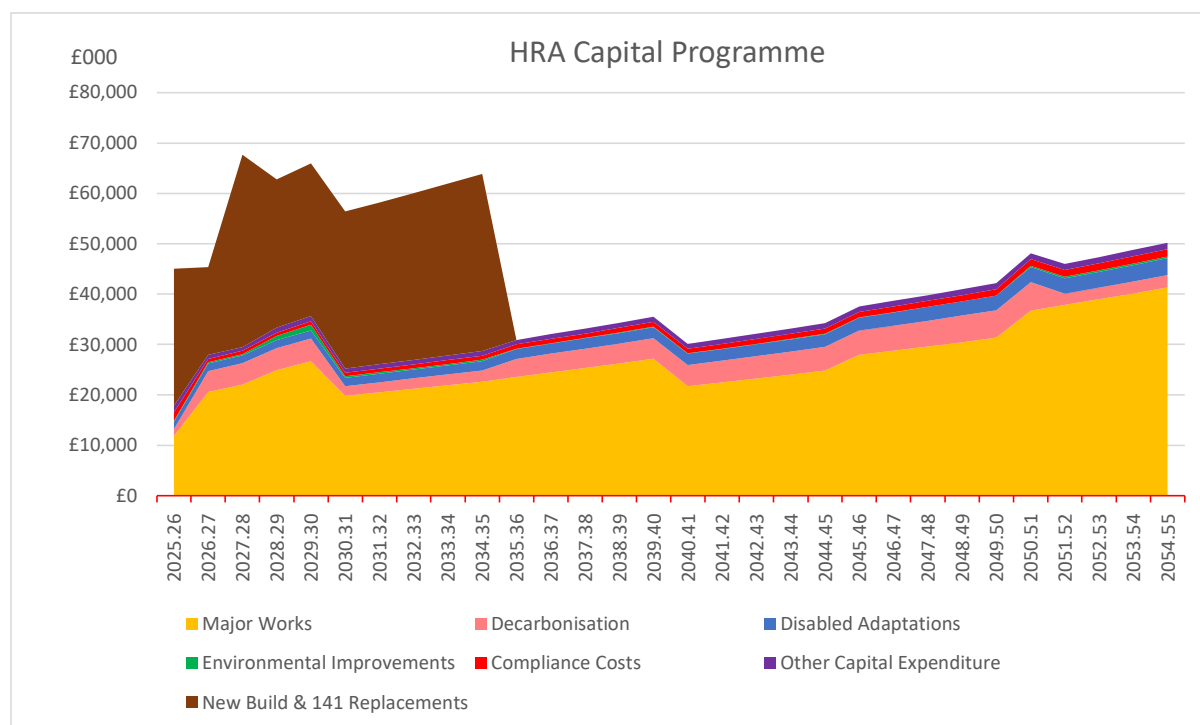
This improvement in the operating surplus helps to increase the financial capacity of the HRA. If the surplus goes up, the HRA is better able to service the borrowing it needs to deliver the capital programme.

It will be important for the authority to match or outperform these improvements in the HRA operating surplus, if it is to maximise future financial capacity.

Capital Programme

Expenditure

The projections allow for the following programme of investment in its HRA over the next 30 years:

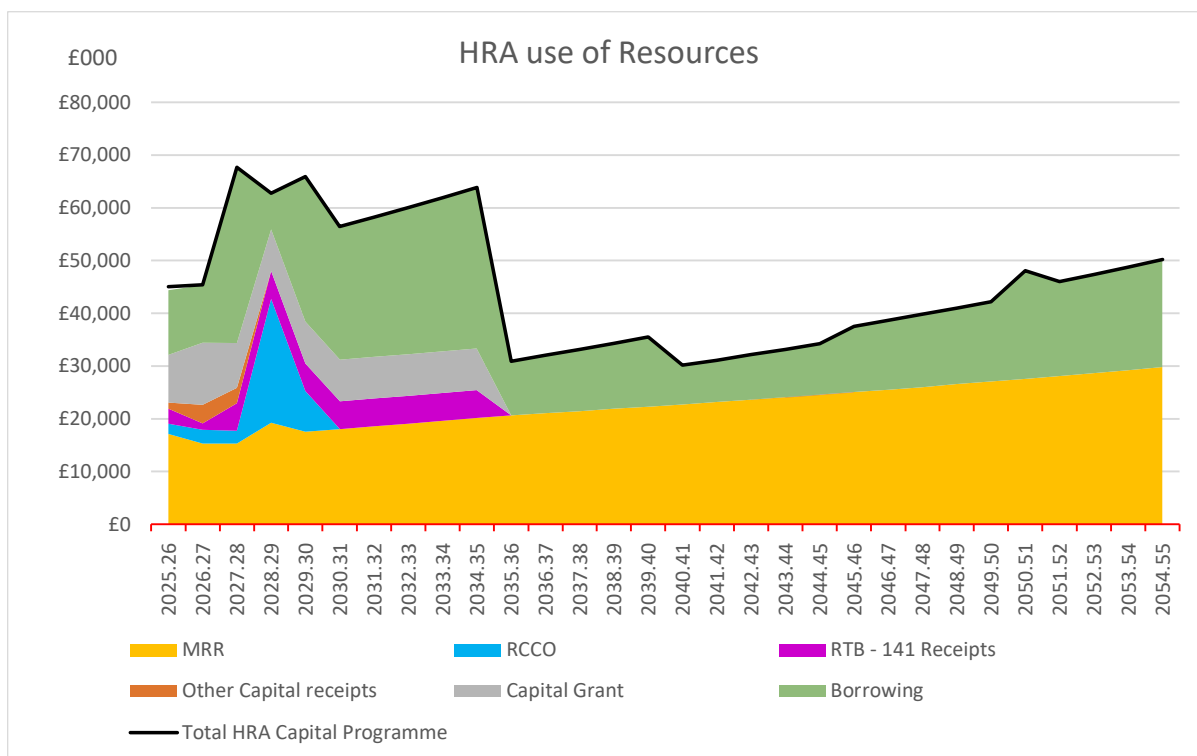


These projections allow for:

- Provision of 937 new homes by 2034/35 (brown area)
- An average of £50,000 (at current prices) to be invested each existing home over 30 years (amber area)
- An average investment in energy efficiency improvements of £7,500 per dwelling over 30 years (pink area)
- Current levels of investment in adaptations (blue area), compliance works (red area) and other capital projects (purple area)

Financing

The authority would access a range of capital resources when financing this capital programme. The projections to minimise the use of borrowing by maximising the use of other resources that are available to support HRA-related investment and are shown in the chart below:



Resources applied in the projections include:

- Major repairs Reserve (MRR – amber area). This is self-generated by the HRA from depreciation charges made against HRA-related assets
- Revenue contributions to capital outlay (RCCO – light blue area). This reflects budgeted contributions over the medium term, along with HRA surpluses that are greater than the minimum balance level from 2028/29 onwards
- Use of retained right to buy receipts (also known as “141 receipts” – pink area). These may only be used to build or acquire new homes and are subject to specific rules
- Other capital receipts (orange area). These reflect the planned use of S106 and shared ownership receipts that part-finance the authority’s existing new homes programme
- Grant (grey area). These grants relate to the provision of new homes
- Borrowing (green area).

Note that borrowing to finance the capital programme incurs interest charges, which are chargeable to the HRA. These charges make borrowing it the most expensive of the capital resources available when financing the HRA capital programme. For this reason, borrowing is only assumed when no other resources are available.

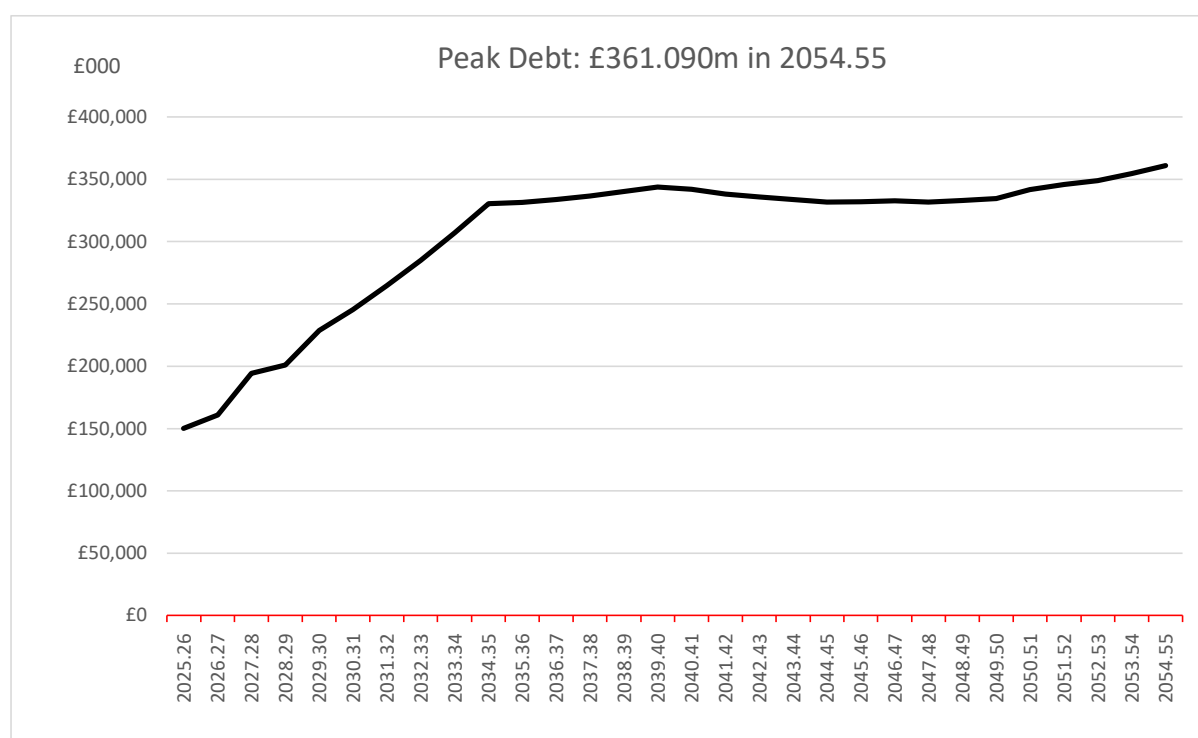
HRA-related Debt

HRA-related Debt levels

Alongside the need to borrow identified when financing the capital programme, above, the projections assume that the HRA would repay any existing debt or new borrowing when it can afford to do so. Two approaches have been taken to facilitate these future repayments:

- Application of revenue balances that are above the minimum level
- Using allowable debt receipts from future right to buy sales to repay debt. These are separate from the retained right to buy receipts (also known as “141 receipts”) that may be used to part-pay for new homes.

The following chart projects the net movement in HRA-related debt:



Projected debt rises substantially while the authority provides new homes, from just under £150m at the end of 2025/26 to just over £330m by the end of 2034/35. Between 2035/36 and 2049/50, debt levels stabilise, indicating that the HRA is broadly able to repay an equivalent amount of the debt that it needs to borrow to finance ongoing stock investment during that period.

Importantly, debt levels start to rise again from 2050/51, reaching a peak of £361.090m in the final year. This indicates a long term exposure to interest rate changes, which represents a key potential risk for the authority.

The authority needs to ensure that the HRA can cover the costs of that debt over the long term.

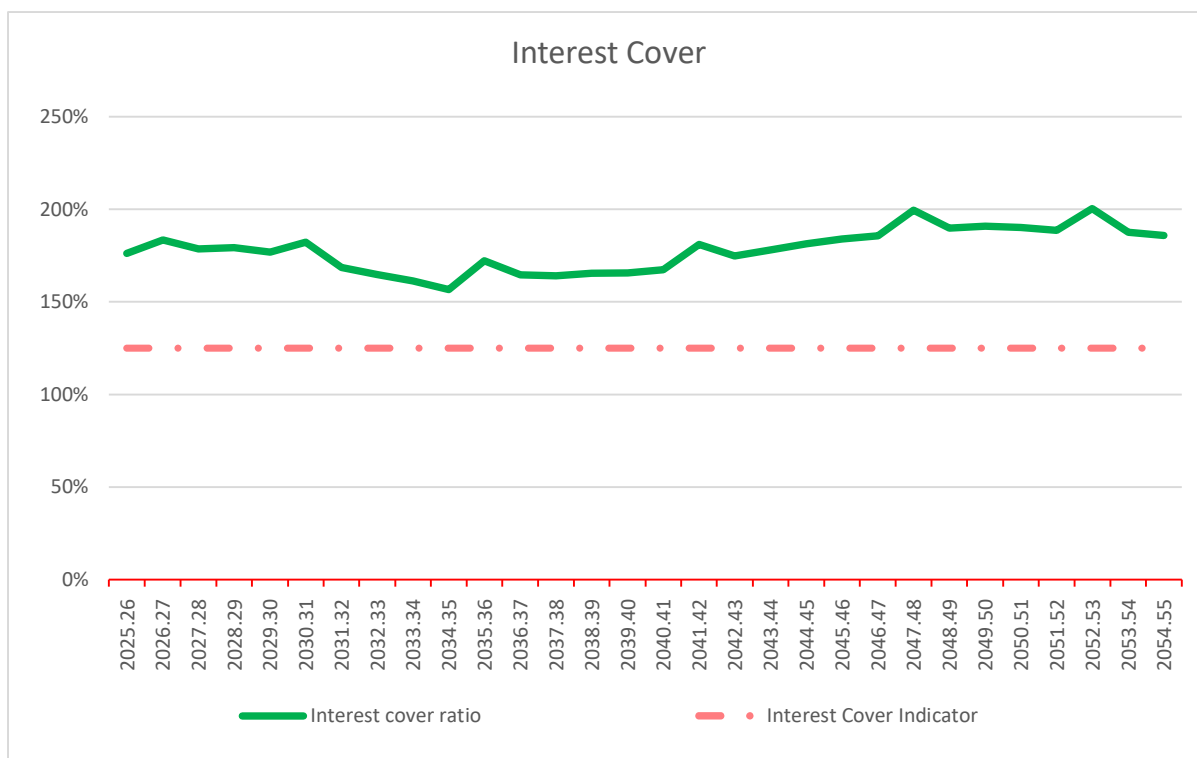
Affordability

Introduction

The projections use interest cover performance as the principal indicator of affordability to the HRA. Interest cover measures how well the HRA would be able to pay the interest charges on projected debt levels from its operating surplus.

Interest Cover Performance

The chart below shows projected levels of interest cover performance for the Baseline projections:



The green line on this chart represents interest cover performance. The dashed pink line shows a prudent minimum performance indicator.

Interest cover performance reduces whenever costs increase. This can happen as a result of:

- Rises in operating costs (such as general management and repairs)
- Loss of income (including higher rent loss or lower rent increases)
- Increases in stock investment costs or the provision of new homes
- Loss of capital funding (such as grant or capital receipts)
- Higher interest charges, caused by additional borrowing on increases in interest rates

The opposite happens if the authority is able to reduce costs or increase income, or if interest rates go down.

The Baseline interest cover projections for the BCP HRA are consistently above the minimum performance level. This indicates that the position is affordable and financially sustainable.

Throughout the period the Baseline HRA retains some spare financial capacity for the authority to draw upon in response to any unexpected costs and emerging risks.

Stress testing and risks

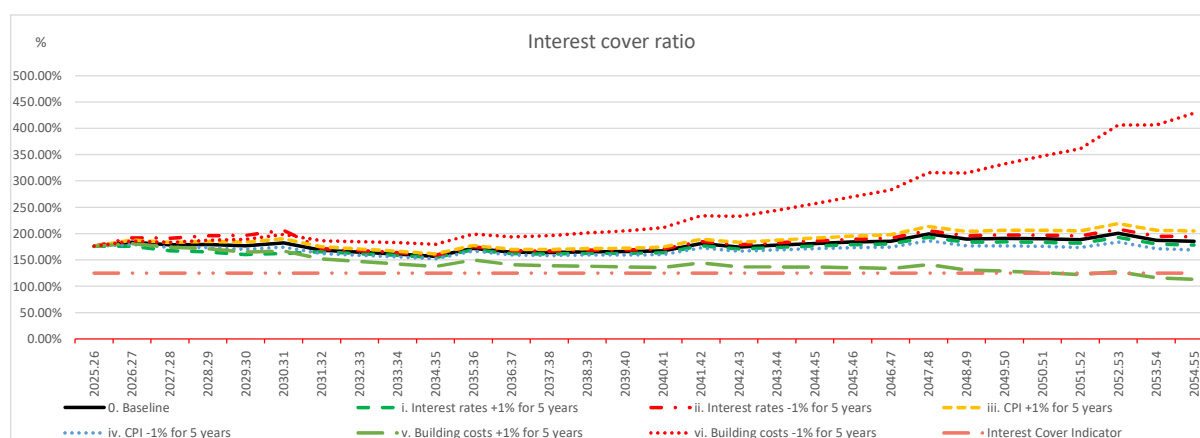
Approach to Stress Testing

While preparing these projections we have explored a range of sensitivity tests and alternative scenarios with council officers. Sensitivity tests show the exposure of the HRA to changes in external factors that are largely outside the authority's control, such as inflation and interest rates.

Alternative scenarios show the potential impact of actions that are largely within the authority's control, such as the approach taken when setting budgets or increasing rents.

Impact of Sensitivity Testing

The chart below shows the impact of a range of sensitivity tests on interest cover performance, compared with the Baseline:



The black line in this chart shows the Baseline position. The sensitivities included are:

- i. Interest rates rise to 1% above Baseline for 5 years (dark green dashed line)
- ii. Interest rates fall to 1% below Baseline for 5 years (red dashed line)
- iii. CPI rises by 1% above Baseline for 5 years (yellow dashed line)
- iv. CPI drops 1% below Baseline for 5 years (blue dotted line)
- v. Building costs increase by 1% above Baseline for 5 years (light green dashed line)
- vi. Building costs increase by 1% below Baseline for 5 years (red dotted line)

Sensitivities that cause costs to rise result in lower interest cover performance. This can be seen most clearly by sensitivity (v), which projects a five year period of increasing costs with no corresponding increase in income. Sensitivities that cause costs to drop result in higher interest cover performance. This is demonstrated by sensitivity (vi), which shows the effects of building costs rising by less than projected for five years.

Interestingly, fluctuations in CPI have slightly different effects, as they impact on both income (i.e. rents) and costs. If CPI goes up, rent rises by more than costs over the medium term, causing a marginal improvement in interest cover performance. A drop in general inflation over the same period has the opposite effect.

The sensitivities show that interest cover drops if the authority's costs rise, unless there is a corresponding increase in income. It is therefore important that the authority continues to focus on minimising costs while maximising income.

Alternative Scenarios

In developing the Baseline position the authority's project team considered a range of alternative scenarios, in addition to the sensitivity tests. The scenarios considered included:

- Increasing the level of decarbonisation spending to £15,000 per home
- Excluding rent convergence
- Allowing for rent convergence at £2 per week
- Introducing the use of rent flexibility when re-letting a home to a new tenant
- Setting a medium term plan to reduce operating costs further
- Combining the above scenarios

These scenarios underlined the conclusions from the sensitivity analysis, that the HRA becomes less financially sustainable if costs rise, unless actions are taken to reduce costs elsewhere or to generate additional income.

Our analysis also considered the level of new homes provision that might be achievable if the authority increased decarbonisation investment while reducing its operating costs and maximising income. The modelling suggested that a modest increase in provision of 40 new homes might be achievable under those circumstances, although doing so would prevent the authority from using the additional capacity for other types of investment or service improvement.

Potential Corrective Actions

While stress testing the HRA projections we explored a range of actions the authority could take to help improve the financial position of the HRA. These actions are also available for the authority to take if it needs to mitigate the impact of emerging risks or adverse changes in financial circumstances and include:

Potential Corrective Actions	
Reduce borrowing	• Allocate corporate resources to the HRA capital programme • Sell under-performing or high value assets for capital receipts • Seek additional funding from government or third parties
Improve revenue performance	• Reduce operating costs permanently over the medium term • Ensure service charges fully recover service costs • Explore use of rent flexibility for social rent re-lets
Set and deliver strict performance requirements for new development	• Payback within 30 to 40 years • Positive Net Present Value across the programme

It will be important to keep these and other options under review, so that the authority can adopt the measures it needs when responding to emerging risks.

Conclusions

The Baseline financial position for the authority's HRA is strong. The projections allow for representative levels of investment in the existing stock, along with the delivery of a substantial new homes programme.

However, stress testing shows that the capacity of the HRA reduces if the authority is unable to contain costs within the indicated levels or if it cannot generate the income and funding required to deliver the Baseline plans. This is a key risk, which the authority can mitigate by maintaining its focus on minimising costs while maximising income and funding. This approach will help it to meet and, ideally, outperform the Baseline projections over the medium and long terms.

The future HRA will also be subject to changes that are outside of its direct control, such as:

- Underlying rates of inflation
- Interest rates
- Future requirements for investment in decent homes and decarbonisation
- External funding available for future stock investment and new homes
- Government policy on rent convergence

All these factors are subject to change and could cause the financial strength of the HRA to weaken if costs rise without a corresponding increase in income or funding. Similarly, the council will also make decisions that can impact on HRA costs and income.

The council needs to remain alert to the potential effects of changes in circumstances and the decisions it takes. It will be important to reassess the impact of such changes on the Baseline projections as they become apparent, so that the authority can adjust its future plans accordingly.

Appendix – Summary of key assumptions

No.	Description	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29	2029.30	Notes
1.00 Constraints							
1.01	Minimum HRA balance	£2,449,750	£2,526,184	£2,635,203	£2,685,769	£2,763,481	Allowance set at 5% of operating expenditure plus depreciation (excludes capital financing charges)
1.02	Interest cover requirement	125%	125%	125%	125%	125%	Minimum interest cover performance requirement
2.00 Inflation							
2.01	Underlying CPI	0.00%	3.75%	2.50%	2.00%	2.00%	BoE MPR projection, August 2025. Continuing at 2% pa from 2028/29. Not applied to outturn budgets.
2.02	Underlying RPI	0.00%	4.75%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	CPI + 1%. Not applied to outturn budgets.
2.03	Underlying Building Costs	0.00%	4.75%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	CPI + 1%. Not applied to outturn budgets.
2.04	House prices	0.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	Standard assumption
2.05	Rent increases	0.00%	4.75%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	Current Government Policy to 2035/36, then CPI.
2.06	Shared ownership rent increases	0.00%	5.25%	4.00%	3.50%	3.50%	RPI + 0.5% - should reflect SO agreements
2.07	Management cost inflation	0.00%	0.00%	2.50%	2.00%	2.00%	Not applied to outturn budgets.
2.08	Repairs & building cost inflation	0.00%	0.00%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	Not applied to outturn budgets.
2.09	Depreciation charge increases	0.00%	0.00%	2.50%	2.00%	2.00%	CPI. Not applied to outturn budgets.
2.10	SCS investment costs cost increases	0.00%	0.00%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	Building Costs. Not applied to outturn budgets.
3.00 Management costs							
3.01	Fixed management costs	100% of Budget	100% of Budget	70% of Budget	70% of Budget	70% of Budget	Plus inflation. Fixed costs not adjusted to reflect changes in stock numbers. 100% fixed until 2026/27
3.02	Variable management costs	None	None	30% of Budget	30% of Budget	30% of Budget	Plus inflation. Variable costs adjusted to reflect changes in stock numbers. 30% variable from 2027/28
4.00 Repairs & asset management costs							
4.01	Fixed repairs costs	100% of Budget	100% of Budget	10% of Budget	10% of Budget	10% of Budget	Plus inflation. Fixed costs not adjusted to reflect changes in stock numbers. 100% fixed until 2026/27
4.02	Variable repairs costs	None	None	90% of Budget	90% of Budget	90% of Budget	Plus inflation. Variable costs adjusted to reflect changes in stock numbers. 90% variable from 2027/28
5.00 Growth, Efficiency & savings							
5.01	R&M growth assumed	£0	£750,000	£0	£-500,000	£-500,000	Medium term increase in 2026/27. £500k removed in 2027/28, £250k balance removed in 2031/32
5.02	R&M cost reductions assumed	£0	£-274,240	£-274,240	£-274,240	£-274,240	Permanent 2% reduction in base budget assumed in 2026/27
5.03	GM cost reductions assumed	£0	£-375,180	£-375,180	£-375,180	£-375,180	Permanent 2% reduction in base budget assumed in 2026/27
6.00 Depreciation charges							
6.01	Depreciation	£15,300,000	£16,035,937	£16,612,360	£17,082,326	£17,564,446	Uses a per-unit allowance from 2025/26 to reflect the effects of stock movements.
7.00 Capital Programme		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
7.01	Major works	£11,870	£20,605	£22,052	£24,897	£26,683	
7.02	Decarbonisation	£1,380	£4,116	£4,254	£4,380	£4,510	
7.03	Development	£27,248	£17,453	£38,195	£29,425	£30,307	
7.04	Aids & Adaptations (Fixed)	£1,400	£1,467	£1,518	£1,563	£1,610	
7.05	Compliance	£1,750	£629	£650	£670	£690	
7.06	Other capital expenditure	£1,202	£784	£703	£1,005	£985	
8.00 Stock							
8.01	Opening Stock	9,606	9,675	9,803	9,883	9,963	
8.02	New Homes	99	158	85	85	85	
8.03	RTB Sales	-30	-30	-5	-5	-5	
8.04	Other Sales	0	0	0	0	0	
8.05	Units removed from management	0	0	0	0	0	
8.06	Closing Stock	9,675	9,803	9,883	9,963	10,043	

Appendix – Summary of key assumptions

No.	Description	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29	2029.30	Notes
9.00 Rents							
9.01	No. Rent weeks	52	52	52	52	52	Allows for years with 53 rent debits
9.02	Average weekly rent paid by tenants	£109.78	£116.27	£122.28	£126.90	£131.49	Allows for rent convergence at £0.80 pw for social rent homes from 2026/27
9.03	Average weekly formula rent (general needs)	£116.75	£122.29	£126.58	£130.37	£134.28	
9.04	Average weekly formula rent (supported)	£100.58	£105.36	£109.05	£112.32	£115.69	
9.05	Units re-let at formula rent	572	535	500	468	439	Assumes 6% of GN stock pa re-let at formula rent (7% of SH stock), using a reducing balance method
9.06	Of these, units re-let with rent flexibility	0	0	0	0	0	No use of rent flexibility
9.07	Rent loss from voids	1.37%	1.37%	1.37%	1.37%	1.37%	
9.08	Rent loss from bad debts	0.73%	0.73%	0.73%	0.73%	0.73%	
10.00 RTB sales							
10.01	Average value per sale	£158,881	£158,881	£228,881	£228,881	£228,881	Plus inflation. Lower RTB discount levels applied from 2027/28 onwards
10.02	Attributable debt per sale	£41,821	£43,912	£46,108	£48,413	£50,834	
10.03	HRA use of capital receipts	£1,200,000	£3,564,000	£2,888,000	£0	£0	Use of shared ownership receipts to support provision of new homes
11.00 Capital financing sequence							
11.01	RCCO	Budget	Budget	Optimised	Optimised	Optimised	No use of RCCO assumed
11.02	MRR	Budget	Budget	Optimised	Optimised	Optimised	Optimised within financial constraints from 2025/26
11.03	Grant	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	
11.04	S106/ commuted sums	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	
11.05	Retained 141 RTB receipts	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	Devpt Prog.	
11.06	Other RTB receipts	None	None	None	None	None	Allowable debt receipts reserved for future repayments of debt
11.07	Other capital receipts	Budget	Budget	Budget	None	None	
11.08	Other HRA reserves	None	None	None	None	None	
11.09	Borrowing	Budget	Optimised	Optimised	Optimised	Optimised	Balancing item
12.00 Capital financing sequence							
12.01	1	Major repairs reserve					Used for major works. Balance also available to repay debt.
12.02	2	Retained 141 RTB receipts					Used to pay for 20% of the cost of new homes. Could be used for up to 100% of new build costs.
12.03	3	Capital grant					Can be included if made available
12.04	4	S106/ commuted sums					Can be included if made available
12.05	5	Other capital receipts					Available for any capital purpose
12.06	6	Revenue contributions					Can be made available for any capital purpose if balance above minimum level
12.07	7	Borrowing					Available for any capital purpose
13.00 Debt							
13.01	Pool rate for new external loans	5.60%	5.30%	5.30%	5.30%	5.30%	Indicative rate, assuming PWLB loans. Needs alignment to WBC Treasury expectations.
13.02	Pool rate for internal borrowing	5.60%	5.30%	5.30%	5.30%	5.30%	Indicative rate, assuming PWLB loans. Needs alignment to WBC Treasury expectations.
13.03	Debt repayment period for new external loans	ASAP					Demonstrates ability to repay debt within a reasonable period
13.04	Interest rate for existing loans	3.92%	3.92%	3.93%	3.92%	3.92%	Average rate, based on indicative loan schedule provided.
13.05	Repayment of existing loans	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	No repayment of existing loans scheduled until 2030/31.
14.00 Resources available for debt repayment							
14.01	1	Reserves set aside for debt repayment					
14.02	2	Unused balance on the major repairs reserve					
14.03	3	HRA balances above the target level					

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CABINET



Report subject	Poole Crematorium - update and next stage opportunity
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To feedback to Cabinet summary results of early market engagement completed in April 2024 and current service performance. To seek Cabinet approval to go to market to procure a concessionaire to operate Poole Crematorium, enabling the reintroduction of cremation services at the site through a third-party provider.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: (a) Note the feedback from the completed Early Market Engagement exercise. (b) Approve the procurement of a concession to operate from Poole Crematorium, Gravel Hill, Poole (c) Delegate authority to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, to finalise the concession specification and undertake the procurement process. (d) Agree to receive a future further report on evaluated bids, and if appropriate approve the award of contract.
Reason for recommendations	To allow officers to take forward a market offer to inform Council decision making as to the future of the Poole Crematorium site, in light of ongoing public, business and political interest in resecuring the cremator(s) facility.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Sandra Moore – Portfolio Holder for Communities
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton - Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Kate Langdown Director of Environment Ian Poultney – Head of Strategic Development Stuart Bickel – Head of Procurement & Contract Management Marta Patsalis – Management Accountant Chantelle Carruthers – Finance Manager Operations
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For decision

Background

1. Poole Crematorium ceased operation in 2020 due to cremator infrastructure failings. Since closure, bereaved families have retained access to the Halo Hall at the location for ceremonial services with conveyancing of the deceased to Bournemouth Crematorium for a cremation.
2. The site remains under council ownership and retains the necessary planning designation for crematorium use.
3. Multiple reports have been considered by Cabinet as detailed in Background Papers exploring business cases and investment options to reinstate cremators at the site with ongoing public, business and political interest in securing a viable solution.
4. Any solution needs to be mindful that, in finding a reinvestment solution to the cremators, its income surpluses are linked to funding broader Council services and the wider bereavement services including cemeteries management for which there is reducing income to support maintenance directly linked to finite burial capacity.

Early market engagement activity

5. In January 2024 the then Leader and Deputy Leader led an opening engagement session with sector and community representatives at the Halo Hall in Poole the purpose being:

For BCP Council to explore and discuss different views on how the market is developing and evolving and future needs, and how other companies or organisations may partner BCP Council or take responsibility for some or all areas of the bereavement care service.

6. BCP Procurement published a Prior Information Notice (PIN) in February 2024 proposing a consultation with the market. The PIN had UK-wide coverage. The PIN was live for 4 weeks allowing businesses and organisations that express an

interest to receive a document that outlines the engagement work BCP Council are undertaking in relation to its Bereavement Service as a whole.

Responses April 2024

7. The following formal responses were received:

- 5 responses from churches or faith groups
- 1 response from a software supplier
- 1 response from a consultant who would carry out a strategic review of service
- 2 responses that could be viewed as offering new ways of working, outsourcing etc

8. The following summary responses from faith groups were received:

- Large elderly population and young people turning to more traditional funerals – should think of Dorset residents as well.
- People want a service close to where they have lived and it is disrespectful to move somebody on final journey – families deterred from using Poole.
- Large income generator for BCP and should fund Poole cremators from budgets/ reserves/ borrowing.
- Poole used as contingency for Bournemouth (also has ageing cremators)
- Should sell or lease service to private company (less cost of new Poole cremators).
- BCP provision is for greater good of community and is more affordable than others, should exploit monopoly position.
- Should prevent other companies exploiting their positions.
- Offer more traditional and longer services, also services of remembrance.
- Should think of carbon footprint and promote services better.

9. The following summary responses from interested commercial solutions were received:

Two Commercial Operators expressed an interest in some or all of the Bereavement Service. Their views can be best summarised by the following four options:

- Joint venture/concession
- Outright Sale
- Lease of selected Sites & Facilities

10. There was a general acceptance that the overall bereavement market is shifting and that like the rest of the business's involved BCP must adapt to these changes in order to maintain any market share and meet the needs of its communities.

Subsequent and supplementary approaches

11. Follow up from interested parties from the PIN exercise has been received. In addition, a new party has approached the Council expressing interest in the facility for which informal communication has been undertaken.

Performance & financial review of service

12. The table below details Bereavement Service demand serviced by local providers per calendar year. For BCP Bereavement Services this shows a year-on-year reduction in demand. Noting that in 2024 demand reduced across three of the four local providers with Weymouth Crematorium the only facility to secure a small increase.

Year	BCP Crematorium	Harbourview	New Milton	Weymouth
2021	4446	1414	0	1334
2022	3730	1638	922	1389
2023	3366	1720	1,581	1328
2024	2998	1683	1,568	1334

Source The Cremation Society National Statistics

13. The table below details BCP Bereavement Care Service location demand split by calendar year. The table evidences an increasing trend demand for ceremonial only services at Poole with onwads conveyancing to Bournemouth Crematorium.

Year	Bournemouth	Poole
2021	3325	1121
2022	3243	487
2023	2849	517
2024	2201	797

14. The table below details BCP Bereavement Care Service gross income by financial year and by function against budget expectation. The increase in cremation income in 2024/25 over 2023/24, despite a reduction in the total number of cremations can be attributed to the individual service type and packages booked by bereaved families.

Year	Crematorium	Cemeteries	Memorials	Total Income	Budget Expectation
2020/21	£ 3,735,900	£ 562,600	£ 88,600	£ 4,387,100	£ 4,511,200
2021/22	£ 3,277,500	£ 568,500	£ 64,900	£ 3,910,900	£ 4,511,200
2022/23	£ 2,838,100	£ 457,900	£ 32,900	£ 3,328,900	£ 4,511,200
2023/24	£ 2,444,700	£ 452,400	£ 104,900	£ 3,002,000	£ 3,920,200
2024/25	£ 2,717,300	£ 668,300	£ 116,700	£ 3,502,300	£ 3,420,200
2025/26 forecast	£ 2,307,700	£ 563,800	£ 154,700	£ 3,026,200	£ 3,158,200

Options appraisal

15. The following options are available to the Council:

- a. Do nothing - The facility would continue as a ceremonial venue for bereaved families with conveyancing of the deceased to Bournemouth Crematorium for a cremation offered by BCP Bereavement Care. Bournemouth Crematorium has sufficient capacity to manage current demand.

A decision not to reinstate the cremation facility at this location will result in a level of ongoing local community and Funeral Director disappointment and dissatisfaction in the loss of an asset as evidenced through the public petition and local press articles.

- b. Direct Operation by Council – The Council's current financial position means this remains currently unviable, any investment decision at this time would result in an increase in unsupported revenue spend and impact of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan. The potential to increase income through achieving an ongoing increased marketplace share of customer base is not guaranteed and will be subject to open competition and impacts of changing bereavement industry trends.
- c. Concession procurement (recommended) – Formally take the site to market to invite bids to realise service reinstatement whilst remaining a BCP Council asset. It could be possible to minimise financial risk to the council whilst securing income and providing enhanced services to bereaved families whilst also improving service resilience.
- d. The Council could explore selling the facility. This option would not provide a revenue return to the Council which could be used to contribute to the MTFP, would reduce Council influence on any future design and operation of the facility and result in direct competition to remaining BCP Council Bereavement Services assets.

Next stage proposal

16. Given informal interest expressed by multiple parties it is recommended that Cabinet consider formally offering a concession opportunity to the market, inviting bids from experienced crematorium operators to:

- Enhance the BCP Bereavement Care offer to individuals and communities at their time of need.
 - Invest in necessary refurbishment and compliance upgrades.
 - Reopen and operate the cremation service.
 - Provide bereavement services aligned with industry standards and council values.
 - Pay base rent and revenue share to the council.
17. In doing so the Council can be satisfied it has explored all current interest in realising a reinvestment opportunity through a transparent procurement process. The results of the evaluation will be considered by Cabinet in a future report to determine if the offer(s) best align with Council priorities, values and MTFP requirements as part of an award decision. Contracting authorities are under no obligation to award a contract following a procurement exercise.

Summary of financial implications

18. Any successful concessionaire would be responsible for capital investment and operational costs. The council should receive base rent and a share of revenue, subject to market response.
19. Re-opening cremations at Poole will directly reduce the number of cremations at Bournemouth Crematorium. All 797 of the 2024 service bookings at Poole required a cremation and were conveyed to Bournemouth. In addition, some Bournemouth bookings which enable the service and cremation to be undertaken without conveyancing may revert back to the Poole site. It is therefore important that any concession arrangement minimises the financial impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan which will be evaluated against each bid received.
20. From a VAT perspective, the concession of a crematorium could affect the Council's partial exemption position if not structured appropriately. To mitigate the risk of breaching the de-minimis threshold, all tender submissions will be carefully assessed from a tax standpoint to ensure they do not result in adverse VAT implications for the authority. Particular attention will be given to any proposed capital investment, as structural alterations beyond the replacement of cremators may constitute a barter transaction, which could further implicate the Council's VAT position.

Summary of legal implications

21. There is no statutory duty on a local authority to provide burial or cremation facilities, but if they do so, the management is governed by the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 and the 2008 Regulations. Local authorities are defined as burial authorities and/or cremation authorities and given the power to provide services by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972.
22. Any approved procurement process will comply with Procurement Act 2023.

Summary of human resources implications

23. An individual crematorium must be certified and licenced as a stand-alone facility for the cremation and disposal of human remains in compliance with the Cremation (England and Wales) Regulations 2008. As such the site must be provided with sufficient, trained, and competent staff who must be present when active cremations are being undertaken. Staffing implications will be taken into

consideration when evaluating bids including potential for Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE).

Summary of sustainability impact

24. Any bidder will be required, as part of their bid, to clearly describe how their operations would support the Council's Climate and Ecological Declaration ambitions.
25. An outline Decision Impact Assessment 747 has been completed and will be reviewed following evaluation of submitted bids.

Summary of public health implications

26. This report continues to support the work that Bereavement Care Services undertakes within the community in delivering a range of services, which provides the appropriate closure at a time of heightened emotional distress and supports a healthier grief recovery process.

Summary of equality implications

27. An Equalities Impact Assessment – conversation screening tool has been completed; there are no significant negative equality impacts on protected characteristics that have been identified with service users retaining access to both local authority and private sector marketplace providers delivering local and national facilities.

Summary of risk implications

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Detrimental impact to Council's MTFP income	Medium/Low	Medium	Unknown until bids evaluated. Specifications to clearly define Council service needs.
Insufficient market interest	Medium	Medium	Site remains as is, cremations undertaken at Bournemouth which has sufficient capacity for existing need.
Operator fails to meet service standards	Medium	High	Include robust performance management and penalty clauses in the concession agreement.
Delays in procurement or concessionaire mobilisation	Medium	Medium	Develop a clear procurement timeline and mobilisation plan; monitor progress closely.
Public opposition or reputational risk	Low	Medium	Engage stakeholders early; ensure transparency and sensitivity in communications.

Environmental non-compliance	Low	High	Require adherence to environmental regulations and regular audits.
Financial failure of concessionaire	Low	High	Conduct financial due diligence; include step-in rights and contingency planning.

Background papers

[Poole Crematorium Report September 2023](#)

[Poole Crematorium Report March 2023](#)

[Poole Crematorium Report September 2022](#)

Appendices

None

CABINET



Report subject	Sea Cliff and Chine Management
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	Along the BCP coastline there is approximately 15.5 miles of sea cliffs and chines. The responsibility for much of the management of the sea cliffs and chines falls to BCP Council (either as landowner or leaseholder). In order to address cliff slips and falls, past engineering efforts during the 20th century have introduced various forms of cliff drainage and stabilisation works including pinning and netting, slope regrading and installation of over 700 sand drains along large sections of the BCP coast. Engineering that would cost many tens of £millions at today's prices Ongoing work to develop a new BCP cliff management strategy has identified that costs for cliff management along the BCP frontage over the next 20 years are currently estimated to be in excess of £41m. In order to address some of the issues being identified in the immediate term, one-off funding of £1.446m has been allocated by the finance team for cliff management over this financial year and next. It is planned to prioritise this funding on items identified through the Cliff Management Working Group.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet Recommends to Council to: (a) Note the challenges being faced in managing BCP's sea cliffs and chines, including the impacts of climate change and limited resources allocated to this in the recent past. (b) Support the immediate allocation of £1.446m from reserves to support responses to current cliff management issues and mitigate the lost income from commercial services on the seafront. (c) Delegate to the Director of Commercial Operations in consultation with the Chief Operations Officer and Portfolio Holder the allocations of the funding.

Reason for recommendations	To support achievement of the BCP vision for where people, nature, coast and towns come together in sustainable, safe and healthy communities, by contributing the delivery of the following objectives: • People and places are connected by sustainable and modern infrastructure. • Our communities have pride in our streets, neighbourhoods and public spaces. • Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice • Our green spaces flourish and support the wellbeing of both people and nature.
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Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley, Cabinet Member for Climate Response, Environment and Energy
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Alan Frampton – Strategy, Policy & Environment Manager Matt Hosey – Head of FCERM Julian Case – Principal Geotechnical Engineer Anthony Rogers – Head of Seafront
Wards	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; Bournemouth Central; Canford Cliffs; East Cliff & Springbourne; East Southbourne & Tuckton; Hamworthy; Highcliffe & Walkford; Mudeford, Stanpit & West Highcliffe; West Southbourne; Westbourne & West Cliff;
Classification	For Decision

Key terminology to understand in reading this paper:

- **Coastal erosion** is a natural process where material (sediment, rocks and manmade features) is taken away from shorelines by the action of waves, tides and currents (often to be deposited along other parts of the coast or moved to offshore areas). This is not replaced by new material, resulting in the coastline being 'eroded'.

Waves, currents, tides, and wind can all contribute to coastal erosion.

Importantly, coastal erosion is driven by forces at the base of cliffs (i.e. along the shoreline), though the impacts result in retreat of the cliff top that in turn can lead to loss of properties and infrastructure located on top of cliffs.

- **Cliff stability** is the ability of inclined soil or rock slopes to withstand destabilising forces. This is related to conditions within the cliffs / slopes including the mass characteristics of the geology and groundwater conditions which on occasion may cause excessive destabilising pressures due to the build-up of water levels within the cliffs due to rainfall and/or other sources.
- **Cliff instability** occurs when the stabilising forces within the cliff are exceeded, leading to rockfalls, mudflows, landslips and landslides. These may be confined to the face of cliffs and slopes or they can be deep seated and cause damage/risk to life to people, property and infrastructure on or at the base of the slopes, or they may also result in retreat of the cliff top position in which case they can then also lead to loss of properties and infrastructure located on

top of cliffs.

Background

1. This paper should be read in conjunction with the background paper on [Cliff and Coastal Erosion Management Across the BCP Coast](#) presented to the BCP Council Environment & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 July 2025.
2. Along the BCP coastline there is approximately 15.5 miles of sea cliffs and chines fronted by sandy beaches, extending from the boundary with New Forest District Council at Chewton Bunny in the east to the boundary with Dorset Council in Lytchett Bay in the west (see Figure 1).

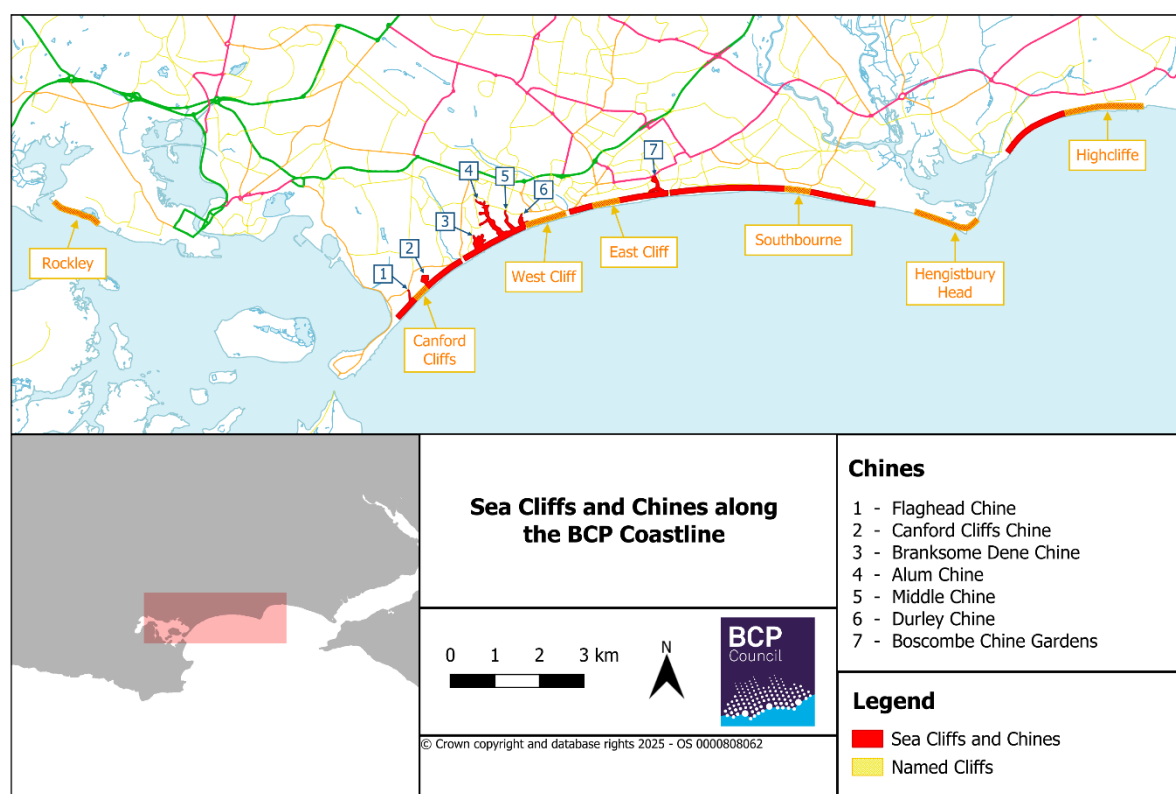


Figure 1 Extent of sea cliffs and chines along the BCP coast

3. The responsibility for much of the management of the sea cliffs and chines falls to BCP Council (either as landowner or leaseholder), however about 1.4 miles of sea cliffs and chines are in private ownership and so the responsibility for management lies with those private owners (see Figure 2). These private cliffs often have a relationship to adjacent sections of cliff, or assets at the top and bottom of the cliff, that are the responsibility of BCP Council, which poses challenges for integrated management.

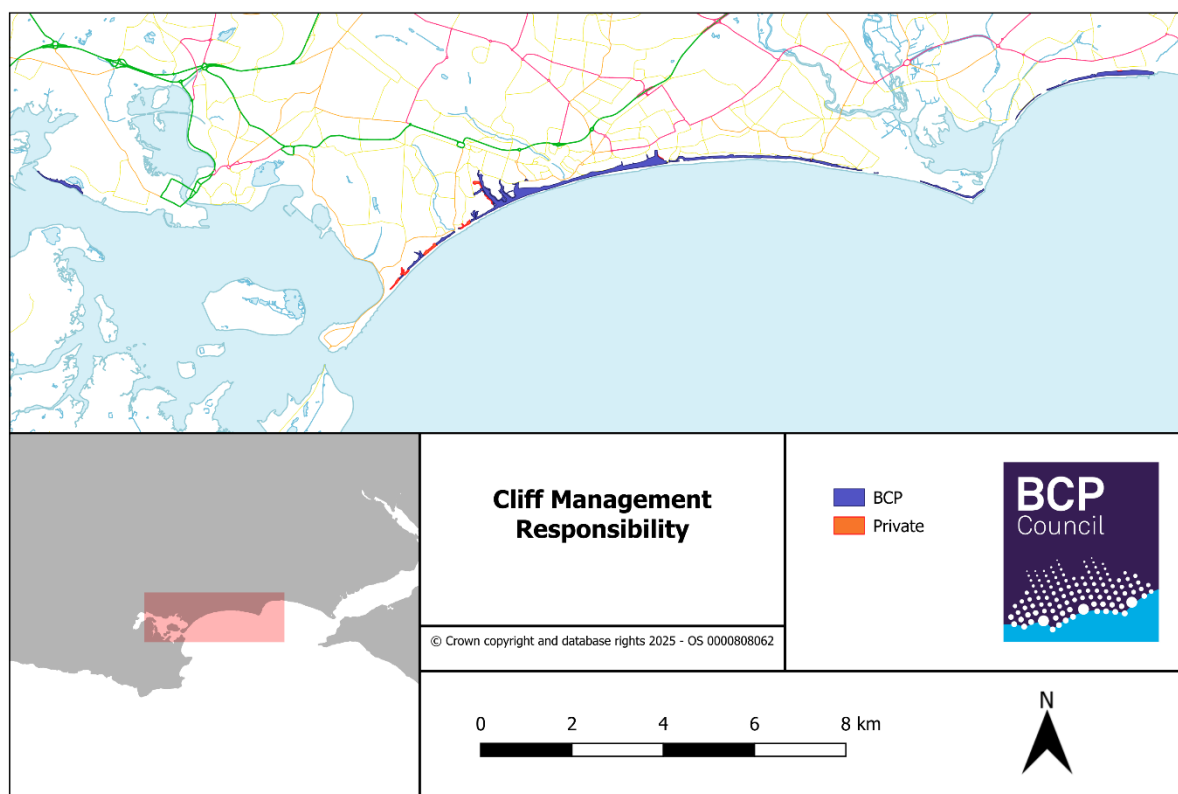


Figure 2 Sea cliffs and chines management responsibility along the BCP coast

4. Since the late 19th century, we have been building coastal defences along the shoreline at the base of the cliff to prevent coastal erosion. Whilst the introduction and evolution of coastal defences along the base of the cliffs have been very successful in stopping coastal erosion by marine action, they were not successful in stopping cliff instability landwards of the coastal defences. Cliff slips and falls were still occurring throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century, including most recently at West Cliff on 9th and 19th October 2024, and East Cliff on 28th November 2024 and 30th January 2025 adjacent to the slip at East Cliff lift that occurred in April 2016.
5. The distinction between coastal erosion and cliff stability/instability (which relates more to landslips) is significant for the management of the sea cliffs and chines along the BCP coast.
6. If we were to stop maintaining coastal erosion defences along the BCP coast, these defences would eventually fail and this would lead to the resumption of cliff retreat that, over a 100 year timescale, would put around 7,000 properties at risk of coastal erosion across the BCP coast. However, we are able to access central Government funding to provide coastal defences along the shoreline/base of cliffs via FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA) to stop this risk arising.
7. In reality therefore, although much of the BCP coast is protected against coastal erosion by seawalls, groynes and beach nourishment located along the base of the cliffs, these coastal erosion defences do not stop landslips that are the result of groundwater driven cliff instability. We therefore still regularly see landslips and falls along much of the BCP

coast albeit to a lesser scale than if the sea was still able to attack the base of the cliffs. When these events occur they pose a risk to life, property and infrastructure.

8. However, unlike coastal erosion, dealing with landslips caused by cliff stability issues is not eligible for funding from central Government via FCERM GiA. In fact there is no national funding available at all for managing this. Rather the funding to deal with cliff stability / landslip issues is the responsibility solely of the landowner or responsible operating organisation, which as noted in paragraph 3, is largely BCP Council in this case.
9. As noted above, from the mid/late 19th century coastal defences have been constructed along the shoreline of much of the BCP coast to prevent coastal erosion. However, these coastal erosion defences did not stop the groundwater driven cliff instability issues along the coast. The clay layers within the cliffs are a significant factor in this regard which together with perched water tables were found to have provided the primary sliding mechanism to a number of cliff falls and landslips in the past. Given this, past engineering efforts have also introduced various forms of cliff drainage and stabilisation works including pinning and netting, slope regrading and installation of over 700 sand drains along large sections of the BCP coast.
10. Despite these efforts, we still have fairly regular cliff instability failures along the BCP coast, albeit smaller in scale and less often than if we have not coastal defences and full coastal erosion was able to occur.
11. As noted above, the management of this residual coastal instability risk is not eligible for FCERM GiA and so is reliant on BCP Council funding. A consequence of the funding required for sea cliff and chine management largely having to come from BCP Council is that, as this is not a statutory requirement and as budgetary pressures have grown, it has in the past not always been prioritised, meaning that it can take years to address and remedy cliff instability failures.
12. The Cliff Management Strategy is still in development and aims to be completed by March 2026. At its core is treating the cliffs as an asset system and applying an asset management system approach to their management. This involves establishing systematic and repeated inspections to assess whether cliff stability issues are present and whether existing cliff stability measures are functioning as they were designed to do. In addition, we undertake regular inspections across the seafront, to report any signs of cliff instability that may develop. Regular inspections of cliff drainage systems built into the cliffs also take place to identify any maintenance and/or monitoring requirements.
13. This information is then reported to a new Cliff Management Working Group (CMWG) that has been formed to better deal with the integrated issues of cliff management across BCP. The CMWG regularly brings together officers from all services in BCP that have a role in managing aspects of the sea cliffs and chines, and includes:
 - the Seafront Service who are responsible for managing people and services including: general visitors and access (including land trains and cliff lifts), beach huts, catering concessions and sports clubs.

- Environment service who undertake things like cliff vegetation management under the Natural England approved Higher Level Stewardship scheme to systematically remove invasive species and reintroduce native species to enhance ground cover and cliff stability. NB: This Higher Level Stewardship funding is the only other sources of external funding BCP Council receives to manage the cliffs.
14. The focus of the CMWG is to review and discuss the latest cliff inspection findings and recommendations and to prioritise actions to address issues identified. Actions recommended may range from communicating with private landowners and establishing cliff monitoring works, to enlisting geotechnical consultants to undertake detailed stability assessments and if necessary, the detailed design of stabilisation measures. Actions taken following this process in the last 2 years have cost BCP Council in excess of £750k and include:
- GPS cliff monitoring by the South West Flood & Coastal team;
 - Commissioning expert advice such as stability assessments, structural assessments and / or detailed design of stabilisation measures;
 - Cliff maintenance work; and
 - Portman Ravine Emergency Works involving physical intervention to remove partial slip and stabilise cliff face.
15. In order to address some of the issues being identified in the immediate term, one off funding of £1.446m has been allocated from reserves for cliff management over this financial year and next. It is planned to prioritise this funding on activities including:
- A rolling programme of inspection, maintenance, recommissioning and replacement (where necessary) of over 700 sand drains and other cliff drainage systems located in different sections of cliff, including along various cliff zig zag paths/access steps such as those at Tofts, Fisherman's Walk, Manor Steps, East Cliff and Highcliffe as doing so can greatly reduce risk at relatively low cost; and
 - Detailed assessment of areas identified as being of concern by visual inspection, and design and implementation (subject to cost / availability of funding) of any recommended remediation measures, including at West Cliff / West Cliff Lift, Honeycombe Chine and Pinecliff Gardens, so that areas can be made safe for the public use of such areas and enable seafront operations to resume.

Options Appraisal

Do not invest in sea cliff and chine management along the BCP coast

16. This will lead to ongoing cliff falls and landslips, posing risk to life, property and infrastructure along the cliff top and along the base of the cliffs (i.e. promenade, beach huts and concessions), as well as access routes from top to bottom of the cliffs (i.e. steps, zig zag paths and cliff lifts).

17. As a result we will see more closures of roads, suspension of parking and partial / full closure of sections of promenade, etc.
18. As well as being disruptive to residents, businesses and visitors, it will also lead to loss of income to BCP Council (e.g. loss beach hut revenue) and increased spend on incident management and fencing/diversions to ensure public safety. The Seafront Service currently generates a surplus of more than £6m/yr from commercial facilities and services.
19. This can be further exacerbated by the perception that the seafront is closed to visitors due to the way such events are portrayed in the media with associated negative impacts on the local tourism sector as well and reputational damage to BCP Council.

Undertake investment in sea cliff and chine management along the BCP coast

20. Investing in the proactive, evidence-based management of the sea cliffs and chines along the BCP coast will mean we will be able to ensure effective maintenance of existing stabilisation systems is occurring, reducing the risk of future cliff falls and slips occurring.
21. This won't fully prevent cliff falls and slips occurring, but will ensure we are doing everything in our power to minimise the risk to people, property and infrastructure. It will also reduce the risk of loss of income to BCP Council from having to respond to such events and having to close beach huts etc.

Summary of financial implications

22. Currently there is no base budget for sea cliff and chine management. However, if annual funding was earmarked for this area it will enable steady progress to be made in tackling the issues identified to date and over time reduce the risk of future cliff falls and slips requiring sudden requirements for funding to be found in an emergency situation as well as reducing the risk of lost revenue to BCP Council. The need for future funding allocation to sea cliff and chine management should therefore be considered as part of ongoing medium-term financial planning.
23. At the present time, £1.446m of BCP Council funding has been allocated, and it is proposed to utilise this one-off funding amount in the near term to progress priority items identified through the CMWG.

Summary of legal implications

24. There is no legal duty on BCP Council to undertake cliff stabilisation and associated cliff management works. However, failure to do so will have implications for public safety and leasehold agreements, as well as insurance premiums etc.

Summary of human resources implications

25. The implementation of this approach requires geotechnical expertise to be retained within the BCP Council FCERM team (South West Flood & Coastal) in order to provide the technical advice on risks and priorities to the CMWG, and to also then aide the effective management of consultants and contractors.

26. The South West Flood & Coastal team currently employs a Principal Geotechnical Engineer and Graduate Geotechnical Engineer who lead on these aspects for BCP Council.

Summary of sustainability impact

27. The purpose of the BCP Cliff Management Strategy is to provide an integrated, sustainable approach to all aspects of cliff management across the BCP coast.
28. The ongoing implementation of the approach, processes and procedures that the cliff management strategy has developed will require ongoing investment by BCP Council to ensure this integrated, sustainable approach to managing the risks of cliff falls and slips occurs.

Summary of public health implications

29. Investment in sea cliff and chine management across the BCP coast will reduce the risk of cliff falls and slips which can and do cause mental health stress in those affected, for example be that through risk of loss of property or loss of access along the seafront due to path closures etc.

Summary of equality implications

30. There are no equality implications of this recommendation.

Summary of risk assessment

31. Without investment in sea cliff and chine management across the BCP coast, there will be an ongoing risk (that with climate change could increase) of further cliff falls and slips. These will impact people, property, businesses and infrastructure, and lead to loss of revenue and sudden need for emergency, unplanned funding for BCP Council. Staff resources would be in demand for reactive measures, delaying other pre-planned activity.

Background papers

- a) [Cliff and Coastal Erosion Management Across the BCP Coast](#). Paper presented to the BCP Council Environment & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9 July 2025).
- o [Full minutes](#) of the 9 July 2025 Environment & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for this agenda item.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.



Report subject	Home to School Transport
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report presents the findings of a strategic review undertaken by an external provider into the Local Authority's home to school transport arrangements focussing on our arrangements and provision for children and young people pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The key objective of the review was to identify strategic and operational opportunities that support the development of independent travel options and make improvements to how home-to-school transport is delivered with a focus on potential efficiencies and service improvement. It identifies key opportunities to introduce travel options that meet individual needs and help prepare young people for adulthood and promote long-term independence. Key issues include the complexity of transport arrangements, market capacity challenges, and the need for improved commissioning models that deliver better outcomes and value for money. The report presents a range of options and opportunities for future delivery and contained details of the investment necessary to achieve cashable savings and cost avoidance. This report seeks approval to proceed with a formal tendering exercise to commission an external provider to implement a phased delivery of change proposals that encourage independent travel, build independence and reduce journey times for children and young people. The approach will be supportive of young people's development to help young people gain confidence and practical skills for travelling safely on their own will result in making school transport more efficient and sustainable.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that COUNCIL: Agree to tender an external provider to deliver a transformation project over three years with a total cost of £1.5 million funded by the flexible use of capital receipts to deliver service improvements and by the end of the project on-going savings in SEND school transport projected at £3 million (net of additional resource requirement).
Reason for recommendations	The recommended approach promotes independence by equipping children and young people with essential travel skills, while addressing rising complexity and cost pressures. A phased delivery plan ensures smooth transition, co-production with families, and ongoing evaluation. By building internal resilience and leveraging external expertise where needed, the Council retains strategic control and delivers a more sustainable, value-for-money service—reducing long-term costs and improving outcomes.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Richard Burton
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Director of Children's Services
Report Authors	Tanya Smith, Head of Inclusion, Places and Capital
Wards	Council-wide

Classification	For Recommendation/Decision
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Background

1. Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to provide free home to school transport for eligible children and young people. This includes those who live beyond the statutory walking distance, have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or face other qualifying circumstances. The duty ensures that children can access suitable education without barriers related to travel.
2. The council currently provides home to school transport for 1,639 SEND passengers on a day-to-day basis. In recent years, the Council has experienced significant growth in demand for home to school transport, particularly for children and young people with SEND. This increase reflects broader demographic changes, rising levels of need, and growing parental expectations around personalised transport solutions.
3. This trend is mirrored nationally, with many local authorities reporting escalating costs and operational pressures in delivering SEND transport. The council's SEND home to school transport expenditure in 2024/25 was £13.8m with the budget for 2025/26 being £16.4m million. This budget in the current MTFP is projected to grow to £21.8m by 2028/29.
4. The key driver for the increased demand in passenger numbers has been an increase to the number of children with an EHCP which has increased by 45% since 2021/22 to 4,837. The service has largely mirrored that of other local authority operations across England and Wales. Increasing pressure has been created by a rising number of children entitled to transport which has been largely driven by growing numbers. This has combined with more costly external taxi and bus supply for inflationary and other operational reasons.

5. The 2024/25 outturn and 2025/26 budget and forecast

Budget Category	2024/25 Outturn £million	2025/26 Budget £million	2025/26 Forecast £million
Staff Costs - Passenger Assistants (PAs)	2.3	2.3	2.3
Staff Costs Recharge - Transport Team	0.4	0.4	0.4
Client Travel	0.5	0.6	0.5
Private Contract Hire - Taxi	6.8	9.3	9.6
Private Contract Hire - Minibus	3.9	3.9	3.8
Total expenditure	14.0	16.5	16.6
Income	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Next Expenditure	13.8	16.4	16.5

6. The 19% increase in 2025/26 compared with the previous year outturn reflects that the EHCP backlog that existed until the final quarter of last year had suppressed the demand for transport with a £0.3m underspend against budget recorded for 2024/25. This expenditure has caught up in 2025/26. The current year budget allowed for a further significant increase in EHCP demand throughout the year plus inflationary pressures totalling £2.1 million. The pay award initially budgeted centrally was distributed to services in quarter two and is reflected in the staff costs in the above table.
7. The current MTFP presented to October Cabinet allows for a further £1.8 million of growth each year over the next three years (39% in total) to 2028/29 for pupil travel costs, the annual pay award for staff costs continuing to be budgeted centrally.
8. The latest service estimate for EHCP growth for the relevant SEND cohort potentially eligible for school transport is under review.
9. To address these challenges, the council commissioned a headline review of its home to school transport arrangements with a focus on operational opportunities that support the development of independent travel options for children and young people with SEND. The review, undertaken by Edge Public Solutions, identifies opportunities to promote independent travel and includes measures designed to improve the delivery and sustainability of the service with associated

opportunities for cost efficiencies. The review sets out a proposed three-year transformation strategy comprising a timeline, clear recommendations and investment implications in systems and permanent resources. A full report of the review is set out at Appendix 1.

Issues

10. The home to school transport function is delivered with input and cooperation from and between the Children's Services and Environment Directorates. Duties and responsibilities are the responsibility of various Education, Social Care and Passenger Transport services. Essentially, assessment of eligibility for assistance with travel costs from home to school is undertaken by the Admissions and Transport team working across the directorate and with the SEND service where assessments and placements decisions are taken for children with additional needs. The budget and policy are the responsibility of the Education service while the day-to-day travel arrangements and commissioning functions sit within the Passenger Transport unit (see page 10 of the report for details). The overall performance of the service is summarised on pages 10-15 and headline capability and gaps are included in Appendix B of the consultant's report in Appendix 1.
11. A summary of the report's key findings is set out in an executive summary on pages 6-7. This identifies:
 - BCP performs similarly to other progressive authorities and has put into place many initiatives in recent years to improve control of demand and service delivery.
 - There is a commendable eligibility assessment regime which clearly contributes to only 33% of children with an EHCP receiving transport which is lower than expected when comparing to other authorities.
 - Respective teams with an involvement in delivering the home to school transport function have been hampered by poor systems and are at full capacity delivering a demanding service.
 - The report identifies activity to achieve service transformation over the next 3 years and deliver an annual financial impact of £2.7 million from 2028/29.
 - Each key initiative will require careful phasing to allow time to properly implement in a sustainable and low risk manner over 2-3 years.
 - Savings should be considered separately from cost avoidance, which is the impact of applying the efficiencies to predicted new demand and cost growth.
 - Successful delivery of the changes and efficiencies will be dependent on fully implementing initiatives involving supply management and commissioning activities, policy changes, investment in independent travel training and governance.
 - Implementation will present a significant challenge and be dependent on five critical building blocks necessary for sustainable delivery namely, political and officer buy-in, parent/carer understanding of the rationale and the benefits of the programme and delivering a positive message to parents and schools communicated as a period of transition (pages 6-9 of the report).
 - Investment in resources will be necessary to properly support and deliver the implementation; including to ensure schools, parents and passenger needs and expectations are managed. There will also be a requirement for additional investment in systems and permanent resources as contained in the financial implications paragraph 26 and the human resource implications set out in paragraphs 35-38.
12. Opportunities to secure efficiencies in supply management and procurement are outlined in pages 17- 25 and include opportunities in the following areas:
 - Supply management and procurement
 - Routing
 - Group/safe pick-up
 - Supply of passenger assistants
13. An overview of assessment and policy is provided on pages 26 – 33 including observations, challenges and operational complexities. It highlights a limited re-assessment regime and opportunities to strengthen this. It also details proposals for assessment of single person journeys, moving away from door-to-door transport, promotion of personal travel budgets and policy change in respect of Post 16 travel, specifically, a proposal to review charges for Post 16 passengers to cover some of the cost of their journey. Details of the role of independent travel training and a

proposed model are set out on pages 34 – 36. The robustness of the policy is contained on page 37 and include some more minor changes to enforce parental responsibility and promote independence and manage parental expectations.

14. **Resources Necessary for Implementation:** Details of the resources and expertise necessary to implement a phased delivery plan of proposed changes is provided on pages 38 – 46 in the Consultant's report. The total ongoing cost implications comprise staffing costs totalling £160k and these are summarised in the financial implications and resource implications sections in this report.
15. **Implementation Timeline:** A timeline of key activity over the next 2 years to implement proposals is provided on page 44 of the report. The timelines in the report are indicative at this stage and may need some level of refinement. In particular, it will be important to manage expectations about the typical timescales involved in implementing substantive changes to the home to school transport policy. This reflects that information and guidance which help inform decisions about onward school or college placements must also be available during the autumn in each academic year. It therefore follows that the process to implement changes to policy need to be co-produced, consulted upon and formally approved well advance and typically begin almost two years prior to the point of admission. The table below helps to illustrate this in more detail. Note: regardless of whether the admission is resolved through the School Admissions Code or the SEND Code of Practice, transition planning starts in the autumn for admission in the following academic year.

Timescales involved in making changes to policy

Activity	Duration	Timeline
Initial Report to Cabinet		25 November 2025
Commission an external partner	8-12 weeks	January – March 2026
Review data	4 weeks	April 2026
Co production of policy changes	6-8 weeks	April – May 2026
Consultation/Collate responses	6-8 weeks	June – July 2026
Cabinet Approval	6 weeks	September 2026
New policy published and applicable for new starters with existing users ageing through*	September 2026 ready for families making their decision for following September 2027	New policy effective from September 2027 if consultation and decision making align. If the autumn window for a decision is not met, the new policy will be implemented from September 2028.

16. **Delivery Model:** A summary of delivery models is provided on page 43 showing the rationale for commissioning external support working in partnership with the council and pros and cons of internal/external resources including an outline cost comparison.
17. **Initiatives for Change - Recommendations:** A summary of recommendations is provided on pages 47-48.

Options Appraisal

18. **Option 1:** Do Nothing -Maintain Current Arrangements
 - Advantages: No disruption to current service; avoids short-term political or operational risk.
 - Disadvantages: Fails to address rising costs, inefficiencies, and increasing demand; does not include options to support children to travel independently, does not meet the council's strategic objectives for transformation or value for money.
 - Conclusion: Not recommended.
19. **Option 2:** Proceed to a formal tendering process to commission an external provider to deliver the recommended changes contained in the external report which form the basis of a 3-year programme of transformation as set out in a phased delivery plan.
 - Advantages: Delivers comprehensive transformation over three years; addresses demand, cost, and quality; aligns with national best practice.

- Disadvantages: Requires upfront investment; some proposals may be politically sensitive; requires formal procurement process which may impact timescales/
- Formal tendering may result in a bid award to a new supplier which could impact costs/initial investment and opportunities for savings.
- Conclusion: Recommended option, subject to robust tendering/commissioning.

Consultation

20. **Engaging with Parents/Carers:** The council has been thinking carefully about how best to engage and communicate the range of possible proposals designed to promote independence. This recognises that early and effective consultation is vital to securing the support of parents, carers and all stakeholders. Undoubtedly, effective communication involves clearly outlining the rationale for change, listening to concerns, and collaboratively exploring solutions that place children at the centre of decision making. For this purpose and as an initial step, the council has met with representatives of Parents/Carers Together who agreed to gather the views of parents/carers on proposed policy changes designed to promote independent travel. As a result, feedback on the each of the project proposals will be feedback to the council and following this, further work will be undertaken with BCP Parents/Carers to support conversations with families and stakeholders in line with the timescales of the delivery plan.
21. **Communications Plan:** In advance of a decision on the recommended option and led by our Corporate Communications Team, the council has begun shaping a communication approach to ensure parents, carers, and other stakeholders are kept informed and involved as proposals develop. It is planned that the approach will comprise:
 - A distinct focus on changes that promote independent skills for life
 - Inclusive decision-making and targeted information sessions
 - Regular communication to all stakeholders and formal periods of consultation
 - Proactive and coordinated press releases and associated handling plan
22. **Consultation Requirements for Policy Changes:** Any substantive changes to home to school transport policy particularly those affecting eligibility, service models, or parental responsibilities must be subject to public consultation. This ensures:
 - Parents and carers understand their rights and responsibilities.
 - Stakeholders can provide feedback on proposed changes.
 - The Council meets its duty to act transparently and fairly.
23. **Consultation Aligned to School Admissions and Transition:** Home to school transport policy is closely linked to school admissions. Regardless of whether the admission is resolved through the School Admissions Code or the SEND Code of Practice, transition planning starts in the autumn for admission in the following academic year. This means that information and guidance which help to determine an onward school or college placement must also be available during the autumn in each academic year. It therefore follows that any changes to policy need to be co-produced, consulted upon and agreed as part of the democratic decision-making process by the autumn in any year. The School Admissions Code 2021 requires local authorities to ensure that parents are provided with clear, accessible information about transport eligibility when expressing school preferences. This includes:
 - Definitions of “nearest suitable school” for preference, travel and transport purposes.
 - The impact of stating a preference for a school that does not meet transport eligibility criteria.
 - How transport policies may affect access to school and an emphasis to encourage parents/cares to consider how they will get their children to school when expressing their school preferences.
24. This information must be included in composite prospectuses (School Admissions Guide) and published annually to support informed parental decision-making during the admissions process. Failure to provide this information may disadvantage families and undermine fair access to education. Consultation should be timed to align with the school admissions cycle to allow families to make informed choices. Local authorities must ensure that transport arrangements are suitable, safe, and enable access to education.

Summary of Financial Implications

25. The delivery plan includes invest-to-save proposals requiring upfront investment, with projected savings over a three-year period. It shows that an investment of £1.49m is required for project management, consultation, and delivery of system changes. Budget implications span financial years 2026/27 to 2028/29. As this is a transformation programme that will lead to savings, funding for the investment can be provided through the flexible use of capital receipts, a government policy that has been extended to March 2030.
26. Details of the headline annual savings and investments required in each year are based on a late 2025/26 starting point now (page 5 in the report). The following table is an extract, and further details are contained in the detailed financial plan contained on page 49-50 of the report, section 8 items 11 and 12 in the table.

Opportunity for Cash Savings

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total 26/27–28/29	2029/30 Ongoing position
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Savings and Efficiencies –Note 1	576	2,611	3,167	6,354	3,167
Total Investment Required	(558)	(497)	(439)	(1,494)	
Ongoing Resource Implications					(160)
Net Cash Saving After Investment	18	2,114	2,728	4,860	3,007

Note 1 - The savings figures in the above table are the reductions from the current level of budget and are the absolute values to include in the MTFP.

The cost avoidance figures in the consultant's report are indicative only based on one possible scenario for EHCP growth estimates and inflation applied to all costs, including staff costs that have not risen according to this EHCP growth trajectory and where pay awards are budgeted centrally. The final cost avoidance figures to be assumed does not impact on the savings and efficiencies in the above table or the level of investment required to achieve them. It will impact on the overall budget required each year with this budget growth requirement still under review.

Summary of Legal Implications

27. **Statutory Duty to Provide Home to School Transport:** Local authorities have a legal obligation under the Education Act 1996 to provide free home-to-school transport for eligible children. Any changes must ensure continued compliance with these duties, particularly for children with special educational needs (SEN), disabilities, or those living beyond statutory walking distances.
28. **Equality and Non-Discrimination:** Under the Equality Act 2010, the council must ensure that changes do not disproportionately disadvantage protected groups. This includes conducting a robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) at the appropriate stage to identify and mitigate potential adverse effects. While an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has been initiated, it is recognised that the process is at a very early stage. A full assessment will be more appropriately timed once proposals have been further developed and shaped through co-production and informed by the appointment of external consultancy support. Any detailed analysis will need to align with the specific proposals and be based on current data relating to children and young people travelling at that point in time.
29. **Duty to Consult:** There is a legal requirement to consult meaningfully with affected parties—especially parents, carers, and schools—before implementing significant changes. Failure to do so could expose the council to legal challenge on grounds of procedural unfairness.
30. **Human Rights Considerations:** Changes must respect the rights of children and families under the Human Rights Act 1998, particularly the right to education and the right to private and family life. Any perceived infringement must be proportionate and justified.
31. **Data Protection and Privacy:** If proposals involve collecting or using personal data (e.g., travel patterns, health information), compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 is essential, including transparency and appropriate safeguards.

32. **Contractual and Procurement Implications:** If changes affect existing transport contracts or require new services, procurement rules and contractual obligations must be carefully managed to avoid breach or legal disputes.
33. The proposed three-year delivery strategy constitutes a significant programme of work. In accordance with the public contracts' regulations, the Council must undertake a competitive tendering process to commission an external provider. Note: a direct award to the external consultant firm engaged for the purposes of producing the attached review report is not permissible unless specific exemptions apply, which is not the case here. The procurement process must ensure:
- Transparency and equal treatment of bidders.
 - Value for money and legal compliance.
 - Alignment with commissioning timelines to avoid delays in implementation.
34. **The SEND White Paper:** The "SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time" White Paper has been delayed until 2026. Local authorities anticipated that the White Paper would address several long-standing challenges in the SEND system, including unsustainable growth in SEND transport costs. Key expectations included:
- **Clarification of Eligibility Criteria:** Councils sought clearer guidance on statutory duties, especially around post-16 transport and independent placements, which often drive high costs.
 - **Flexibility in Delivery Models:** Proposals were expected to support travel training, personal travel budgets, and phased independence models to reduce reliance on specialist transport.
 - **Improved Commissioning and Market Shaping:** Authorities wanted support to develop local provision and reduce long-distance travel, which contributes to rising costs and carbon emissions.
 - **Data and Benchmarking Tools:** Better national data collection and benchmarking to help councils compare costs and identify efficiencies.
35. The impact of the Delay to the White Paper until early 2026 means that there is no formal national mandate to reform transport policy or indeed help manage several long-standing challenges in the SEND system which impacts on growth and sustainability. In the meantime, local authorities continue to face rising demand and rely on sector-led guidance, such as the ADCS and ADEPT joint report (Nov 2023), which calls for legislative reform and better alignment between SEND and transport policy.

Summary of Human Resources Implications

36. The report emphasises there are a range of resource intensive activities (page 36) and sets out the requirements of successful implementation in terms of leadership, governance and additional permanent temporary/fixed term support (page 41-42). Namely successful implementation will require:
- Strong leadership to drive progress,
 - Clear governance to ensure accountability,
 - Additional permanent team resources, and
 - Temporary fixed-term support to manage and execute key initiatives beyond daily operations.
37. Adequate resources and expertise are critical to ensuring the sustainable delivery of resource-intensive initiatives. These efforts aim to achieve annual efficiencies and cost reductions. Additional support will establish the foundational elements for successful service transformation, including:
- Building a performance-driven culture,
 - Strengthening governance frameworks,
 - Refining strategic priorities,
 - Enhancing communication,
 - Managing customer expectations, and
 - Supporting team development.

38. While precise resource requirements are challenging to predict, experience suggests the following full-time equivalent (FTE) resource levels over the three-year transformation period at a cost of £160k. Newly appointed staff will deliver travel training and team resources focussing on the development of a training contract and re assessment and compliance including the arrangements for providing personal travel budgets.

Year Resources (FTE)

1	3–5
2	3–5
3	1–3

39. Resource demands will fluctuate, with peaks during procurement events and quieter periods thereafter. Training and change management support will be required. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed to assess the impact on affected groups.

Summary of Sustainability Impact

40. Improved transport planning may reduce unnecessary journeys and promote more sustainable travel options. The transformation plan includes consideration of environmental impact and carbon reduction.

Summary of Public Health Implications

41. Efficient and reliable transport supports attendance and wellbeing for children with SEND. The plan aims to reduce stress for families and improve access to education.

Summary of Risk Assessment

42. Risks include political sensitivity, stakeholder resistance, and procurement delays. Mitigation includes phased implementation, clear communication, and alignment with statutory timelines.

Background Papers

Edge Public Solutions Strategic Review Report July 2025

Appendices

Appendix 1: Edge Public Solutions Strategic Review Report July 2025

The key objective of the review was to identify strategic and operational opportunities that support the development of independent travel options and make improvements to how home to school transport is delivered with a focus on potential efficiencies and service improvement.

The report details clear recommendations, and options for decision, before culminating in an implementation plan including timeline, resource required and investment implications.

This report is not intended to be a detailed description of the service and a catalogue of observations which do not contribute directly to key opportunities.

Richard Hall
Director
July 2025

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1.0 OVERVIEW & CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report sets out opportunities to enhance our home-to-school transport arrangements, with a purposeful emphasis on children and young people with special educational needs. By focusing on those who may encounter the most significant challenges to independent travel, we are committed to identifying new approaches that foster autonomy, build confidence, and support their transition into adulthood—both in terms of personal development and practical mobility.
- 1.2 According to The Sunday Times analysis in June 2025, spending on home-to-school transport for children with additional needs has tripled over the past decade, reaching £2.25bn. Home-to-school transport expenditure is now higher than the total expenditure on fostering services (£2.14 billion), family support (£1.3 billion) or children’s centres (£444 million).
- 1.3 Analysis by The Times suggests that rising numbers of children with additional needs, limited capacity at special schools and demand for individual transport have contributed to the increase.
- 1.4 BCP Council provides home to school transport to 1,639 passengers with additional needs on a day-to-day basis, with 1,334 receiving door-to-door transport on supplied bus or taxi and the remainder receiving bus passes, an allowance for fuel wear and tear or a personal transport budget (PTB).
- 1.5 Over recent years the service has largely mirrored that of other local authority operations across England and Wales. Increasing pressure has been created by a rising number of children entitled to transport which has been largely driven by growing numbers and complexity of children with an EHCP. This has combined with more costly external taxi and bus supply for inflationary and other operational reasons.
- 1.6 The overall cost of the service in 2024/5 was £13.8million with the budgeted annual expenditure for 2025/6 being £16.3million and predicted to grow to £21.2million by 2028/29 (Appendix A)
- 1.7 Expenditure on transporting SEND children has more than doubled, increasing by 119% since 2021/22 driven by a 36% increase in overall passenger demand and escalating costs of supply from the external market which have resulted in a cost per passenger increase of 51% from £6,484 to £9,810 per year.
- 1.8 The key driver for the increased demand in passenger numbers has been an increase to the number of children with an EHCP which has increased by 45% since 2021/22 to around 5,000.
- 1.9 It is within this context that Edge public solutions conducted a headline review of the service. The review considered how home to school transport delivery can be improved to promote independent travel, better manage demand for door-to-door transport solutions from the

point of assessment and how it can deliver wider benefits and improve outcome for children and young people while, at the same time, delivering efficiencies and securing value for money. The review culminated in a plan to deliver a raft of initiatives as part of an overall transformation strategy over the next 3 years and has considered investment and further estimated growth.

2.0 KEY FINDINGS – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall

- 2.1 BCP Council performs similarly to other progressive authorities and has put into place many initiatives in recent years to improve control of demand and service delivery.
- 2.2 We observed a laudable eligibility assessment regime which clearly contributes to only 33% of children with an EHCP receiving transport which is lower than expected when comparing to other authorities.
- 2.3 The Transport team are committed and knowledgeable and have already considered and implemented many initiatives with some controls and protocols delivering exceptional performance such as the low number of PA's allocated to routes.
- 2.4 However, both the School Admissions and Transport Team and the Passenger Transport Unit have been hampered by poor systems and are at full capacity delivering a demanding service with little headroom and resources to enable significant change.
- 2.5 This report will clearly show how there is a real opportunity to embark on a fundamental service transformation over the next 3 years and deliver an **annual financial impact of £2.7 million from 2028/29** and cost avoidance associated with applying the efficiencies to projected new volume of passengers in future years.
- I. This is a saving against the current projected expenditure in each coming year which includes growth in demand and cost.
 - II. Savings should be considered separately from cost avoidance, which is the impact of applying the efficiencies to predicted new demand and cost growth.
- 2.6 Each key initiative will require careful phasing to allow time to properly implement in a sustainable and low risk manner over 2-3 years. The table below summarises the headline annual savings and investments required in each year versus a 2025 start point. (A detailed financial plan can be found at section 8.0).

Versus the start point '000£	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Efficiencies	576	2,611	3,167
Investments	558	487	439
Total net saving	18	2,114	2,728
Cost avoidance/ new volume	159	786	999

- 2.7 Investment in resources will be necessary to properly support and deliver the implementation; including to ensure schools, parents and passenger needs and expectations are managed. There will also be a requirement for some modest additional investment in systems and permanent resources.
- 2.8 Successful delivery of the changes and efficiencies will be dependent on fully implementing initiatives across some critical themes,
- I. Developing and delivering a clear transport strategy under a joined up and accountable Governance structure for transport supported by more integrated systems and clear metrics of performance.
 - II. Enhancing the control of the supply market and securing better value by moving to a more flexible dynamic purchasing system (DPS), and managing a complex re-engagement, re-procurement, and routing overhaul exercise including the option of introducing safe pick-up points.
 - III. Considering the options for providing passenger assistants, including exploring opportunities to move to a mixed model of PA supply including transport providers.
 - IV. Investment in a travel training offer, which will underpin a re-assessment regime to support moving away from expensive door-to-door transport to other travel solutions such as PTB's.
 - V. Better using policy to communicate strategy and manage expectation, and specifically considering changes to Post 16 policy and the greater use of default offer PTB's.
- 2.9 Implementation will present a significant challenge and be dependent on five critical building blocks necessary for sustainable delivery.
- I. Political and officer buy-in, appetite and understanding of the changes, including the rationale and the need for a joined up holistic strategy. This can be achieved by leveraging strong governance and leadership across the directorates involved in transport and better visibility of the service with a joined-up database.
 - II. Parent and user understanding of the rationale and the benefits of the programme with a clear focus on promoting independent travel. Ensuring that the benefits of independent travel are promoted and principles of consistency, fairness, delivering policy and best use of valuable resources are at the heart of all changes.
 - III. Delivering a positive message to parents and schools, working with all partners to manage expectations and navigate changes through thoughtful planning, clear communication and careful management. Transformation should be communicated as

a period of transition followed by a lengthy period of certainty and settled arrangements. This can be managed very successfully with expertise.

- IV. Securing investment in project leadership, expertise, and capacity to drive the necessary short-term changes and implement the complex range of sustainable service improvement initiatives.
- V. Having a clear roadmap for developing the right level of resources for the business-as-usual operation after the transformation phase.

3.0 ORGANISATION, GOVERNANCE, RESOURCES & OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Organisation & governance

- 3.1 Whilst this review focused on home to school transport there are 5 main service areas, across 3 directorates of BCP council, which have a stake in passenger transport and these are indicated in the table below,

Team	Directorate	Role
Passenger Transport (Social Care)	Environment	The procurement and organisation of social care passenger transport. This includes the internal fleet of accessible minibuses. The direct provision of some home to school transport. Support for community transport.
Passenger Transport (Education)	Environment	The procurement and coordination of home to school transport. Determines most appropriate travel solution. Recruits and manages Passenger Assistants (PAs).

		Organises fuel, wear and tear (FWT) and personal travel budget (PTB) payments.
School Admissions and Transport	Education/ Children's Services	Assesses entitlement for home to school transport.
Education Health Care Coordinators (EHCCoS)	Education/ Children's Services	Completes EHCP EHCP review Placement decisions
Social Care	Wellbeing	Social Care transport budget Social Care eligibility

- 3.2 It is not uncommon for transport to be delivered from several service areas, but this typically causes issues with control and governance. In this respect, the following observations were made of SEND transport which are likely replicated in social care and therefore transport as a holistic service:
- I. There is a lack of coordinated visibility and transparency supported by clear metrics which are visible across all areas of the operation resulting in evident lack of trust and confidence that best value is being achieved and the right assessment decisions are being made and in line with policy. The team have been hampered by using three different databases in the last 5 years.
 - II. There are gaps in accountability for overall expenditure and other key areas. This is often the case where a transport team re-charges for services and has no control over demand, and the commissioning services (SEND) have some control of demand but little control over the delivery cost. Other examples or unclear accountability include SEND or transport team making decisions on discretionary transport in isolation, where transport is not offered by policy.
 - III. There is a challenge to making clear overarching decisions for transport to drive best value for the council. For example, whether to pursue moving away from door-to-door transport and support independence and driving initiatives to support this. It is unclear whether accountability rests with the School Admissions

and Transport Team, the Passenger Transport Unit or the SEND Team and, if all three, then how this would work in practice.

- IV. There is little evidence of a clear overarching strategy for transport in respect of future proofing and transforming it to make it efficient.
 - V. It is unclear which department owns the communication of strategy and decisions to parents and schools.
 - VI. It has been a challenge for Passenger Transport Unit culture to keep up with a fast-changing culture and direction within Children's Services. Being detached from the service makes this more difficult to achieve.
- 3.3 Many local authorities have taken steps to become more integrated to resolve some of these challenges and some have re-organised into one integrated transport team. However, this has also been achieved with better Governance for the whole of transport and its commissioners, and we recommend better overall Governance for BCP Council.
- 3.4 Whilst there is good communication between the School Admissions and Transport Team and the Passenger Transport Unit, this relates in the main to tactical decision making, the forums in place don't have the teeth or remit to control all the parts of the operation or agree and drive more strategic changes.
- 3.5 The service has a significant opportunity to improve its Governance and develop a joined up overarching control of transport across the stakeholders involved, ensuring a joined-up approach to strategy, forecasting, expenditure, and delivery.
- 3.6 It is recommended that a Travel Board be implemented to be accountable for overall performance. The Travel Board will have the 'teeth' to manage transport performance for home to school transport and social care; drive forward a joined-up strategy to achieve the best possible value and outcomes for the authority. The board will be accountable for all decisions which are discretionary and over and above policy. Social care involvement is important given their future strategy and the potential for the availability of 30 internal minibus resources for SEND passengers or growing this fleet to accommodate SEND passengers.
- 3.7 In respect of a Travel Board recommendation, there are some critical considerations,
- I. There must be representation from all key areas and finance.
 - II. Its Chair and leadership must be of sufficient seniority to bring together accountability for overall expenditure and probably from Children's services given the lion's share of the budget.

- III. Care must be taken to ensure the board is not over-engineered and overburdened with operational detail and decision making. It is envisaged that the board will set clear protocols on decisions and have clear mechanisms to ensure compliance.
- IV. The Board will require clear reporting and metrics of performance to manage progress, see Appendix D for an example of a Key Metric report.

3.8 The table below shows how the 4 key areas in transport can be brought together by stronger Governance and clear accountabilities.

Directorate	Who?	Specific Accountabilities
TRAVEL BOARD	Director Leadership Finance Transport Education Social Care	Governance Strategy Budget Forecasting Communications

Well-being	Social Care Commissioning	Policy Assessment Re-assessment
Children's	SEND (EHCCoS)	Transport needs in EHCP Consider transport in EHCP
Children's	Admissions/ Assessment	Transport Policy Assessment Re-assessment
Environment	Passenger Transport Service	Effective travel solution Delivery

Overall performance

- 3.9 Whilst there are many opportunities for improvement it is important to note that the transport service across all areas performs in a similar fashion to other authorities struggling to develop and respond to rapidly increasing demand. There are many progressive initiatives in place or having recently been implemented. The knowledge and dedication of the School Admissions and Transport Team and the Passenger Transport Unit is laudable.
- 3.10 The headline metric comparison (for passengers with special educational needs) below highlights some areas of strength and some of opportunity. It is important to understand that metrics provide only a headline gauge of where opportunities might be. They can be misleading and it is important for a review to look further at the bespoke conditions and the

practical situation in the operation to assess opportunity. In summary, transport metrics are indicating that BCP Council:

- I. Provides transport to slightly fewer children with EHCPs than is the norm. 33% versus an average expectation of 38%. This is likely to be an indication of good quality assessment and robust eligibility controls. The number of first stage appeals is significantly higher than expected which may indicate robust controls in the context of high parent expectation. But with some authorities improving on 33% then there are some best practice opportunities to examine.
- II. Does not promote personal transport budgets (PTBs) to good effect and under-performs most other authorities in this respect. PTBs are an effective way of providing parents, and transport users with greater autonomy to make their own arrangements and are delivered at a cheaper cost than organised transport.
- III. Has a very high number of single passengers per route at 47% of all routes, which cost significantly more at £16,000 per year than a passenger on a group route. These routes can be indicative of poor routing control, but also indicative of placement locations which are out of borough, smaller satellite placements with fewer passengers attending on a day-to-day basis.
- IV. Has a low number of routes with passenger assistants (PAs) indicating good control, but which could in part be driven by difficulty in recruitment of PAs.
- V. The cost per passenger is higher than typically seen elsewhere at £9,810 per year. Whilst high level metrics of these types can only ever present a gauge and an indicator it is a signal that there may be an opportunity to better deliver, route and procure transport arrangements.
- VI. The number of passengers per route is very low at 2.11 versus a benchmark average of nearer 5 passengers per route. This is a headline indicator and work to understand and improve this metric will be critical. Though unlikely to be practically possible, it cannot escape notice that making improvements to meet the benchmark would result in approximately halving current total transport costs.

Metrics (SEN)	BCP	Benchmark expectation
% of EHCP receiving transport	33%	38%
% Personal Travel Budgets offered of total passengers	2.2%	6%
Single passenger routes	47%	37%
Routes with a PA	31%	62%
Cost per passenger	£9,810	£6,317
Passengers per route	2.11	5.12

- 3.11 The review covered all key aspects of a passenger transport operation and from a headline perspective was able to indicate whether performance was good or had room for improvement. *NB: benchmarks can be misleading as local authorities have very different dynamics, benchmarks are not intended to allow a precise science to ascertain opportunity. We have only used performance from councils where we have worked and can verify data. Benchmarks have only been used as a headline indicator of where there may be an opportunity.*

Data and systems

- 3.12 The transport team have struggled in recent years to keep records that can produce robust reporting based on up-to-date data. This has caused some concern from the services seeking assurance that best possible value is being delivered. However recent improvements and the introduction of the Mobisoft product MTC has provided a database and routing tool which is the foundation for better data and metrics. However, there is still work to do to fully transition data into the new system and it has not yet been used for re-routing. Full use of MTC will provide some headroom from the admin burden associated with invoice checking, PA timesheet checking and inputting etc. The transport team is still catching up with the assimilation work associated with the merging the councils into BCP Council.
- 3.13 However, each of the two other areas in Children's services uses a different system. The School Admissions and Transport Team have an in-house built system based on excel and do not use the Synergy interface available. The team, alongside colleagues in Education services use synergy for other tasks. Synergy does not link with the in-house system and neither system currently links with MTC. Hence there are interfaces which are not seamless and cause work with inputting and valuable data is not readily available for all to see.
- 3.14 It is recommended that a solution is found to provide a seamless solution from Synergy to MTC. There are two options, each which would allow synergy to interface with MTC and therefore seamless access to data without re-input being required after changes are made or new transport arrangements are required.

- I. Synergy can be interfaced with MTC and Synergy has an assessment module which can replace the in-house system used by admissions.
- II. MTC also has an assessment module.

3.15 MTC will allow the production of quality reports which can be used by the Travel Board to manage performance. An example of a report can be seen at Appendix D.

3.16 The table below, whilst not exhaustive, outlines typical measures across the travel service which can be used for setting targets and monthly performance appraisals. These metrics will also be important to give a Travel Board the teeth to govern.

Category	Common measures	Function
Overall team	Cost per passenger. Demand increase, each category of passenger Demand decrease, each category of passenger	Assessment & Transport Team
Supplier value	Cost per mile. Cost per vehicle type. Cost per supplier (based on passengers) Number of suppliers Variance to base contract summary on re-tender and during contract term reflecting variations	Assessment & Transport Team
Day to day	New allocations Single person journeys per total (separated by reason) PAs per passenger route Complaints Numbers allocated to existing routes. New routes procured. Short term quotes	Assessment & Transport Team

Financial forecasting

- 3.17 There was evidence of robust forecasting of future demand (over next 3 years) and potential cost growth based on EHCP growth from within the Admissions function. Remarkably this is unusual and represents excellent practice. However, there was little evidence of how these forecasts manifested in delivery plans and strategy. This will be especially critical in the future, given estimated demand growth of 26% and an estimated increase in costs of 30% between now 2025/26 and 2028/29. This supports the need for a Travel Board and improved Governance and strategy.

Resources

- 3.18 The passenger transport team is knowledgeable, and many progressive initiatives have been implemented. However, major change, a progressive approach and some core activities are hampered by lack of resources in the team. Appendix C shows how the Transport team is at least 3.5 FTE short of what would be expected in terms of resource to manage home to school with the current number of SEND passengers; Whilst this is not a precise science; given BCP Council manage their own PAs which others do not...and others have an in-house operation which BCP Council does not....it is still a useful guide given the need for BCP Council to carry out some other key activities.
- 3.19 Whilst a transformation to implement the recommendations of this review will require significant temporary resources, expertise, and leadership (which are outlined later) there are some activities which will require continued added resources permanently to ensure sustainable operational change and to continue the activities of the transformation phase after temporary resources have gone. The activities currently needing additional focus include:
- I. On-going new supplier engagement
 - II. Supplier compliance checking.
 - III. Support for the on-going re-assessment of passengers
 - IV. Driving forward Personal Travel Budgets
 - V. Providing a travel training function (whether this is led by Transport or Admissions)
- 3.20 It is recommended that additional, permanent resources are recruited and developed alongside the transformation activity to deliver these progressive activities, each of which are covered later in the report and amount to 2 additional resources to support travel training and 2 resources to support I-IV above.

Compliance checks

- 3.21 It is important to note that compliance checking in respect of ensuring contractors are meeting contractual and legal responsibilities is lacking focus.

- 3.22 The BCP Council operation is not sufficiently resourced to carry out a regime of proactive compliance checking. A recommended regime is outlined at Appendix J. The operation is currently:
- I. Reliant on the Private Hire, Hackney Carriage and PSV licensing regimes to ensure roadworthiness.
 - II. Reliant on Operation Coachman for occasional unannounced spot checks of all compliance issues.
 - III. Reliant on PAs to report issues.
- 3.23 This leaves BCP Council vulnerable. If there is an incident and authorities request a record of checks or a record of supplier performance and therefore, we have recommended additional resources to enable a compliance regime to take place.

Head Teacher feedback

- 3.24 Many observations and opportunities for improvement were supported by feedback from Headteachers who we interviewed as part of the review. A summary of this feedback is contained at Appendix I. However, the key headlines in terms of solutions and recommendations from the feedback are listed below:
- **Routing and Timing:** Reduce unnecessary early arrivals and optimise routes to prevent delays.
 - **Enhance Communication:** Establish regular meetings and clearer feedback mechanisms between schools and the transport team.
 - **Strengthen Compliance:** Conduct routine site audits and checks.
 - **Improve Training:** Ensure all PAs and drivers receive appropriate training, especially on safeguarding and working with pupils with SEND.
 - **Clarify Processes:** Develop and publish clear SLAs for application processing and issue resolution.

4.0 EFFICIENCY OPPORTUNITIES

Supply management and procurement

- 4.1 Around £10.6million per annum in 2024/5 is spent, and £12.9m budgeted to be spent for 2025/26 on contracted supply of taxi and minibuses. Routes are tendered using a fixed framework contract of 49 suppliers which comes to an end in July 2027. Of these 49 suppliers, 36 are used with one supplier carrying out 40% of all the work.
- 4.2 Given that 40% of the work is carried out by one provider and there is significantly more work given to the top 3 providers than is expected from the norm, this indicates that competition for tenders could potentially be improved.

% total value given to top 3 providers	
BCP Council	52
Hillingdon	36
Luton	38
Cheshire East	39
Gloucestershire	33
Lewisham	40

- 4.3 Our analysis further supported the conclusion that supply value could be improved by the following:
- I. Through a search using Yell and the Traffic Commissioner we established that there are 28 other PSV operators and 109 taxi providers currently not used and available in the region which cannot engage because of the fixed framework in place. Many authorities have over 100 suppliers on a flexible Dynamic purchasing system (DPS) which allows suppliers to access at any point following an evaluation.
 - II. The cost per mile of contracted saloon routes (without PAs) was compared with the licensed tariff for an ad-hoc taxi journey in BCP Council over the average 15mile trip. The table below shows that the contract price is 292% (nearly 3 times) more expensive than the standard tariff. We would normally only expect to see a 50% premium to account for peak demand, waiting time, dedicated drivers and complexities of transporting children to school on a strict timetable. Whilst this does not indicate that contract priced can

match standard licensed tariff it does clearly indicate the value that providers must place on securing BCP Council contracted work.

BCP Saloon	Licensed Tariff £	Contract £
15mile trip	45.70	133.50

- III. We can also see how the cost per mile compares with some other authorities. This is not a precise science, it can be skewed by geography and it only includes the mileage for a sample of routes in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (about 30%), nevertheless it provides an indicator.

Council	Cost per mile (5-20miles)	
	Saloons	16 seats
Somerset	2.14	3.10
Lincs	3.74	4.50
Cumbria	3.60	4.20
Durham	3.56	4.50
Cornwall	3.38	5.60
Wirral	4.56	8.46
BCP Council	8.90	8.78

- IV. Indeed, a comparison of average prices per day and per annum (not including PA's) provides a similar picture with saloon cars 16% more expensive and 16 seat buses 31% more than a basket of other authorities.

	Benchmark (No PA)		BCP Council		Comparison
	Cost per annum	Cost per Day	Cost per annum	Cost per. Day	% More expensive
Saloon car	14,010	77.83	16,339	90.77	16%
16 seat bus	32,000	168.42	41,940	233.00	31%

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- V. We assessed the number of bids per tenders issued in 2023/24 and 2024/25 where there were 375 tenders issued and the result was that 28 tenders attracted 3 or less bids. Generally, this did not indicate a stand-out concern, however clearly it indicates that there is likely to be some benefit of increasing suppliers and raising competition by generating more bids.

Bid received	Number of tenders per bids received
0-3	28
4-6	195
7-9	161
10+	227
Total	611

- 4.4 There is clearly an opportunity to identify, ignite and educate the supply market to engage with the council. We identified a significant number of companies that were not currently used and whilst many may not be suitable these high numbers are not often available to local authority operations elsewhere and they represent a significant opportunity to enhance competition. This can be delivered by setting up a new DPS to open the market up to new suppliers, conducting evaluations for all suppliers and giving notice of up to three months on the current framework to allow this happen.
- 4.5 Increasing the number of providers will increase competition alongside the activities of encouraging more bids, developing suppliers, and increasing visibility of the work that is available. Our review included a small survey of suppliers (see Appendix F) currently not engaged which identified an appetite and willingness for suppliers to engage if supported by a better understanding of how to bid and the opportunities available.
- 4.6 Better contract value will also be driven by the application of a robust competitive procurement process. It is recommended that electronic reverse auctioning is utilised to evaluate bids for taxi/minibus contracts. This will provide all bidders with visibility of the best priced bid and thus enable them further chances to bid a better price. This practice has recently proven to drive much improved competitive value if managed carefully to ensure quality and viability of each contract and coaching is offered to suppliers to bid effectively.

- 4.7 Procurement software, 'Proactis', which has reverse auction functionality and is highly recommended from our experience of using it, is currently available, and in place within the council. Software has developed to be very effective in recent years and whilst some local authorities experimented with reverse auctions 5-10 years ago, with mixed success, many are returning to it with great success today.
- 4.8 The current framework is due to expire in Summer 2027 which given the potential to make significant improvements in value, is too far away to delay action.
- 4.9 A full re-tender using reverse auction is not recommended in one go for all contracts. Therefore, it is recommended to carry on a timely basis and reprocure in at least 3 tranches commencing in September 2026, January 2027, and April 2027. This will provide enough time to set up a DPS, encourage the supply market to engage, and to develop and retender routes.
- 4.10 Re-procurement in tranches is recommended to smooth the workload of building tenders and linking this work to any potential re-route opportunities as well as to provide the team with confidence in the process. Work should also be undertaken to understand the implications of the new Dynamic Market under the Procurement Act 2023 which will be transitioned to in 2025 and impact the transport operation on termination of the Framework contract in 2027. Our informed view is that the new legislation provides for open frameworks (effectively a DPS) where competitive procurement can then be deployed (effectively reverse auction) with some workarounds for low threshold contract values.
- 4.11 By igniting the supply base and improving competition we believe that there will be a conservative opportunity to improve the c£12.9 million of taxi expenditure budgeted for 2025/6 by at least 7.5% delivering a saving of £967,500 per year by 2028/29.
- 4.12 Appendix G shows recent achievements in councils with similar circumstances to BCP Council. Whilst no two councils are the same, and comparison is challenging, it can clearly be seen where similar circumstances such as an opportunity to develop the supply market, and to work with them to develop understanding of reverse auction, then a significant opportunity has resulted in all cases.
- 4.13 Timing of re-procurement events, and care to enable the effective management of workload peaks associated with a complex re-procurement process will be critical and it is recommended to commence market engagement at latest by April 2026 to increase the number of suitable contractors and start to develop their expertise in reverse auction protocols.

Routing

- 4.14 An overhaul of routing is carried out annually in many effective operations as new passengers allocated to existing routes quickly erode effectiveness. Whilst the transport teams work hard to optimize routes, and new passengers are carefully examined for best route each year there

is little evidence of fundamental overhaul across all passengers using routing software capability. The team does not currently use the available MTC software as it has only recently been commissioned. But it has good routing tool capability and it is recommended that this takes place.

- 4.15 A fundamental route overhaul requires resource to carry out the task and manage impacted users and parental expectations. There is a common reluctance to fundamentally change the arrangements of passengers and suppliers when parent expectation is high. Interestingly some Headteachers fed back that they wished to see a routing improvement and would like to see less smaller vehicles arriving at their premises. Whilst anecdotal, this feedback is positive in that Headteachers might be supportive of such an initiative and support work with parental expectations.
- 4.16 We used Q Routes (a similar product to MTC) to re-route all routes going into the three schools with the most routes (Linwood, Winchelsea, and Victoria Education Centre) a total of 85 routes.
- 4.17 The analysis ensured PA space was considered and ensured that journey times were not extended beyond current maximum times. We retained all single passenger routes as is, in the absence of information to suggest that these passengers could not travel in a group.
- 4.18 The analysis indicated an opportunity to implement a 24% reduction in routes from 85 routes down to 64, with similar reductions in time, route mileages. The table below summarises the results from the Q Route analysis:

	Total Route Miles*	Total Route Time*	Passengers	Routes
Original	941	64:33	339	85
Average per route	11	00:45	3.99	
Solution	391	35:29	339	64
Average per route	7	00:39	5.78	
Reduction %	58%	45%		24%

*excluding PA pick up and drop off

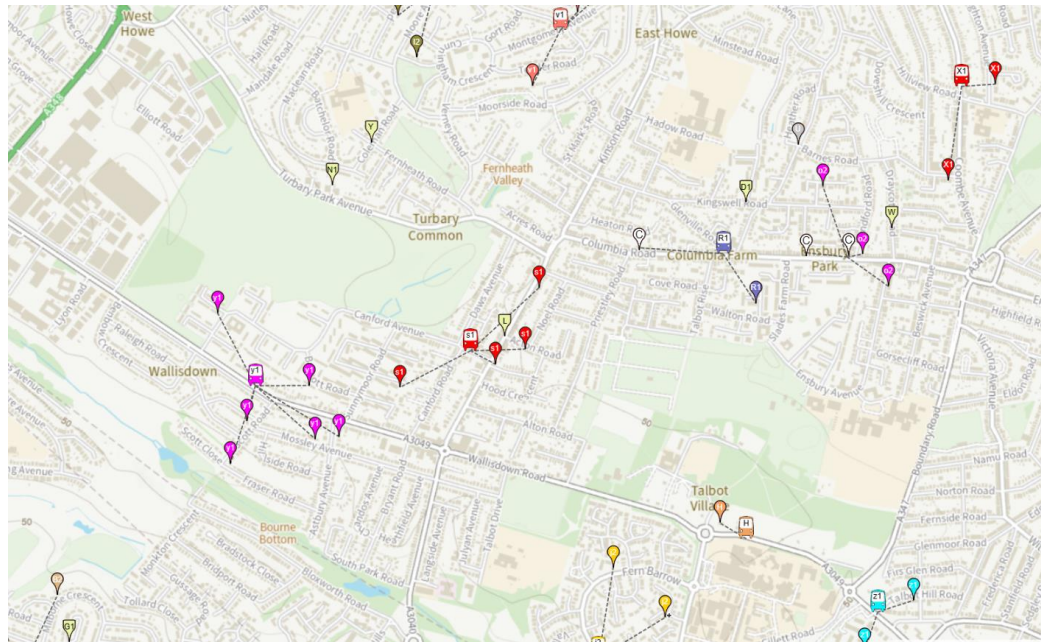
- 4.19 We have considered this opportunity very conservatively and can confidently outline an opportunity of at least 7.5% route reduction of all routes going into destinations with 5 or more routes. This represents 75% of all routes (468 out of 631) where rationalization will be effective. The reason for reducing the Q route estimation of 36% reduction down to 7.5% is because we were unable to source data including which passengers travel by wheelchair

which could reduce minibus capacity and we also cannot be sure of the market capacity to provide significantly more 16 seat minibuses although we are certain that engaging the market will generate improvement.

- 4.20 Savings from using software and conducting a route overhaul will be at least £776,250 per annum and a further saving from reduction of PAs of £121,500 per annum. This equates to a reduction of c70 routes which will enhance competition by providing more available supply, and result in less congestion at schools and a reduction in carbon emissions of c390 tonnes per year. This could offer a safe, efficient, and social enriching experience for children, particularly when tailored to their individual needs. Where appropriate, these shared journeys can help foster peer interaction, build routine, and reduce overall travel time and costs. Crucially, any group travel must be carefully planned to ensure safeguarding standards are met, with pick-up points and timings designed to suit the specific requirements of each child – balancing convenience with comfort, safety, and developmental goals.

Group/ safe pick-up

- 4.21 Route reduction should be further supported by the introduction of group/safe pick-up where passengers are accompanied as necessary by parents for short walks of less than quarter of a mile to pick-up points in appropriate locations.
- 4.22 Grouped pick up will reduce total route distance and travel time. Some authorities have shown how route savings of around 30% can be made and this initiative also supports the independence and transition to adulthood of passengers.
- 4.23 In BCP Council we conducted analysis using passengers at each of the top 3 schools and considered the results after a general routing solution is first implemented. The impact indicated there are further benefits of saving 12% of route miles and 28% of route time by applying a group/ safe pick-up solution with a further reduction of 2 routes from the 54 required.
- 4.24 We have not targeted this saving as it is based on every passenger being able to walk 0.25 miles to a safe stop and this clearly will not always be possible. But the concept provides food for thought and an option which is recommended to pursue and include in the transport offer and policy.
- 4.25 The map below shows how passengers (marked by coloured dots), could make their way to a safe pick-up point by a short walk.



- 4.26 This could represent a significant saving opportunity of up to 20% for some school route patterns. Whilst this does not require a policy change, the initiative will be supported by clearly articulating it as a travel option in policy and be considered as part of a re-assessment programme.

Supply of passenger assistants

- 4.27 Passenger assistants are employed directly and applied to contractor routes where necessary. There appears to be a robust risk assessment of when PAs are required and indeed BCP Council performs exceptionally well against other authorities with only 31% of routes being applied a PA versus a benchmark expectation of 62%. This may be slightly lower than planned given the challenges of finding PAs.
- 4.28 The provision of PAs presents BCP Council some significant challenges in recruitment, retention, and training. There are 196 routes requiring a PA and there are currently 133 directly employed with c30 on a casual contract. Attrition is around 10% per annum, as is sickness.
- 4.29 Many local authorities source PAs through their contracted taxi provision and this can work more effectively if compliance and training is managed. Not only would this approach mitigate the recruitment burden and eradicate the direct costs of sickness and attrition, but the costs will undoubtedly be less. The rate per hour (after all costs) that BCP Council currently pays is c£15 per hour against an expected contractor rate of £13 per hour.
- 4.30 With there being 196 PAs needed at an average of 15 hours per week each, then a saving of £2 per hour would amount to £223,440 over a 38week year.

- 4.31 A move to a mixed model including contracted provision can be managed slowly to ensure management of risk and sustainability including that compliance and training is conducted and that BCP Council job loss costs are mitigated. To this end, 83% of those currently employed have less than 2years service and could transfer to contracted provision.
- 4.32 It is recommended that options for providing passenger assistants, including exploration of different models of PA supply through transport providers is carefully considered.
- 4.33 There is also strong evidence that sourcing PAs through contractors can reduce the travel time associated with picking and dropping PAs from their homes before and after the core route. Contractors tend to be more innovative in finding the most economical solution and in some cases arrange convenient pick-up points for PAs to reduce travel time and cost.
- 4.34 PA checks and training are critical and there was some anecdotal feedback through the review, from headteacher interviews and other stakeholders that these were not delivered robustly.
- 4.35 Mandatory checks must include:
- I. Enhanced DBS Check (with barred list check): Required for working with children. Must be current and regularly reviewed (often every 3 years or via the DBS Update Service).
 - II. Right to Work and Identity Checks:
To ensure legal employment and verify identity.
 - III. References:
At least two, ideally one from a previous employer in a relevant role.
 - IV. Medical Fitness Declaration:
Particularly where the role involves physical activity such as assisting wheelchair users.
- 4.36 Core training requirements which should be delivered internally for employed staff and/or by external providers (and detailed in contracts) for external staff include:
- I. Safeguarding Children Training:
Typically, Level 1 or 2. Covers recognising signs of abuse and procedures for reporting concerns.
 - II. SEND Awareness Training:
Understanding various needs such as autism, ADHD, and physical disabilities, and how to support children appropriately.

- III. Manual Handling and Personal Safety:
Especially where assisting with mobility equipment like wheelchairs or dealing with challenging behaviour.
- IV. Emergency Procedures and First Aid:
Basic first aid or emergency awareness training – not always a full certificate unless required by the contract.
- V. Conflict Resolution and De-escalation:
Techniques for managing challenging behaviour calmly and safely.

5.0 ASSESSMENT & POLICY

Assessment overview

- 5.1 Eligibility assessment for SEND passengers is carried out by the School Admissions and Transport Team. There are many observations representing good practice and a robust assessment regime including:
- I. Parents are signposted to complete a comprehensive on-line application form and the School Admissions and Transport Team have access to all key information in the EHCP. Current decision making is robust and generally aligned to policy unless over-ridden by SEND or occasionally services adapted by transport team.
 - II. Outcomes and reasons for decisions are well tracked and recorded.
 - III. There were about 150 stage one appeals in 2024 which is a high number but against high parental expectation this reflects a robust assessment process. Only 12 were heard at second stage and only 4 of these upheld.
 - IV. Only 33% of children with an EHCP receive transport which is lower than the expected 38% benchmark. This in part may reflect a robust assessment process.
 - V. The Education Health Care Coordinators (EHCCoS), SEND teams and placement panels are getting better at making placement decisions which consider transport and transport costs which is good practice.
 - VI. There appears to be a robust practice of not granting transport when parents do not choose the nearest school. This is the case even when the school may have been a mainstream school for SEND provision.
- 5.2 However, some general observations were made, some of which are outside of the control of the School Admissions and Transport Team:
- I. There are many discretionary decisions made by the SEND team, sometimes under pressure from schools to provide transport when BCP Council is not compelled to by statutory obligation or policy. This includes special circumstances and part-time timetables where schools seek special arrangements and which cost significantly more to design transport solutions. There needs to be better understanding of the costs of these decisions and control of them centrally. This will be provided by better Governance. A clear stance should be agreed and protocols for schools to potentially release funding where their needs are greater than statutory obligations. An SLA should be developed between- It seems being flexible and customer focussed over past years have created an expectation from schools. However, decisions outside of the agreement should be

considered by Transport Board and ultimately Children's Services, the home to school transport budget holder.

- II. There appears to be many short 'home to school' walking distance children transported who may be ambulant and able to walk accompanied as necessary. There are 500 children under statutory safe walking distance which is about 33% of total passengers which is unusual as we would expect to see around 20%. More specifically there are 193 children under 2 miles and 40 under 1 miles which should be re-assessed periodically and potentially considered as part of a travel training regime. The School Admissions and Transport Team expressed a wish for improved software to determine safe walking distances and this is available through most transport software packages including MTC and Q Routes.
- III. There is no periodic re-assessment regime, this is important as children develop and situations and abilities change. Although re-application is expected at transition. Re-assessment should be set at a frequency bespoke for each child and there will be a significant benefit in resourcing and carrying out a re-assessment overhaul to catch up for the years that it has not been place.
- IV. There is no travel training offer currently in place to support independence, though the benefits are well understood and work has taken place with the parent/carers forum to coproduce a travel training offer that helps to prepare young people for adulthood.
- V. There is a general sufficiency challenge where placements have been difficult to identify resulting in longer travel distances and more individual (single person) journeys. The council is implementing its SEND sufficiency strategy, and this strategy is considering transport. A programme of expansion is underway which is delivering an annual increase to the availability of local places for local children. The routing and re-procurement overhaul process should consider these potential changes.
- VI. The challenge of sufficiency and identifying suitable available placements over recent years has in part resulted in many children 'criss-crossing' each other across the boroughs with children attending placements further from their home than the nearest ones if they had places available at the time of commencement. If we look at just two schools, Linwood, and Winchelsea then in total 73 passengers (25%) live closer to the school that they do not attend.

	Passengers attending	Live nearer other school
Linwood	183	51
Winchelsea	114	22

This needs to be considered as part of the sufficiency strategy and whether as part of the EHCP annual review process, there are opportunities to support children and young

people in transitioning to educational placements closer to home where appropriate. Careful consideration at key transition points may offer a chance to thoughtfully consider whether a local setting could better meet a child's evolving needs. Reducing travel time not only brings practical benefits, such as less time spent commuting and more time for learning and rest but also supports wellbeing and independence.

Whilst it will take some time it is recognised that any changes must be carefully planned and sensitively managed. With clear communication and collaborative planning, aiming to ensure that transitions are smooth, respectful of each child's journey, and ultimately beneficial for both families and learners.

As a comparison, and to provide confidence from elsewhere, our team supported Dundee Council to re-locate 40% of their ASN base to local nearest suitable settings reducing students with transport from 477 to 310 and the number of routes by half and overall saving £855,000 per annum.

Any work to deliver this must be driven by the SEND sufficiency strategy, working closely with the SEND Service, and supported by cross council appetite, therefore we have made no estimations of benefits in this review.

Re-assessment

- 5.3. BCP Council does not have a robust, periodic reassessment process of those passengers receiving transport. Children develop and needs change, often children receiving transport aged 11 do not require it by age 14.
- 5.4 The main reasons for not having a robust re-assessment protocol include,
- I. The council does not have the resources to conduct this process in depth and on a periodic basis.
 - II. The EHCCoS in the SEND Service typically have 300 children in their case load and cannot know the individual needs of each child in respect of transport.
 - III. Transport is not a subject discussed in the annual review of a child's EHCP.
 - IV. The lack of knowledge of each child results in the parent and school view being taken and this is rarely likely to result in door-to-door transport being taken away.
 - V. Independence of the child which can be supported in the right circumstances by the removal of door-to-door transport is not a central theme of focus for parents or schools.

- 5.5 Given that robust reviews have not taken place for the lifetime of most current passengers (aside from at transition) then there is likely to be a significant opportunity to review all current passengers to ensure that they are in receipt of the most appropriate form of transport, whether they still need a PA, need to travel alone etc. Reassessment will be particularly useful in the context of considering other forms of travel such as PTB, group pick-up or whether the child would benefit from travel training to access public transport.
- 5.6 We recommend that resources with transport knowledge and knowledge of the child gathered from EHCP and feedback from schools and PA, are applied to carry out transport re-assessments as an initial exercise and then periodic re-assessment dates set as part of an on-going re-assessment regime. We often find that this is best conducted separately from EHCP review, however relevant information from an EHCP review where the subject of transport has been discussed is made available.
- 5.7 Rather than current assessment, the greater challenge for the council are the decisions that have been made in the past 7 years, where arguably a less stringent test has been applied to determine those that need transport.
- 5.8 In addition to not having a re-assessment regime there are gaps in terms of:
- I. There is a parental expectation of transport until transition and of door-to-door transport with reduced opportunities for independence.
 - II. No travel training is offered which limits opportunities for learning key life skills such as route planning, time management and navigating in public spaces.
- 5.9 It is recommended that capacity and expertise be provided in the short term, potentially by an external partner to carry out a robust re-assessment exercise outside of the current process and be driven by information gathered from schools, parents, and PAs on individual passenger transport needs. This will provide traction to catch up many years of limited re-assessment. In parallel, internal resources can be developed to carry out the process on a routine basis and for all passengers to have an identified next re-assessment date based on their individual circumstances which will support the management of parental expectation that transport is not granted for school life.
- 5.10 Whilst clearly there will always be a requirement for door-to-door transport for many passengers with complex needs; there will be those that are not ambulant irrespective of distance; and there are bespoke circumstances in BCP Council such as a propensity for short distances which may skew comparisons with other authorities, the indications are nevertheless strong that there are likely to be many children who may not require transport, and could walk, accompanied as necessary.
- 5.11 We expect that re-assessment supported by travel training would identify at least 2% (30 SEND passengers) in each of the next 3 years and a sensible assumption would be the

opportunity to at least halve the average annual transport cost of £9,800 for those coming off group transport onto alternative means such as bus passes/ walking, recognising that not all reductions in passengers will result in a saving.

- 5.12 A re-assessment process should prioritise single person route passengers and those passengers who are travelling short distances.

Single person Journeys

- 5.13 BCP Council has 293 single person routes which represents 47% of all routes having one passenger. This is significantly more than that seen in many other authorities. (NB that this equates to 20% of all passengers being transported singularly). Single routes are a cost driver given that the average cost of is £16,150 per annum. Whilst there are likely some bespoke reasons for their high number such as the sufficiency challenge and more children going to further away placements, there are 60 destinations which have a single passenger attending. However, there is also evidence of high numbers of single person journeys going to the bigger schools too such as Winchelsea, Linwood, and Victoria Centre.
- 5.14 It is recommended that single person routes are re-assessed and brought nearer to the benchmark expectation but recognizing BCP Council's challenge of 60 single person destinations. By conservatively moving around 20% (60 single person routes) over the next 3 years to group routes then this would result in around 40% of all routes being single person, still more than expectation but reflecting BCP Council challenges. By doing this there is an opportunity to save the difference between a single person route £16,150 and the average annual cost of a group route £9,810 for each one of them.

Moving away from door-to-door transport – shifting the travel offer

- 5.15 BCP Council has an under-developed process of changing parent/user expectation away from door-to-door transport to alternative and more independent ways of travel. Whilst the home to school policy contains many of the key aspects of a good policy it would benefit from being re-written to better set out all the travel options and outline parental obligations in getting their child to school. An exercise of enhanced communication and proactive targeting of opportunities must then take place to further develop the benefits of alternatives such as personal transport budgets (PTBs)
- 5.16 Currently, PTBs are occasionally offered but are not promoted and targeted in a strategic manner. BCP Council performance is poor against other authorities that have focussed on this area. The initiative is generally in its infancy across the country and many authorities have big plans. There is significant potential to identify more opportunities in BCP Council. It should be noted that BCP Council, like most authorities, make many FWT (fuel wear and tear) payments at a basic level of 45ppm. These are often not attractive to the more parents of the more expensive single person journeys. In promoting PTBs care must be

taken to mitigate the risk of those with a FWT payments asking for more. This can be done with careful, individual targeting and payments made based on individual circumstances.

Local authority	PTB % SEN passengers
BCP Council	3
Hounslow	9
Bexley	22
Gloucestershire	12
Enfield	12
Luton	14
Lincs	10

- 5.17 The PTB offer will support resolving the issue of the high number of single person journeys.
- 5.18 PTBs provide flexibility to parents to make their own arrangements and represent an opportunity for a council to reduce its cost burden and management time for day-to-day arrangements, in many cases travel arrangements can typically be made for significantly reduced cost.
- 5.19 In most local authorities PTBs are typically offered to SEND passengers, where appropriate, at the council's discretion, as they largely represent those in receipt of special door to door transport arrangements which are costly.
- 5.20 From our experience the likely reasons for not fully developing the opportunity of PTBs include,
- I. The amounts offered are not enough to be appealing and are typically based on HMRC mileage allowances of 45ppm. This is the case with the BCP Council offer for fuel wear and tear.
 - II. There is little resource and focus applied strategically to generating interest, identifying, influencing, and negotiating with likely candidates. Blanket offers do not tend to work.
 - III. Parents can be concerned about the impact on their tax or benefits and do not find it easy to give up the perceived entitlement to a door-to-door transport service.

- 5.21 It is recommended that PTB opportunities are pursued with clear drive and with resource applied. Not least because the potential for savings on some route costs will be significant.
- 5.22 From our experience, where the following factors are implemented, then there will be significant benefits,
- I. Encourage children and young people and their families to explore more independent travel options and the associated benefits this brings.
 - II. Dedicated roles/ resources for at least a 3year period to evaluate the current cohort of passengers.
 - III. Target offers to single person journeys as a priority and then move strategically onto routes with vehicles with valuable spaces which can be filled.
- 5.23 If we examine the number of PTBs currently offered and the number of single person journeys in place in the table below, the scale of the opportunity becomes evident when we consider that the average cost of a single person journey is £16,500 per annum.

	Overall passengers	Single passengers	Number PTB's	% of total	Average annual cost PTB £
SEN	1,334	293	36	3%	5,271

- 5.24 A conservative target is at least 15 of the remaining single person journeys can be converted to PTBs per year for the next 3 years which would result in a total saving of £427,087 per annum by 2028/9 if the difference between the average cost of a single journey and the average cost of a PTB is applied per passenger. Coincidentally in the period since September 2024 in Cheshire East Council, 38 new PTBs have been agreed for single passengers with an average cost of £3,168 p.a. The average annual cost of a 4-seat taxi is £17,663 which equates to an average annual saving of £14,495 per PTB.
- 5.25 Common concerns include ensuring that the scheme is equitable across parents. This is best achieved by payments made in bands according to circumstances, however, to be most effective the scheme must consider that every circumstance is different dependent on factors such as other children in the household, vehicles at the parent's disposal, distance, needs of the child, time taken etc. and therefore ultimately the council will be best able to negotiate a mutually acceptable payment which represents the costs incurred by parents.
- 5.26 It is recommended that clear arrangements are agreed with parents for payment. These will normally be based on the number of times children are taken to school and not be linked to

investments and other commitments made such as investments in vehicles. As a specific example there would therefore be no liability for payment when schools are closed.

Post 16 travel

- 5.27 Providing home to school travel assistance for post 16 students is not a statutory obligation for UK local authorities (for either mainstream or SEND pupils) although there is an expectation of 'reasonable provision' and an obligation to publish an annual policy statement in respect of post 16 travel support. Whereas for 19-25 students there is a legal duty under section 508F of the Education Act 1996 for local authorities to provide free transport with SEND to enable attendance at their education course.
- 5.28 In respect of mainstream students, this has led many councils, including BCP Council, to withdraw any form of travel support for post 16 altogether. Others have adopted a compromise stance where they organise bus transport where necessary, but make an annual charge, based either on the actual cost of the transport commissioned, or a significant parental contribution towards that cost. The charging is normally means tested to some degree to ensure that students from low-income families continue to be able to access further education. This means that (dependent on the charging policy) post 16 mainstream transport is relatively easy to adjust to reduce the financial burden on councils and even to make cost neutral.
- 5.29 For students with additional needs, most authorities continue to provide travel assistance in some form, based either on a personal travel budget (PTB), independent travel training (ITT), a bus pass or traditional door to door transport.
- 5.30 The proportion of students with additional needs who can effectively be travel trained is naturally limited (normally 10-15% of the SEND cohort is capable of independent travel) and hence the proportion of SEND students that can be supported via this (generally the cheapest option) is limited. Therefore, the cost implications of the Post 16 Policy and the design of travel support arrangements has a much greater potential cost impact for councils and can represent a significant area of expenditure.
- 5.31 There are currently 168 16-18 aged students receiving transport and costing the council c£1.3million per annum. Those that can afford to pay are charged £525 per year, but even assuming 100% recovery then this only equates to £88,000 per annum. Interestingly, £500,000 is spent on single person journeys of which there are 42.
- 5.32 The policy as a minimum should be amended to set out a clear hierarchy of travel options, starting with independent travel without any assistance and setting out subsequent travel support options in the order of cost effectiveness for the Council (travel training, public transport bus pass, PTB, shared transport etc.) and making it clear that door-to-door minibus or taxi transport will be considered only as a final option.

- 5.33 The above will provide the platform for effective planning of travel assistance provision in a way that is most cost effective for the Council.
- 5.34 BCP Council should also consider offering default PTBs to post 16 students in circumstances such as they need a single person journey. If this is implemented, then there is the potential to save the difference between the average post 16 single person journey cost and the average PTB cost which would amount to an annual saving of £285,348 in 2028/29 with a September 2027 implementation.

Charges/ contribution

- 5.35 The council has an opportunity to review charges for Post 16 SEND passengers to cover some of the cost of their journey. In a survey conducted by Thurrock Council, nearly a third of the 45 councils that charged, had set contributions over £700 per year but BCP Council has charged £525 for many years without review, and it is recommended that this be increased to £750 and be reviewed annually to consider inflation.
- 5.36 Assuming that 60% could afford to pay by means test this would contribute a further £22,000 per annum.

The role of Independent Travel Training

- 5.37 The long-term transport process for mainstream school children is that they attain increasing levels of travel independence as they develop and learn to either walk to school or catch public transport.
- 5.38 For children with additional needs this is not always possible. In many cases they receive door-to-door transport from the time they start school until the time they leave College such that they do not gain the necessary travel skills that other children do. However, whilst many children with SEND will never be able to travel independently, those that can, should be given the opportunity to do so.
- 5.39 Independent travel training (ITT) is one of the key aspects that supports children and young adults with mild learning and physical difficulties providing a range of non-tangible benefits to the individual concerned, that engender self-confidence, independence, and self-esteem, including:
- Builds confidence and self-belief.
 - Improves social mobility and enhances prospects for further education, employment, and training.
 - Promotes an understanding of the value of money.

- Improves focus on personal safety.
- Assists in getting a job when leaving school or college by supporting travel to and from the workplace.
- Enables independent socialising / visits to family and friends as required to be incorporated in EHCPs.
- Supports family integration by developing the capacity to undertake simple tasks such as visiting the local shops, hence reducing dependency on other family members.
- Provides an important 'enabler' in allowing adult clients with learning difficulties to find and retain work.

- 5.40 In many authorities, funding is provided for travel training. Methods of coaching include tuition in timetable reading and practical coaching in catching buses. The scheme can be extremely successful and in some authorities over 50 children every year are helped to travel independently.
- 5.41 Funding of Independent Travel Training is a long-term commitment which will produce better outcomes for children over the long term and will have benefits for their future mobility, although applying normal business case payback models may not work.
- 5.42 BCP Council does not currently offer travel training, but travel training will be a critical facilitator for any movement away from door-to-door transport, reassessment, consider those that are able to walk, move onto public transport or move from travelling alone to with a group.
- 5.43 Other authorities either conduct travel training with in-house resources or have an external partnership with a provider such as Mencap who provide travel training, or they have a mix of the two.
- 5.44 There are some key observations in respect of developing a travel training offer for BCP Council:
- I. Those capable of receiving travel training are not currently routinely identified in the application process, the EHCP or the assessment process. Travel training should be discussed and built into EHCP assessment, transport assessment and re-assessment reviews.
 - II. Schools being engaged and on board is critical to success. Schools play an important role in identifying capable children, facilitating training and motivating children and parents to wanting to achieve independence. Successful travel training generally needs strategic focus, energy, resource, and engagement of schools. Schools can build travel training into their curriculum and innovatively use teaching assistants to support this.

- III. Sometimes parents refuse to allow independent travel after training was in progress or completed. It is recommended that a stance is taken to support the importance of independence for the child when parents reject new arrangements, after successful training is taken.
- 5.45 With successful school engagement, improved identification of candidates, and an enhanced training resource model then, if results are compared to other local authorities, the council could successfully support at least 30 children per year to access other travel methods.
- 5.46 To support delivery of this the following initiatives are recommended to be implemented,
- I. Enhance the current resources to focus on developing relationships with schools, with the backing of strategic support including efforts to raise the profile of travel training across all stakeholders both within the council and across schools.
 - II. Investigate and develop a business plan for engaging a support model from a training partner with clear commitments of successful outputs for fees.
 - III. It is recommended that a training support partnership model is engaged because this can be flexed up and down depending on demand and number of identified children over time, which may dwindle after a few years of identification of easy candidates. It also allows internal resource to focus on school engagement and identification of children which a support model will be dependent on to deliver training to. It is common from our experience for local authorities to engage a delivery partner for a fixed price and then not focus on identification of candidates for them to train. This is a risk to avoid.
- 5.47 At this stage, until the number of children who may respond to travel training has been evaluated, we have not generated a specific financial benefit to travel training. Although its costs have been outlined and the assumption that travel training is a key facilitator for the savings associated with re-assessment.
- 5.48 An in-house model and external model of delivery will be similar in cost. A purely in-house model of engagement, identification and delivery would cost around £90,100 per year based on
- Lead trainer – Grade G - £34,200 salary + £10,300 oncosts
 - Assistant trainer- Grade E £30,300 salary and £9,200 oncosts
- Alternatively, a lead trainer and a £40,000 per year training contract would also be worth exploring.

- 5.49 The subject of which function delivers Travel Training is often debated but it can sit in Assessment or in Transport Delivery or work across both under the guidance of the travel board.

Changes to policy to underpin transformation.

- 5.50 The current home to school transport policy is very good in terms of being robust and in line with statutory guidelines. There are plans to improve many aspects in a progressive manner in the next review.
- 5.51 In headline terms for school age and post 16 passengers the following points will re-enforce the current policy
- I. The re-enforcement of terminology from transport to travel in a consistent way to support the move away from the expectation of door-to door transport and the range of independent travel options that maybe appropriate.
 - II. The promotion of other forms of more independent modes of travel such as PTBs, travel training and group pick-up. Currently references to these are passive but they should form part of a travel hierarchy of options with door-to door transport being the last resort.
 - III. Re-enforcement of parental responsibility to accompany their child as necessary to access travel arrangements.
 - IV. Reflect a travel training offer and the importance of this in driving child independence.
 - V. Promote the importance of independence of the child and that this will underpin decisions on the most appropriate travel solutions offered.
 - VI. Making clear that travel is not for the duration of the child's education but will be reassessed regularly and that travel must be re-applied for at various stages such as transition.
 - VII. In respect of post 16 it will be useful to set out statutory obligations before considering a default PTB and introduction of annual review of charging.
- 5.52 The policy and application form are important tools in managing expectation, setting out the range of options, and managing the impact of decisions that are made. Further, the application form is key to gathering relevant data on each passenger to be able to assess which option is most appropriate and can be improved to identify.
- I. Parental appetite for a PTB

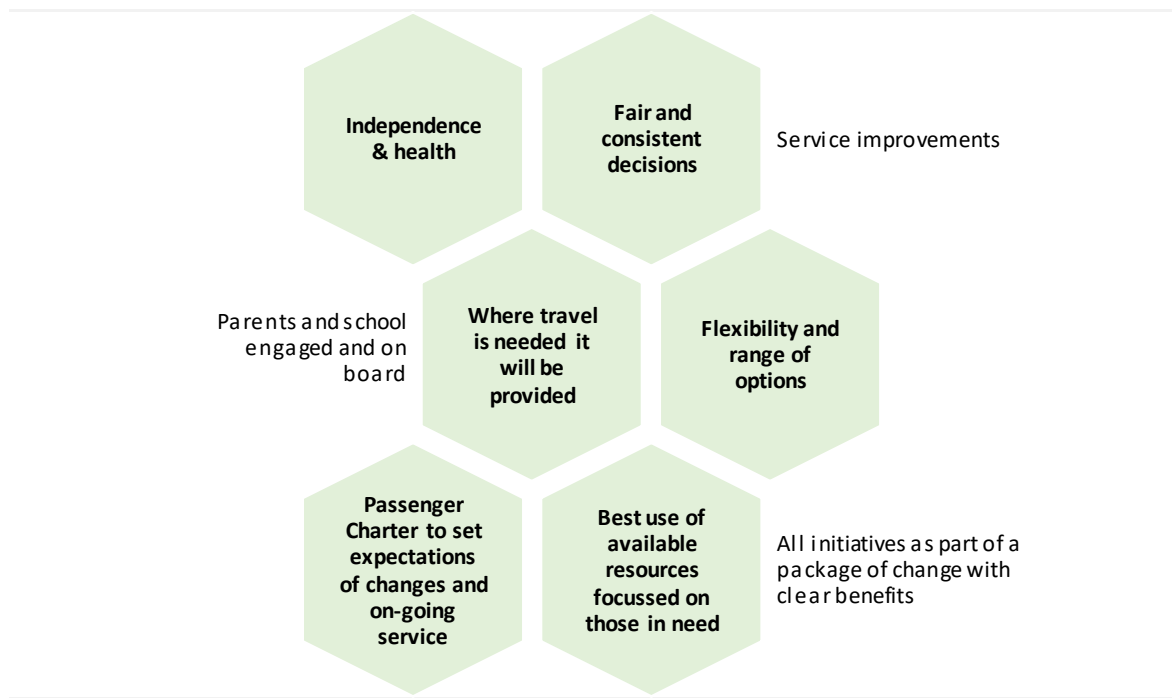
- II. Information to help assess capability for responding to travel training.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Overview

- 6.1 The opportunities outlined in this report are significant and will require a coordinated three-year program of transformation to deliver all proposed initiatives.
- 6.2 It is critical to secure the necessary expertise, resources, and leadership to drive these changes. Such investments should be considered on an 'invest-to-save' basis. Resources will not only offer expertise and leadership but also supplement resource-intensive activities such as:
- Engaging, influencing, coaching, and developing the supply market.
 - Developing tenders and managing complex re-procurement exercises in alignment with route overhauls.
 - Reassessing passengers to encourage the uptake of Personal Transport Budgets (PTB), travel training, and alternative travel options.
 - Facilitating the identification of more suitable, nearby placements and their impact on transport arrangements.
 - Building internal team capacity to sustain activities long-term, including recruitment for new roles, establishing a Travel Board, and implementing governance and performance frameworks.
 - Conducting appraisals, cost analyses, impact assessments, benefit evaluations, business cases, and consultations to support policy changes, including the potential removal of discretionary transport services.
 - Managing program delivery, including user expectations, supplier communications, and securing political and senior stakeholder approvals.
 - Leading governance, fostering close collaboration across teams, and ensuring robust progress measurement.
- 6.3 The transformation must be underpinned by effective communication and proactive management of expectations among users, parents, and schools. Sharing, collaborating and coproducing a clear rationale for the changes is essential, as adjustments in this complex service area may lead to feelings of uncertainty and could require additional reassurance and support.

- 6.4 Placing children and young people at the heart alongside Consistency and adherence to agreed policies is critical to delivering a clear message and managing expectations. At the same time, decision-making must remain firmly child-centred, ensuring that arrangements reflect the individual needs and circumstances of each child. This balance is particularly important in the appeals process, where fairness and transparency must be underpinned by a commitment to the child's best interests.
- 6.5. To support this process, it is crucial to convey positive messages to suppliers, parents, and headteachers. This can be achieved by focusing on the strategic benefits and key messages outlined in the plan.



- 6.6 It is recommended that a Passenger Charter between service and customer is developed to re-set expectation of the service in particular reference to when changes are made. Improved communications on strategic matters were reflected in Headteacher feedback. A passenger charter will,
- ✓ Set expectation of service and changes to expect with a clear focus on prompting independence.
 - ✓ Provide clear contact details and times users can make contact, publish complaints procedure, clarify website links and routes of communication.
 - ✓ Introduce a 'child passport' a profile which can be shared with suppliers and support the understanding of each child.

- ✓ Introduce 'meet and greet' aspiration and measurement in the lead up to a new arrangement – this will result in reduced anxiety.
 - ✓ Outline a protocol/notice period in respect of route changes and when change is likely to take place. The need to outline contract end dates and rationale for changes.
 - ✓ Expectations and timing on letters outlining new arrangements.
- 6.6 Every month of delay represents lost efficiency opportunity of around £237,000 so it is imperative now to take some critical next steps including,
- Agreeing the need to transform and accepting that improvements can be made.
 - Developing all initiatives as part of a holistic programme and strategy, baselining current costs, and putting in place measurement of progress in terms of demand and detailing key financial benefits over each of the next 3 years and beyond.
 - Considering and deciding on the options to provide/secure delivery/leadership resources.
 - Commencing in readiness for first tranche of re-procurement and re-routing by September 2026, in the knowledge that it will take around 6 months to prepare to deliver this effectively which means commencement of the programme latest April 2026.
- 6.7 A headline implementation plan covering the big-ticket items in the first 2 years is shown below. Whilst there are many small initiatives and recommendations it will be beneficial to focus on the delivery and decisions necessary to deliver these big-ticket items. Some important considerations include,
- 1- That many key activities will need to be completed in the lead up to September 2026 (first tranche of delivery) which include.
 - Implementing a new routing system and begin rerouting in time for tranches of re-procurement.
 - Engaging the supply market and supporting a new DPS which will also consider future dynamic market legislation.
 - Coaching/training/ educating suppliers in reverse auction.
 - Developing reverse auction system/ 'Proactis'
 - Developing team to run reverse auction.
 - Managing the process of onboarding new supplier/ building tenders/ running reverse auction and managing fall-out
 - Managing communications to collaborate and coproduce but also to manage expectations of parents/ schools/ suppliers through whole process.

- Cleansing the database so it can be used to accurately route, produce metrics of performance that are trusted and be used as data source for new tender development.

2- Other important activities in the first year include.

- Working with children and young people and their parents and carers to understand their lived experience and ensure changes are carefully planned and well managed.
- Setting up new Transport Governance, ensuring clear reporting, robust key decision making particularly in relation to control, tackling discretionary spend and strategic momentum/ transformation.
- Developing further options papers on discretionary transport
- Delivery momentum behind re-assessment, PTBs and travel training.

Resources and Expertise Required

6.8 The proposed recommendations and strategy outline a complex transformation process expected to take a minimum of three years to complete.

6.9 Successful implementation will require:

- **Strong leadership** to drive progress,
- **Clear governance** to ensure accountability,
- **Additional permanent team resources**, and
- **Temporary fixed-term support** to manage and execute key initiatives beyond daily operations.

6.10 Adequate resources and expertise are critical to ensuring the sustainable delivery of resource-intensive initiatives. These efforts aim to achieve annual efficiencies and cost reductions totalling at least £2 million by the third year.

6.11 Additional support will establish the foundational elements for successful service transformation, including:

- Building a performance-driven culture,
- Strengthening governance frameworks,
- Refining strategic priorities,
- Enhancing communication,
- Managing customer expectations, and
- Supporting team development.

Resources

- 6.12 While precise resource requirements are challenging to predict, experience suggests the following full-time equivalent (FTE) resource levels over the three-year transformation period:

Year Resources (FTE)

1	3–5
2	3–5
3	1–3

- 6.13 Resource demands will fluctuate, with peaks during procurement events and quieter periods thereafter.
- 6.14 The estimated internal investment to support this resource level is £1,200,000 over three years. The table below compares the challenges of maintaining a flexible, skilled internal resource base versus partnering with an external provider specializing in this niche field.

Key Resource Expertise

- 6.15 Critical expertise required for success includes:

- **Leadership:** Program and transformation leadership, with hands-on change management and planning capabilities.
- **Influence and communication:** Inspiring confidence among internal stakeholders and managing user expectations.
- **Operational experience:** Knowledge in areas such as transport tenders, e-auctions, and procurement processes.
- **Community engagement:** Engaging with parents and schools, leveraging local knowledge.
- **Cultural change:** Driving performance culture improvements and implementing robust performance frameworks.
- **Technical expertise:** Developing and optimizing transport databases and systems for end-users.
- **Policy development:** Assessing children's travel needs using care plans and crafting

Comparison of Delivery Models

Criteria	Support Partnership	In-House Team	Rationale
Cost (3 years)	£1.2m	£0.75m	External partnerships can provide better value due to expertise and efficiency.
Flexibility of resources	Yes	No	External teams can scale resources according to demand.
Fixed costs	Yes	No	Fixed costs minimize financial risk during peak demands.
Downsize implications	No	Yes	Internal teams require redeployment at project end.
Knowledge & expertise	Yes	Possible	External teams bring specialized knowledge critical to success.
Guarantee of delivery	Yes	No	External providers can be held contractually accountable for outcomes.
Leadership	Yes	Yes	Both models can provide effective leadership.
Independence & best practices	Yes	No	Independent external partners offer insights into industry standards.
Mobilization time	Immediate	Unknown	Timely mobilization is essential to meet the April 2026 deadline for commencement

Headline timeline

- 6.16 The headline timeline of key activity over the next 2 years is shown below with the red blocks indicating an initiative is in place or a phase is complete.
- 6.17. The table below outlines the pros and cons, including and outline cost comparison of resourcing the programme using internal resources or external partnership

[illegible]

Initiative	User risk	Spectrum v other local authorities	Comments and rationale for implementation
Igniting the market and re-procurement of supply		Most are now routinely overhauling re-procurement on a periodic basis.	Few issues likely, there may be frustration at change of driver or PA but this can be mitigated by good up-front communication of rationale and setting of expectations.
Re-routing overhaul		Many are now periodically overhauling routing plans and using software	Good communications of changes will mitigate user dissatisfaction. Sharing rationale and managing user expectation ahead of changes and planning a defined period of stability after overhaul is good practice.
Group pick-up		Some councils are examining this opportunity with great success for example Hillingdon and Bolton.	Good communication of the benefits to child independence and the rationale for this initiative which is to reduce journey times and better use resources. Also, key to re-set the obligations of parents in the transport process. Consultation with schools and lots of dialogue with parents sharing detailed plans needed.
Providing PA's in mixed model of internal and externally		Most councils have moved to contracted supply	Good communication and risk assessment for the change. There will be a need for clear compliance checks.
Focus on Personal Travel Budgets		Most local authorities are now focussing on PTB	PTBs are not enforced. However, they will not also be an option for all to choose. Therefore, it is key to ensure that PTB offers are at the discretion of the council.
Introducing travel training		Most local authorities have a travel training regime. Some local authorities make travel training the only offer for those that are assessed as candidates	Will most likely be viewed as positive.
Applying safe walking routes		Most local authorities have a robust regime of assessing and applying safe walking routes as per their policy. CEC made decision to remove transport to 75 children in Dec 2023.	This must be communicated in the context of applying consistent policy, supporting independence and best use of scarce resources so that the most in need can receive support.

Re-assessment of passengers		Most local authorities conduct periodic re-assessment of transport needs.	Passenger needs change and the independence journey is important to child development into adulthood. Re-assessment will be supported by Travel training and a range of travel alternatives.
Increasing charging contribution for post 16 and use PTB as default offer		Some local authorities have stopped post 16 provision save for exceptional circumstances, Leicestershire for example only offer PTBs. Many have increased charges to meet at least the bus pass rate and 45 councils in the Thurrock survey have exceeded £700 per year contribution.	BCP Council offers greater service than it is statutorily required to do for post 16 children. It still offers a full range of door-to-door transport whereas it can offer PTBs or alternatives. It has also not raised its passenger contribution for many years.

7.0 SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Headline strategy	
S1	Agree a strategy of key initiatives and embark on a 3year transformation programme to deliver recommendations in this report.
S2	Identify additional capacity and capability required to lead and support the high resource and expertise requirements of implementation.
S3	Implement proposed Governance structure including a Travel Board to ensure a simple, clear and 'joined up' strategy, accountability for performance
S4	Provide communications and engagement with schools, parents and users making clear the rationale for change, re-setting expectations and outlining the importance of the changes required. Introduce a passenger charter to support this.
S5	Support the transport team to recruit and develop additional permanent resource requirements
S6	Baseline current costs and demand and track progress through implementation
S7	Ensure robust growth forecasts in parallel to the savings of this programme being reflected in future years budgets
Specific efficiency and operational initiatives	
E1	Immediately embark on a comprehensive supply market engagement exercise to understand the market and identify, develop, coach, and support all suppliers to access a new DPS and bid effectively. Deliver careful communications programme to suppliers to aid understanding and rationale. Give notice on current arrangements and move to DPS.
E2	Develop and train team in use of 'Proactis' software and put into place a system of reverse auctioning and develop suppliers to be able to effectively use it.
E3	Re-procure all contracts using reverse auction scheduling the exercise in tranches from a commencement date of September 2026. In the lead up to this provide coaching and support to suppliers to bid effectively. Focus on communications to schools and users.
E4	Engage routing software. Develop performance metrics and reporting for Travel Board.
E5	Re-route, using newly procured software each school, prioritising large route schools. Schedule in parallel with re-procurement tranches.
E6	Assess full opportunity for group/safe pick up. Adapt policy to support expectation and gain agreements and conduct any necessary consultation to implement the initiative.

E7	Develop and implement programme of transition of PAs to mixed model of provision
E8	Consider system for Assessment to allow seamless database and communications from SEND through to transport delivery

Effective application of current policy and the offer

P1	Develop model and provision of resources to promote and deliver travel training across all schools and secure engagement and school resources. Develop the process of identification of those passengers who will respond to travel training through assessment and re-assessment processes
P2	Re-appraise all single passenger journeys for alternative solutions including group travel or PTBs. Directly approach and prioritise likely candidates
P3	Focus resource on PTBs, developing an effective and appealing offer, prioritising and targeting single person journeys and Post 16 students.
P4	Develop protocol and promote PTBs at council's discretion
P5	Develop Travel Training proposition and implement

Changing current policy

CP1	Update policy and re-enforce language to support shift away from door-to-door transport including PTB, Travel Training, Re-assessment, and parent obligations.
CP2	Consider charging review for all post 16 students
CP3	Make PTB the default post 16 offer when appropriate to do so.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

			Potential annual returns versus start point		
	Efficiencies	Rationale	26/27	27/28	28/29
1	Igniting the market and re-procurement of supply	Saving 7.5% from current spend level of 12.9million budget for 25/26. Implement in 3 tranches Sept 26, Jan 27, April 27	241,975	967,500	967,500
2	Re-routing overhaul	Re-route all routes going to schools with 5 or more routes and save 7.5%. That is 75% of all routes that can be impacted by 7.5%....or roughly 60 routes in line with re-procurement tranches. Impacting 10.35m	194,062	776,250	776,250
3	Group pick up points	Challenging to quantify without in depth analysis.....supports re-route benefits until this work is done. The example assumes all can be picked up and without individual assessment this is hard to quantify	0	0	0
4	Single person route reduction supported by reassessment	Reducing the current levels towards the norm of 37% (target conservatively 40%) = saving 20% of 293 single journeys (c60 jouneys) and saving difference between 16,150 average single journey cost and 9,810 average cost per passenger	63,400	253,600	380,400
5	PA model, move towards mixed model	Saving £2 per hour by moving PA to contractor supplied model. Commence with 30 PA's per year on basis of 15 hour average per week over 38 weeks. This saving could be significantly more if the reduction in route mileage is reflected in new prices from contractors.	17,100	68,400	102,600
6	Focus on Personal Travel Budgets supported by reassessment	Increase by 15 PTBs per year focussing on converting single person routes which cost 16,150 p.a. and replacing with PTB which is currently 5,271 average p.a.	40,796	244,777	411,960
TOTAL			557,333	2,310,527	2,638,710
	Application of current policy	Rationale	26/27	27/28	28/29
7	Re-assessment of passengers supported by travel training	Re-assess and travel train at least 2% of all passengers (30) each year onto other travel options which assumed as costing 50% of current average cost per passenger of 9,800 to account for those coming off group transport not saving and scholar bus pass £640 per annum.	18,375	147,000	220,500
8	Post 16 adapted offer to PTB where single person (default)	This option would save 42 passengers at 11,905 each and cost average PTB of £5,111 (Sept 27 implementation)	0	142,674	285,348
9	Re-assess post 16-18 charging	£530- £750 per year and inflation increase from then on. 168 passengers at £525 asuming 60% ca afford to pay. (Sept 27 implementation)	0	11,088	22,176
TOTAL			18,375	300,762	528,024

	Investment	Rationale	26/27	27/28	28/29
10	Partnership to lead and resource transformation	3 year partnership to provide all resources and leadership	-558,000	-372,000	-279,000
11	Travel Training resources	Addition of 1 GRADE G and 1 GRADE E and consumable budget or GRADE G and a c40 training contract	0	-90,000	-90,000
12	Travel Team Resources	Addition of 2 officers (Grade F) to transport team to focus on re-assessment, compliance, PTB	0	-35,000	-70,000
TOTAL			- 558,000	- 497,000	- 439,000

NET TOTAL

17,708 2,114,289 2,727,734

	Cost avoidance	Rationale	26/27	27/28	28/29
13	Cost avoidance relating to projected new SEND volume	Efficiencies each year as a % of total contracted spend (in the first section of this plan) are 4.3% in Y1, 17.9% in Y2 and 20% in Y3. These have been applied to additional growth expenditure projected of Y1 3,693,000, Y2 4,393,000 and Y3 4,996,000	158,799	786,347	999,200
TOTAL			176,507	2,900,636	3,726,934

Based on April 2026 commencement

APPENDIX A – Growth estimates

	EHCP's	Transported	% EHCP Transported	Cost	Cost per child p.a.	Cost with 3% inflation
2025/26	5,215	1,665	33%	16,334	9,810	16,334
2026/27	6,006	1,982	33%	19,443	9,810	20,027
2027/28	6,216	2,051	33%	20,123	9,810	20,727
2028/29	6,367	2,101	33%	20,612	9,810	21,230

Assumptions

- Agreed EHCP growth from the service.
- Consistent number of these transported at 33%
- Consistent cost per child as per current
- Inflation added at 3% per annum.

APPENDIX B – Headline capability gaps

Headline capability.... identifying gaps & opportunities



Organisation	
Clear accountabilities	
Joined up strategic approach to change	
Robust Governance	
Expertise in transport & admission teams	
Policy and offer	
Periodically updated policy	
Policy compliance/consistent decisions	
Robust eligibility assessment process	
Moving from D2D expectation to travel support	
Independence at core of travel offer	
Travel training offer	
Flexible PTB offer promoted and targeted	

Policy and offer continued	
Robust re-assessment process	
Supply and service operations	
Proactively developed supply	
Healthy framework using a DPS	
Competitive procurement – innovation	
Good value prices	
Effective routing supported by software	
Control of PA allocation	
Control of single person journeys	
Reliable systems and data	
Resource levels to deliver change	
Service levels to customer	

APPENDIX C – ITU Resource Comparison

Councils	SEND passengers	ITU Team FTE	Average passengers per head	Direct PA management	Assessment	Travel Training
A	582	10	58	x	x	yes
B	1598	15	107	x	x	x
C	511	6	85	x	x	yes
D	686	7	98	x	x	yes
E	770	9	86	x	x	yes
F	309	4	77	x	x	yes
G	1284	10	128	x	x	x
Average			91			
BCP current	1,400	10.5	133	yes	x	x
BCP suggested	1,400	13	107			

NB most councils also manage mainstream with these teams – as do BCP Council (c500 passengers)

PT manager	0.5
ITU manager	1
supervisor	2
coordinators	7
BCP Council	10.5

[illegible]

APPENDIX E – Suppliers identified and not used.

Supplier	Town	PostCode	Operator Type
"CWRC Taxis" Colehill & Wimborne	WIMBORNE	BH21 2AU	TAXI
1st Choice Private Hire	NEW MILTON	BH25 5NF	TAXI
A.L.BENNETTS TRANSPORT LTD	BOURNEMOUTH	BH3 7ND	PSV
A P Swanage Taxi's	SWANAGE	BH19	TAXI
A2B Taxis	POOLE	BH15 1LS	TAXI
AB Airport Runs	BOURNEMOUTH	BH9 1EB	TAXI
Abacus Cars & Radio Cabs	NEW MILTON	BH25 6HR	TAXI
Ace Taxis	BOURNEMOUTH	BH2 5PS	TAXI
Acorn Taxi	POOLE	BH16 6DT	TAXI
Airport Cars	BOURNEMOUTH	BH8 0BG	TAXI
AIRPORT TAXIS BOURNEMOUTH	BOURNEMOUTH	BH4 9BG	PSV
Airport Taxis Bournemouth	BOURNEMOUTH	BH4 9BY	TAXI
AM Taxis	SWANAGE	BH19 2JS	TAXI
AM Transfer	POOLE	BH14 9BQ	TAXI
AMBERLEY MINIBUSES LIMITED	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 8NF	PSV
Amerc Cars Ltd	BOURNEMOUTH	BH7 6SP	TAXI
Amey Executive Travel	FERNDOWN	BH22 8ST	TAXI
Andrew's Taxi	WIMBORNE	BH21 1TR	TAXI
Angel Cars	NEW MILTON	BH25 5DP	TAXI
Ariel Taxis	POOLE	BH14 9BY	TAXI
Ashley Cars	NEW MILTON	BH25 5YD	TAXI
ATH Dorset	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 6NX	TAXI
Atlas Cabs	WAREHAM	BH20 4EL	TAXI
BENNETTS MINI COACHES LIMITED	POOLE	BH16 6JG	PSV
BH20taxi	POOLE	BH16 6JY	TAXI
Billis Taxis	SWANAGE	BH19 1JU	TAXI
BOURNEMOUTH COLLEGIATE SCHOOL	BOURNEMOUTH	BH5 2DY	PSV
BRITANNIA PARKING GROUP LIMITED	POOLE	BH12 1AZ	PSV
Broadmead Cars & Taxis Ltd	WIMBORNE	BH21 2AY	TAXI
C M C Taxis	FERNDOWN	BH22 9QT	TAXI
C U Travel	WIMBORNE	BH21 2NL	TAXI
Call a Car	RINGWOOD	BH24 1AY	TAXI
Capital Cars	WAREHAM	BH20 5AJ	TAXI
Car Link Air	FERNDOWN	BH22 8EW	TAXI
Charlie Browns Buses	BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 4RS	PSV
Chau4You	VERWOOD	BH31 6PS	TAXI
Chris's Taxi Poole	BOURNEMOUTH	BH9 1LN	TAXI
Christchurch Cabs Ltd	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 6SE	TAXI
Coastal Cabs	WIMBORNE	BH21 7BG	TAXI
Coastal Private Hire	NEW MILTON	BH25 6NG	TAXI
COLTEN CARE LIMITED	POOLE	BH12 5BN	PSV
Compass Cars Ltd	POOLE	BH17 0GD	TAXI
Corfe Castle Taxis	WAREHAM	BH20 4BG	TAXI
County Taxis	WAREHAM	BH20 6NF	TAXI
Cove Cabsaxi	WAREHAM	BH20 5FD	TAXI
CPE Taxis	RINGWOOD	BH24 2NJ	TAXI
Crown Cars & Taxis	FERNDOWN	BH22 0DU	TAXI
DAISH'S COACHES LIMITED	BOURNEMOUTH	BH2 5HR	PSV
David Alexander Travel	FERNDOWN	BH22 8JA	TAXI
Devine Cars	SWANAGE	BH19 2NS	TAXI
Dial-a-Cab	POOLE	BH15 2BU	TAXI
Disabled Transport Services Ltd	BOURNEMOUTH	BH1	TAXI
DISCOVER DORSET LTD	BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 4LE	PSV
Dolphin Radio Taxis	BROADSTONE	BH18 8AZ	TAXI
Dorset Airport Taxi	BOURNEMOUTH	BH10 6HH	TAXI
Dorset Airport Taxis	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 2SH	TAXI
Dorset Road Runner	WAREHAM	BH20 7BA	TAXI
Durdle Door Cabs	WAREHAM	BH20	TAXI
Eagle Flyer	POOLE	BH13 7RD	TAXI
Easy Cabs Co	BOURNEMOUTH	BH8 8UU	TAXI
Eazycabs	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 3QP	TAXI
Elite EV Travel	POOLE	BH14 8PG	TAXI
Elite Private Hire & Chauffeur Serv	FERNDOWN	BH22 9QU	TAXI
Everest Taxis	POOLE	BH16 6JW	TAXI
Excel Taxis Wareham	WAREHAM	BH20 4BG	TAXI
First Class Private Hire	FERNDOWN	BH22	TAXI
First Class Transfers	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 4TX	TAXI
Forest Taxis of Ringwood	POOLE	BH12 1DB	TAXI
FREEDOM TRANSPORT	POOLE	BH15 4GJ	PSV
Galleon Taxis Ltd	NEW MILTON	BH25 6JS	TAXI
Garrison Cars	WAREHAM	BH20 6ER	TAXI
Goodoaks Homecare	POOLE	BH12 1DZ	TAXI
HEATHSIDE TRAVEL LTD	FERNDOWN	BH22 8XN	PSV
HIGHCLIFFE COACH HOLIDAYS	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 5ET	PSV

Hinton Cars Taxi Service	RINGWOOD	BH24 1DZ	TAXI
HOMEWARD BOUND TRAVEL LIMITED	WIMBORNE	BH21 1UU	PSV
Hughes International Ltd	POOLE	BH12 4BQ	TAXI
Imperial Cabs	POOLE	BH14 9HR	TAXI
Iroberts Cars	NEW MILTON	BH25 6BN	TAXI
ISLE OF PURBECK MINICOACHES	SWANAGE	BH19 2QR	PSV
J D S TRAVEL	POOLE	BH14 0RY	PSV
Jai's Taxi	POOLE	BH15 2LB	TAXI
James the chauffeur	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 7HN	TAXI
Jurassic Cabs Ltd	WAREHAM	BH20 4HH	TAXI
KBay Taxi	WAREHAM	BH20 5PE	TAXI
KINGFISHER EDUCATION GROUP LIMITED	BOURNEMOUTH	BH24 2SJ	PSV
Kings Kabs	WAREHAM	BH20 4HH	TAXI
LA Taxi	SWANAGE	BH19 2RX	TAXI
LAGUNA TRAVEL LIMITED	BOURNEMOUTH	BH2 6AZ	PSV
LAND AND WAVE LTD	SWANAGE	BH19 1EJ	PSV
LB Taxi & Private Hire	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 1JE	TAXI
Liberty Cars Poole	BOURNEMOUTH	BH14 9JX	TAXI
LINKRIDER COACHES	SWANAGE	BH19 3EB	PSV
LUCKETTS TRAVEL	BOURNEMOUTH	BH8 0BQ	PSV
Mar Cars Private Hire	BOURNEMOUTH	BH11 9QH	TAXI
Miah & Son Cars	RINGWOOD	BH24 2PD	TAXI
Mike's Taxis	WAREHAM	BH20 6AT	TAXI
MINIBUSING LTD	BOURNEMOUTH	BH10 4HZ	PSV
Mir Cab Taxi Service	BOURNEMOUTH	BH11 8LE	TAXI
Mobile Radio Cars	BOURNEMOUTH	BH9 1BB	TAXI
MOYLES COURT SCHOOL LIMITED	RINGWOOD	BH24 3NF	PSV
New Forest Taxis	NEW MILTON	BH25 7DT	TAXI
NEW FOREST TRAVEL	RINGWOOD	BH24 4HN	PSV
New Milton Cars	NEW MILTON	BH25 6NF	TAXI
New Milton private hire	NEW MILTON	BH25	TAXI
NORTH DORSET TRAVEL LTD	POOLE	BH16 6JW	PSV
P R C Streamline	BOURNEMOUTH	BH2 5RY	TAXI
P.H Taxi Services	POOLE	BH15 2BQ	TAXI
Paragon Travel	WIMBORNE	BH21 7QN	TAXI
PARAGON TRAVEL PHC LTD	WIMBORNE	BH21 3RD	PSV
PARAGON TRAVEL PRIVATE HIRE LTD	FERNDOWN	BH22 8XA	PSV
PARK SCHOOL (BOURNEMOUTH) LTD	BOURNEMOUTH	BH8 9BJ	PSV
Parkstone Cars	POOLE	BH14 9NY	TAXI
Phil's Cabs	WAREHAM	BH20 4HJ	TAXI
Poole Friendly Cabs	BOURNEMOUTH	BH2 6BT	TAXI
Priority Cars	BOURNEMOUTH	BH2 6LA	TAXI
Purbeck Cabs	POOLE	BH16 5PT	TAXI
Purbeck Taxi Centre & Private Hire	WAREHAM	BH20 4LT	TAXI
Radio Cabs	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 1QH	TAXI
READYBUS (HARROW) LIMITED	FERNDOWN	BH22 0BH	PSV
Red Express Taxis	RINGWOOD	BH24 1EL	TAXI
Richard's Taxis	BOURNEMOUTH	BH6 3AS	TAXI
Ride Out Cabs	WAREHAM	BH20 6DT	TAXI
Ringo Taxis	RINGWOOD	BH24 1UP	TAXI
Ringwood Taxis	RINGWOOD	BH24 1AB	TAXI
ROMEROUND	BOURNEMOUTH	BH11 9AX	PSV
ROUTE 24	BOURNEMOUTH	BH9 2NS	PSV
Rowland Cars	NEW MILTON	BH25 7PG	TAXI
SCHOOL TOURS	BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 4RR	PSV
Scotts Private Hire	WIMBORNE	BH21 4EP	TAXI
Smooth Cabs Ltd	POOLE	BH15 3QD	TAXI
South Coast Community Cars	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 5ET	TAXI
South Express Cabs	POOLE	BH12 1DH	TAXI
SOUTHBOURNE SCHOOL OF ENGLISH	BOURNEMOUTH	BH6 5AL	PSV
Star Radio Cars	BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 4BE	TAXI
Sunrise Taxis	FERNDOWN	BH22 8UY	TAXI
Sunset Cars	BOURNEMOUTH	BH11 9PN	TAXI
Swanage & Purbeck Taxi	SWANAGE	BH19 1RB	TAXI
Swanage Taxis	SWANAGE	BH19 1HB	TAXI
TALBOT HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL	BOURNEMOUTH	BH9 2LR	PSV
The Wool Taxi Company	WAREHAM	BH20 6EX	TAXI
TOMORROWS TRAVEL LIMITED	POOLE	BH16 6JL	PSV
Toms Car Service	FERNDOWN	BH22 0BP	TAXI
Travelrunners Ltd	VERWOOD	BH31 6YQ	TAXI
Turn Around	VERWOOD	BH31 6UP	TAXI
United Taxis Ltd	BOURNEMOUTH	BH8 8AS	TAXI
Upton & Lytchett Taxis	POOLE	BH16 5RU	TAXI
Wareham Forest Taxis	WAREHAM	BH20	TAXI
Wareham Taxi	WAREHAM	BH20 4LT	TAXI
Wimborne Executive Taxi	WIMBORNE	BH21 1AB	TAXI
Wimborne Taxi	WIMBORNE	BH21 1JG	TAXI
Wool & Durdle Door Taxis	WAREHAM	BH20	TAXI
X-Ways Cars Ltd	WAREHAM	BH20 4AD	TAXI
Zaza express	BOURNEMOUTH	BH1 1PE	PSV

APPENDIX F – Potential supplier survey**What do potential suppliers say?**

“They make it too difficult to get drivers licensed.”

“Too tricky to bid on.”

“No idea what is available and how to apply.”

“The council favours the same suppliers.”

“Have to jump through hoops to win work.”

“I would be interested but how do I find out more.”

“Not enough money, takes too much time out of the day”

APPENDIX G – Examples of re-procurement activity elsewhere

	Engagement	Annual Saving	Saving %	year
Cheshire East	2 year	3.5m	20%	2025
Hillingdon	7year	£1.8m	18%	2025
Lincolnshire	18 months	£4m	18%	2023
Cornwall	3 year	£4m	22%	2025
Gloucestershire	3 year	£2m	14%	2025
Southampton	2 year	3.5m	30%	2025

APPENDIX H – Detailed re-route solution.

	Total Route Miles (excluding PA pick up/drop)	Total Route Time (excluding PA)	PA Miles	PA Time	Passengers	PA's required	Routes	Route saving %	PA saving %
Original - 85 Rts	941	64:33	342	20:30	339	52	85		
Average per route	11	00:45	4	00:14	3.99				
Solution with 16seats with MTAs - 54 Rts	391	35:29	342	20:30	339	27	54	36%	40%
Average per route	7	00:39	4	00:14	5.78				
Solution with MTA's and Stops - 52 Rts	294	27:05	342	20:30	339	27	52	39%	40%
Average per route	7	00:41	4	00:14	6.52				

APPENDIX I – Headteacher summary feedback

Here is a summary of **positive** and **improvement points** from the school transport feedback provided by the headteachers and school leaders:

Positive Points:**1. Relationships and Communication (with some exceptions):**

- Some schools reported a good working relationship with the transport team, describing them as responsive and approachable.
- Telephone communication was generally reported as positive.
- Email communication was praised in some instances.

2. On-site Operations:

- All schools reported closed sites with staff available to assist during drop-offs and pick-ups.
- Pupil demeanour on arrival was generally described as positive.

3. Vehicle and Driver Standards:

- Vehicles were reported as clean and well-presented.
- Timekeeping is generally good, and consistency of drivers is appreciated where it occurs.

4. Site Engagement:

- At least one school reported recent site visits and scheduled operational meetings with the transport team.
-

Improvement areas:**1. Passenger Assistant (PA) Concerns:**

- Occasional issues with PA conduct and professionalism, including inappropriate language and refusal to transport certain pupils.
- Lack of formal training for PAs; schools have had to step in to provide support.
- Awareness of key policies (e.g. safeguarding, “no lifting”) is inconsistent among PAs.

2. Communication and Feedback Failures:

- Schools noted a lack of proactive engagement from the transport team in understanding pupil needs, particularly for pupils with SEND or behavioural challenges.
- Issues raised by parents are often not passed on to schools.
- Operational contact between the transport team and schools is infrequent or absent.

3. Transport Routing and Timings:

- Routing decisions are sometimes confusing or inefficient, leading to late arrivals at school sites.
- Double runs may contribute to early or delayed arrivals, with limited explanation provided to schools.
- Application processes for new transport arrangements are slow (over 6 weeks reported), with no clear policy or service level agreement (SLA) in place.

4. Safety and Compliance:

- Safety concerns raised, including children dropped on the wrong side of the road or left unsupervised at drop-off.
- Drivers reportedly making decisions for convenience rather than in line with school start times.
- No site audits or Licensing visits reported at most schools.
- No dedicated compliance officer in place, and lack of routine monitoring or checks.

5. Policy and Process Gaps:

- No visible training records for PAs.
 - No formal process for regular operational meetings or feedback between schools and the transport team.
 - Limited evidence of understanding around complex pupil needs and lack of tailored solutions.
-

Suggested Improvements:

- **Routing and Timing:** Reduce unnecessary early arrivals and optimise routes to prevent delays.
- **Enhance Communication:** Establish regular meetings and clearer feedback mechanisms between schools and the transport team.
- **Strengthen Compliance:** Conduct routine site audits and checks.
- **Improve Training:** Ensure all PAs and drivers receive appropriate training, especially on safeguarding and working with pupils with SEND.
- **Clarify Processes:** Develop and publish clear SLAs for application processing and issue resolution.

APPENDIX J – Recommended Compliance check regime

Check Area	Frequency	How
Licensing (Drivers/Vehicles)	Annually (minimum)	Licence check spreadsheet; manual records or supplier confirmation via operational information
PA Compliance (Schools)	Spot checks – 4 times/year (key schools)	Site visits, checklists, school feedback. Particularly useful to use feedback when a native PA is on a supplier route
Quality of Supply	6-monthly reviews (larger suppliers)	Performance matrix/Transport management system records - review of incidents, complaints, breaches etc. To be used in conjunction with supplier compliance meetings, frequencies of which are determined on risk level (volume of work and total contract values)
Breaches / Incident Log	As they occur	Logged in MTC system by supplier/internal/staff
Framework Onboarding	At contract award	DPS Quality Evaluation spreadsheet for scoring/compliance documentation
Fleet Safety & Operations	Ad hoc / as arranged	Operator Licence / Section 19 & Large Bus Permit reviews, maintenance checks

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CABINET



Report subject	Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-2026
Meeting date	26 November 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To present the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26. There is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. This report summarises the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26, with a copy of the Plan appended. The Youth Justice Plan needs to be approved by the full Council.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: The Cabinet recommend approval of the Youth Justice Plan 2025-2026 to the Full Council.
Reason for recommendations	Youth Justice Services are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which should be approved by the Local Authority for that Youth Justice Service. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is a partnership between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. Approval is therefore sought from both Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and from Dorset Council.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People, Education and Skills
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director, Children's Services
Report Authors	David Webb, Head of Service, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) requires Youth Offending Teams (now known as Youth Justice Services) to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan. The Youth Justice Board sets out detailed and prescriptive guidance about what must be included in the Plan. The draft Youth Justice Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is attached at Appendix One. A brief summary of the Youth Justice Plan is provided in this report.

Summary of the Youth Justice Plan 2025/26

2. The Youth Justice Plan provides information on the resourcing, structure, governance, partnership arrangements and performance of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service. The Plan also describes the national and local youth justice context for 2025/26 and sets out our priorities for this year.
3. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service was rated 'Good' in its most recent inspection report, which was published in January 2023. An action plan was produced, in response to the inspection recommendations. All actions have been completed. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service has again been inspected, in February 2025, as part of a national thematic inspection of work with children on 'Out of Court Disposals'. The national report will be published in the summer. The Youth Justice Plan includes some references to the findings and learning from this inspection.
4. The Youth Justice Board continues to publish data for three 'key performance indicators' for youth justice. National performance data is published as a combined figure for the two local authorities within the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service partnership.
5. The first indicator relates to the rate of young people entering the justice system for the first time. Overall local performance in this area, across both local authorities, has improved significantly in recent years. In the year before the pandemic, 2019/20, 104 BCP Council children entered the justice system. In the past year, 2024/25, 57 BCP Council children entered the justice system. Pages 11-16 of the Youth Justice Plan provide more data and analysis of our work to divert children from the justice system.
6. The other two national indicators relate to reducing reoffending and minimising the use of custodial sentences. The reoffending rate fluctuates, partly because of the current counting rules for this measure. Our local reoffending rate has for the most part remained close to the national rate. Local analysis, summarised on pages 17-19 of the Youth Justice Plan, shows some of the patterns underlying the reoffending data. The Youth Justice Plan sets out some of the actions that are being taken to address these issues.
7. Locally we have low rates of children being sentenced to custody, below the regional and national averages. Young people who are sentenced to custody have often experienced significant trauma in their earlier life, affecting their current behaviour. Analysis on pages 19-20 of the Youth Justice Plan shows some of the common characteristics of the children who have been sentenced to custody.
8. Although the numbers remanded or sentenced to custody are low, these outcomes usually reflect serious offences causing significant harm to victims. Reducing youth violence, and harm to victims, is a priority for the Youth Justice

Service and for other local strategic partnerships, such as the Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding Children's Partnership. In 2023 the government introduced the Serious Violence Duty, which requires specified local partners, including youth offending teams, to work together to share information and target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence. Local implementation of the Serious Violence Duty is coordinated by the Community Safety Partnership.

9. The Youth Justice Board promotes a good practice approach to youth justice work, known as 'Child First'. The Youth Justice Plan includes examples of how the principles of Child First practice underpin the work of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service.
10. It is recognised nationally that some groups of children are over-represented in the youth justice system. Locally, we have identified a particular concern about the over-representation of Children in Care. A multi-agency task and finish group is now working on two main themes: earlier identification of Children in Care who may be at risk of entering the justice system and improvements to the joint multi-agency work with Children in Care who have already entered the justice system. This activity is one of the service's priorities for 2025/26.
11. During the past year we have launched a two-year programme, known as 'Re-Engage', aimed at identifying the speech, language and communication needs of children in Key Stage 3 who are at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. The objective is to reduce school exclusions and to prevent future offending. Part of the rationale for this project was the recognition that almost all children who enter the justice system have unidentified communication needs. The Youth Justice Plan also includes data analysing the outcomes of the assessments completed by the YJS Speech and Language Therapists (see pages 43-45). The findings are significant, notably the evidence that 94% of children in the justice system are below the expected level for understanding spoken language. The YJS plans for the coming year include adaptation of our interactions with children to focus more on activities and less on talking-based interventions.
12. The DCYJS Partnership's strategic priorities for 2025/26 are:
 - Continuing to divert children from the formal justice system.
 - Reducing the over-representation of minority groups.
 - Improving education outcomes for children in the justice system.
 - Earlier identification of speech, language and communication needs for children at risk of school exclusion.
 - Increasing public awareness and confidence in work which children are doing with the Youth Justice Service to repair the harm from their offence.

Options Appraisal

13. Councillors are asked to endorse the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26 before it is considered by Cabinet. Cabinet will then decide whether to recommend approval of the Youth Justice Plan to the full Council.

Summary of financial implications

14. The Youth Justice Plan reports on the resourcing of the Youth Justice Service. Like all local authority services, the YJS is subject to significant resource pressures. Although there was an increase in the national Youth Justice Grant in 2024/25, taking it to £767,922, this did not restore it to the allocation of £790,000 in 2014/15. At the time of writing this report, in mid-May, the Youth Justice Grant allocation for 2025/26 has not yet been announced.
15. The Youth Justice Service faces budget pressures arising from the additional staffing costs of annual pay awards, with no increase in local authority contributions to the YJS budget since 2022/23. The Youth Justice Service achieved a balanced budget in 2024/25 through a combination of staffing reductions and additional fixed-term funding from the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office.

Summary of legal implications

16. Local authorities are legally required to form a youth offending team with the statutory partners named in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act also stipulates that youth offending partnerships must submit an annual youth justice plan setting out how youth justice services in their area will be provided and funded; and how the youth offending team will be composed and funded, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out. The Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25 meets these legal obligations.
17. The Youth Justice Board guidance states that Youth Justice Plans must be signed off by full council in accordance with 'Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.

Summary of human resources implications

18. No Human Resources implications have been identified. Local Authority YJS staff members are employees of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole council, including those team members who work in the Dorset Council area. The YJS also includes employees of the partner agencies who have been seconded to work in the team and who remain employed by the partner agency. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 contains statutory requirements for the staffing composition of youth offending services. The Youth Justice Plan shows how Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service meets these requirements.

Summary of sustainability impact

19. No adverse environmental impact has been identified. The Covid-19 pandemic led to changes in the working arrangements of the Youth Justice Service, with increased working from home and a consequent reduction in staff travel.

Summary of public health implications

20. Young people in contact with youth justice services are known to be more likely than other young people to have unmet or unidentified health needs. The Youth Justice Service includes seconded health workers who work directly with young people and who facilitate their engagement with community health services. The Youth Justice Plan includes an update on health provision for children in the justice system (see pages 42-45).

Summary of equality implications

21. The Youth Justice Plan does not relate to a new strategy, policy or function so an Equalities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken. Some information about equalities issues is included in the report. No adverse equalities impacts have been identified.
22. It is recognised nationally that young people with diverse heritage, and young people in the care of the local authority, are over-represented in the youth justice system and particularly in the youth custodial population. It is also recognised that young people known to the YJS may experience learning difficulties or disabilities, including in respect of speech, language and communication needs. Information from Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service records, summarised in the Youth Justice Plan, shows that some of these issues of over-representation also apply in our area. Actions have been identified in the Youth Justice Plan to address these issues.

Summary of risk assessment

23. The Youth Justice Plan sets out local priorities and actions to prevent and reduce offending by young people. These priorities and actions have been developed in response to identified risks and concerns. The recommendation for councillors to endorse the Youth Justice Plan is intended to support the Youth Justice Service to reduce the risks associated with youth offending. No specific risks have been identified as arising from this recommendation.

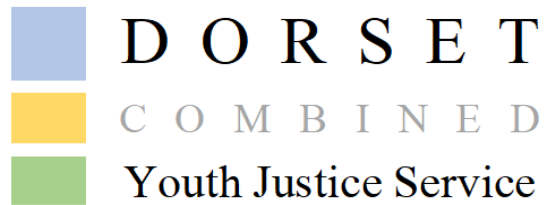
Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Youth Justice Plan 2025/26.

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**DORSET
POLICE**



Service	Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
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YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2025/26

Head of Service	David Webb
Chair of YJS Board	Paul Dempsey

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1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction, vision, strategy, and local context
3. Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements.
4. Update on the previous year.
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 - 4.2. Performance
 - 4.3. Risks and Issues
5. Plans for the year ahead.
 - 5.1. Child First practice
 - 5.2. Resources and Services
 - 5.3. YJS Partnership Board Development
 - 5.4. Workforce development
 - 5.5. Evidence-based practice and innovation and evaluation
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6. Local and National Priorities for 2025/26
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 - 6.7. Serious violence and exploitation
 - 6.8. Policing and Detention of children in police custody
 - 6.9. Transitions to Probation
 - 6.10. Remands
 - 6.11. Custodial Sentences and Resettlement
 - 6.12. Working with Families
 - 6.13. DCYJS Priorities and Plans for 2025/26
7. Sign off, submission and approval.
8. Appendix 1 – Service Structure Chart
9. Appendix 2 – Budget Costs and Contributions

Youth Justice Plan 2025/26

1. Executive Summary

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) works across the Dorset Council and BCP Council areas in a multi-agency partnership between the local authorities, Dorset Police, NHS Dorset and the Probation Service.

DCYJS helps children to make positive changes, keeping them safe, keeping other people safe, and repairing the harm caused to victims. When possible, we do this work outside the formal justice system, to avoid criminalising the child.

During the past year, DCYJS has made progress on our partnership priorities, including:

Keeping children out of the formal justice system: the number of children across Dorset and BCP who received a first caution or court order dropped from 108 in 2023/24 to 106 in 2024/25. The 2023/24 figure was a significant reduction on previous years.

Reducing over-representation of minority groups in the youth justice system: local children from ethnic minorities are not over-represented among those entering the justice system but may progress further through the system. Children in Care and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are over-represented locally and nationally. Action is being taken to reduce over-representation of these groups.

Reducing youth violence and extra-familial harm: there was a reduction in the number of children entering the justice system for violent offences in 2024/25, compared to the previous year. The number of children being arrested locally has reduced in the past three years.

Improve education outcomes for children in the justice system: DCYJS worked with Upton Country Park to provide a project supporting young people to become ready for college or employment.

DCYJS applies the 'Child First' principles that are promoted by the Youth Justice Board. A parent said that *'having YJS involved was at first a worry due to the offence, but it has turned out to be a godsend with all the support'*.

The DCYJS Partnership Strategic Priorities for 2025/26 are:

- Continuing to divert children from the formal justice system.
- Reducing over-representation of minority groups.
- Improving education outcomes.
- Earlier identification of speech, language and communication needs for children at risk of school exclusion.
- Increasing public awareness and confidence in work undertaken by children to repair the harm from their offence.

These priorities sit alongside ongoing commitments to improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system and to repair the harm caused to victims.

2. Introduction, vision, strategy, and local context

Foreword

This document is the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) for 2025/26. It sets out the key priorities and targets for the service for the next 12 months as required by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. This Plan adheres to the Youth Justice Board's document 'Youth Justice Plans: Guidance for Youth Justice Services'.

This Plan has been developed under the direction and oversight of the DCYJS Partnership Board, alongside consultation with DCYJS staff and feedback from DCYJS users.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan:

- summarises the DCYJS structure, governance and partnership arrangements.
- outlines the resources available to the DCYJS.
- reviews achievements and developments during 2024/25.
- identifies emerging issues and describes the partnership's priorities.
- sets out our priorities and actions for improving youth justice outcomes this year.

*Paul Dempsey, Executive Director People – Children, Dorset Council
Chair, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Partnership Board.*

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Statement of Purpose

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service works with children in the local youth justice system. Our purpose is to help those children to make positive changes, to keep them safe, to keep other people safe, and to repair the harm caused to victims.

We support the national Youth Justice Board Vision for a 'child first' youth justice system:

A youth justice system that sees children as children, treats them fairly and helps them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society. This will prevent offending and create safer communities with fewer victims.

Who We Are and What We Do

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) is a statutory partnership between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset Council, Dorset Police, The Probation Service (Dorset) and NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board.

We are a multi-disciplinary team which includes youth justice officers, restorative justice specialists, parenting workers, education and employment workers, police officers, a probation officer, nurses, speech and language therapists and a psychologist.

More information about the Youth Justice Service (YJS) partnership and the members of the YJS team is provided later in this document.

The team works with children who have committed criminal offences to help them make positive changes and to reduce the risks to them and to other people. We also work with parents and carers to help them support their children to make changes.

We contact all victims of crimes committed by the children we work with. We offer those victims the chance to take part in restorative justice processes so we can help to repair the harm they have experienced.

The organisations in the YJS partnership also work together to prevent children entering the youth justice system, to improve the quality of our local youth justice system and to ensure that young people who work with the YJS can access the specialist support they need for their care, health and education.

The combination of direct work with children, parents and victims and work to improve our local youth justice and children's services systems enables us to meet our strategic objectives to:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system.
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system.
- Improve the safety and well-being of children in the youth justice system.
- Reduce and repair the harm caused to victims and the community.
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

Local Context

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) is a partnership working across two local authorities: Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Dorset Council covers a large geographical, predominantly rural area with market towns and a larger urban area in Weymouth and Portland. Dorset Council has a population of about 385,000 (Dorset Council 'State of Population' 2023).

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together form a conurbation with a population of 404,500 (ONS 2023 mid-year estimates).

Other members of the DCYJS Partnership, such as Dorset Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, NHS Dorset CCG, Dorset HealthCare Trust and the Probation Service (Dorset) also work across both local authorities.

The following table provides comparative demographic information about young people in both local authorities at the start of 2025. Fuller versions of this data, including data source information can be found in Appendix 3:

COMPARATIVE DATA FOR 10–17 YEAR-OLDS

(10-17 yrs.)	BCP	DORSET
Number of Children	35,208	33,694
Male (%) Female (%) ¹	51 49	51 49
Pupils eligible for FSM (%)	20.5	22
Pupils with SEN Support (%)	14.3	14.6
Pupils with an EHCP (%) ²	5.2	6.7
Pupils from black and ethnic backgrounds (%) ³	15.9	5.6
Children living in poverty after housing costs (%) ⁴	25	25.7

SAFEGUARDING

(10-17 yrs.)	BCP	DORSET
Number of Children in Need	531	562
Male (%)	58	50.5
Female (%)	42	48.9
Indeterminate(%)	0	0.4
Number of children with a child protection plan	203	100
Number of children in care	376	315
Male (%)	58.7	59.7
Female (%)	41.0	40.3
Indeterminate(%)	0.3	0

Number of children at risk of exploitation

Significant	18	12
Moderate	41	30
Emerging	35	20

Although the two local authorities differ in geographical size and demography, they have similar population sizes for 10-17 year-olds. Dorset Council has slightly higher rates of children eligible for free school meals and slightly higher rates of children identified as having special educational needs and disabilities. 1,110 children aged 10-17 in the BCP Council area (3.2%) have an allocated social worker, compared to 977 children in the Dorset Council area (2.9%).

The proportion of 10-17 year-olds identifying as being from non-white ethnicities is higher in BCP Council (15.9%) than in Dorset Council (5.6%).

3. Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

The work of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is managed strategically by a Partnership Board. The Partnership Board consists of senior representatives of the statutory partner organisations, together with other relevant local partners.

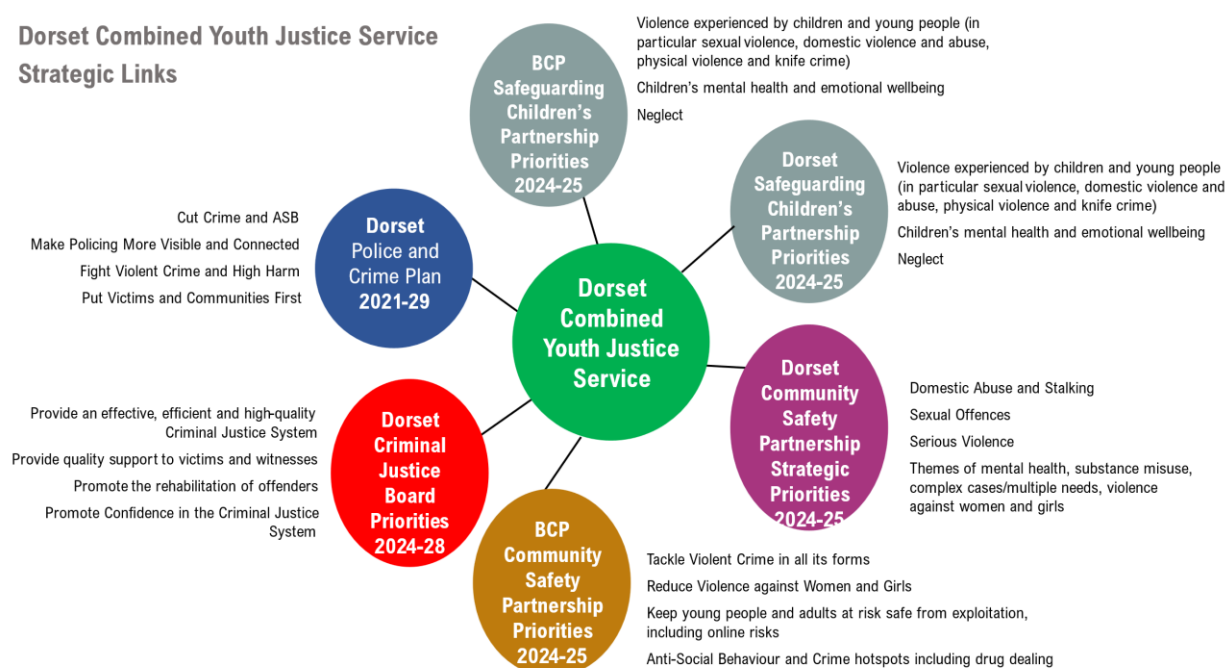
Membership:

- Dorset Council (chair)
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (vice-chair)
- Dorset Police

- The Probation Service (Dorset)
- NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board
- Public Health Dorset
- Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust
- Dorset Magistrates' Youth Panel
- Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Partnership Board oversees the development of the Youth Justice Plan. Board members and the DCYJS Head of Service sit on other strategic partnerships, helping to ensure that the Youth Justice Plan and other local strategic plans and priorities are integrated and consider the needs of children and victims in the local youth justice system. The links between DCYJS and local strategic groups, and their overlapping strategic priorities, are illustrated below:

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Strategic Links



Representation by senior leaders from the key partners enables the DCYJS Head of Service to resolve any difficulties in multi-agency working at a senior level and supports effective links at managerial and practitioner levels.

The DCYJS participates in local multi-agency agreements for information sharing, for safeguarding and for the escalation of concerns. The DCYJS Partnership Data Sharing Agreement underpins local multi-agency work to prevent offending and to reduce reoffending.

The DCYJS Partnership Board oversees activities by partner agencies which contribute to the key youth justice outcomes, particularly in respect of the prevention of offending.

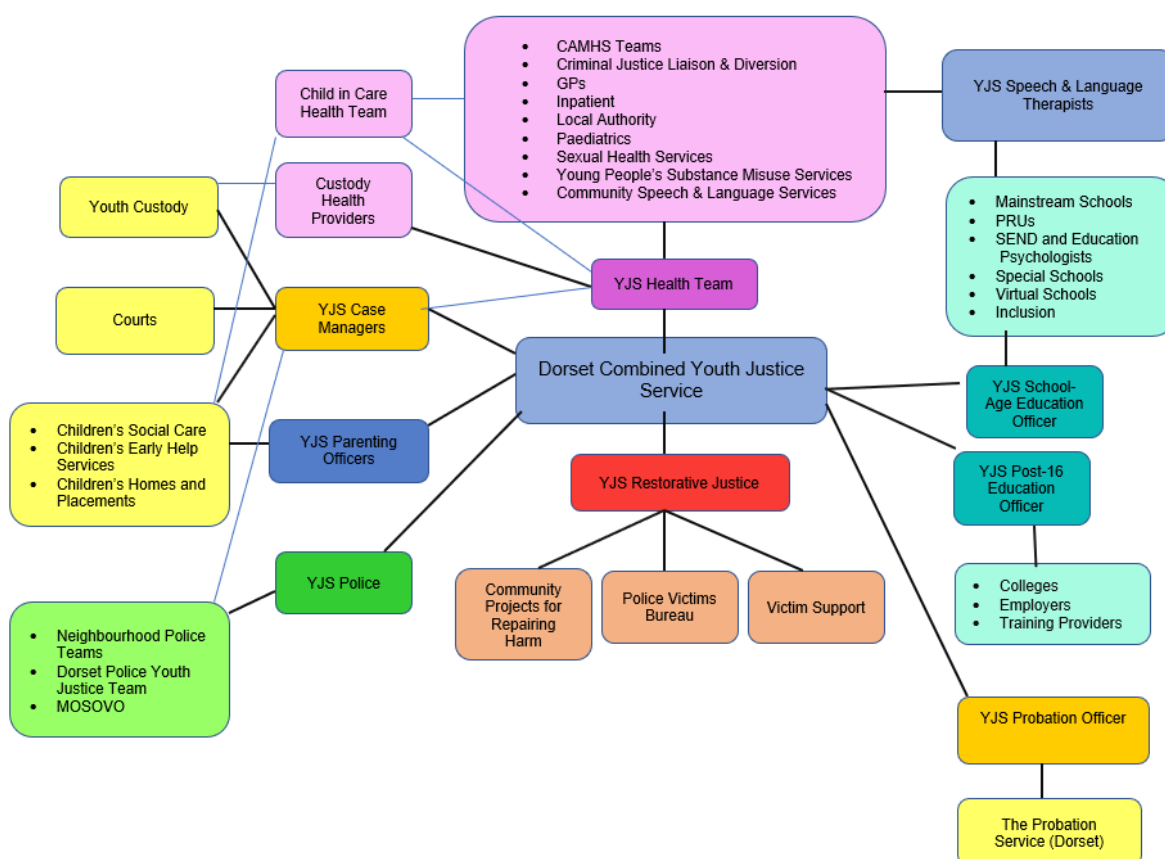
The Partnership Board also provides oversight and governance for local multi-agency protocols in respect of the criminalisation of children in care and the detention of children in police custody. The DCYJS Manager chairs multi-agency operational groups for each protocol and reports on progress to the DCYJS Partnership Board.

DCYJS is hosted by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The Head of Service is a Tier 3 Manager, reporting to the Director of Children's Social Care. The Head of Service also reports to the Corporate Director for Care and Protection in Dorset Council.

Appendix One includes the structure chart for DCYJS and structure charts showing where the YJS sits in each local authority.

DCYJS meets the statutory staffing requirements for youth justice services, set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Specialist staff are seconded into the service by Dorset Police, the Probation Service and Dorset HealthCare University Foundation Trust. These workers have line managers in both the YJS and their employing organisation. They have direct access to their own organisation's case management systems, to enable the prompt and proportionate sharing of information. More details about the staffing and financial contributions from YJS partners are provided in Appendix Two.

The YJS multi-disciplinary team also includes education specialists, parenting workers and restorative justice practitioners. The team works closely with other local services, as illustrated below:



4. UPDATE ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR

4.1. Progress on priorities in last year's plan

Our strategic priorities for 2024-25 are listed below with a brief summary of progress made:

Continue to reduce the rate of children entering the justice system:

- There was a 1.9% reduction in the rate of first-time entrants in 2024/25 compared to the previous year. There has been a 42% reduction in the rate of first-time entrants since 2019/20.
- Use of local authority workers, YJS workers, a Restorative Justice Practitioner and a Speech and Language Therapist to divert children from the justice system, under the Ministry of Justice 'Turnaround' programme.
- Consolidating the use of the police crime disposal option 'Outcome 22' for children with low level offences, as an alternative to a formal justice outcome.
- Transition plan implemented into the new Turnaround arrangements for 2025/26.
- Creation and implementation of the 'Re-Engage' programme, a two-year scheme from summer 2024 to offer speech and language assessments and support for children at risk of school exclusion.

Continue to address over-representation of minority groups in the youth justice system:

- Local children from minority ethnicities are not over-represented in the youth justice system in terms of overall numbers, although there is evidence that children from these groups are more likely to reach the court order stage of the justice system.
- There has been a reduction in recent years in the proportion of black and mixed heritage boys among local children receiving custodial sentences.
- Dorset Police report annually to the YJS Partnership Board on the local use of stop and search and of strip search for children.
- The DCYJS Head of Service represents DCYJS and other local YJS Managers in the Local Criminal Justice Boards' 'Wessex Disproportionality Group'.
- YJS performance data reporting is broken down by disadvantaged groups to check for any over-representation.
- Data analysis has shown that children in care are over-represented amongst children in the local youth justice system. The YJS Partnership Board initiated work in 2024 to improve multi-agency support for children in care in the justice system, and to prevent other children in care from entering the justice system.
- Analysis of YJS Speech and Language assessments, explained later in this document, has improved understanding and responses to children's specific communication needs.
- The 2024 thematic case audit focused on YJS work with girls.

Reduce extra-familial harm and serious violence:

- There has been a reduction in both local authorities in the number of children entering the justice system for an offence of violence against the person.
- DCYJS has contributed to Serious Violence Duty activities in both local authorities, including needs assessment and action planning, to support the multi-agency response to youth violence.
- Actions have been implemented from the 2023 case audit of YJS work with children who committed weapon offences.
- A quarterly 'weapon-related offending' group has been established for YJS practitioners and managers, to share good practice and learning, with inputs from colleagues in Dorset Police. A similar group for Harmful Sexual Behaviour continues to operate.
- The YJS health team has provided support to YJS and other colleagues working with children identified as requiring 'risk support', including Enhanced Case Management trauma formulations led by the DCYJS Psychologist and SAVRY assessments (Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth).
- DCYJS managers and practitioners have participated in partnership work in each local authority to develop and consolidate arrangements for addressing extra-familial harm,

including active contributions to Dorset Council's weekly Extra-Familial Harm panels and BCP Council's fortnightly Missing, Exploited and Trafficked panel.

- The YJS Head of Service has met regularly with senior colleagues from Dorset Police and the Crown Prosecution Service to try to speed up outstanding investigations into alleged violent and sexual offences by children. Progress in this important area remains slow.

Improve education outcomes for children in the youth justice system:

- Funding has been secured to continue the Discover You project at Upton Country Park. The project supports children and young people who are not in employment, education or training. Young people have accessed online learning, gained AQA awards, worked with the Ranger on conservation volunteering activities, engaged in career planning, designed and built animal habitats, bird feeders and play resources for younger children.
- The use of AQA awards to certificate learning by young people during YJS activities has been expanded.
- A weekly ETE Allocations meeting has been established, to prioritise work and to help ensure that support is provided to children without suitable education.

Continue to improve the quality of YJS practice:

- The YJB's new 'Prevention and Diversion' assessment tool has been implemented, with a series of team workshops to improve the quality of YJS assessments and plans with children.
- 'Child First' practice has been embedded through the workshops on assessment and planning, and by aligning individuals' appraisal objectives with the 4 tenets of Child First practice.
- Plans to develop the use of feedback from young people who transfer from the YJS to Probation have been delayed by the continuing vacancy for the seconded Probation Officer post in the YJS.
- The team has developed more options for children to repair the harm caused by weapon and drug offences.

4.2. Performance

DCYJS was inspected in late 2022 under the HMI Probation 'Full Joint Inspection' framework. The inspection report was published in January 2023, rating the service as 'Good'. The inspection report can be found at this link: [A joint inspection of youth offending services in Dorset \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/jipr/reports/2023/joint-inspection-of-youth-offending-services-in-dorset/).

DCYJS was also inspected in February 2025 as part of a national thematic inspection of work with children on 'Out of Court Disposals'. Informal feedback was provided after the inspection, identifying examples of good practice which may be included in the national report in the summer of 2025.

The three primary key performance indicators for youth justice partnerships are:

- The rate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system.
- The rate and frequency of reoffending by children in the criminal justice system.
- The use of custodial sentences.

The YJB publish quarterly performance data for youth justice services, compiled nationally, in relation to these three indicators. The information reported below is drawn from the data published in March 2025 for the period ending December 2024.

First Time Entrants

A 'First Time Entrant' is a child receiving a formal criminal justice outcome for the first time. A Youth Caution, a Youth Conditional Caution or a court outcome count as a formal criminal justice outcome. There are also options for diverting children from the justice system, by using informal justice outcomes, which do not make the child a First Time Entrant.

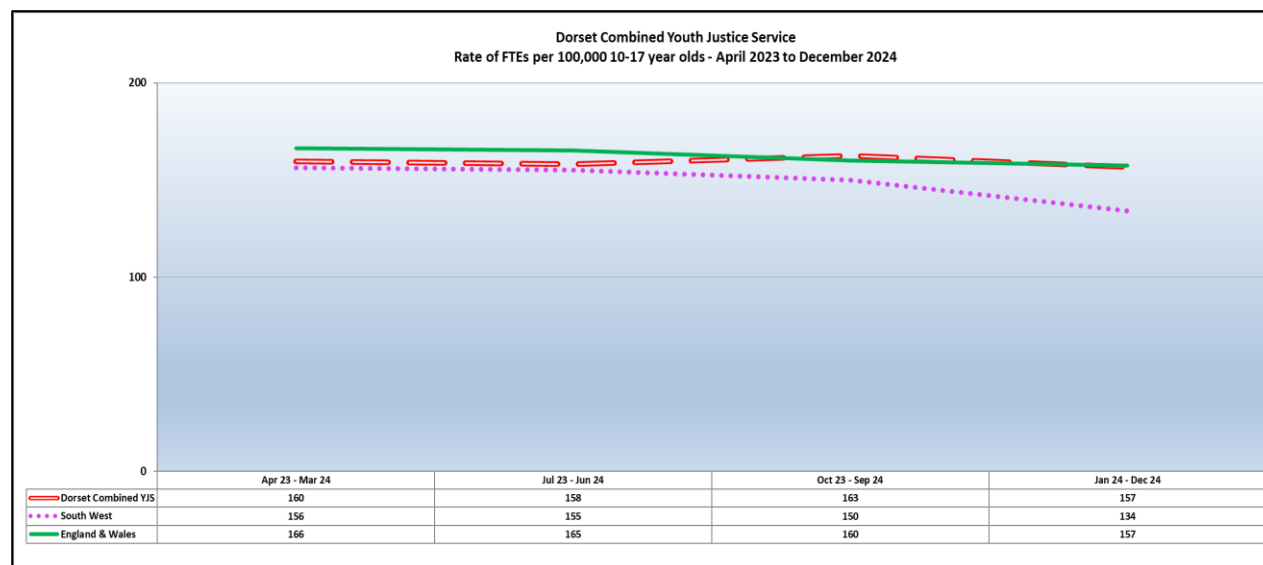
Dorset Police, DCYJS and other children's services work closely together to decide the appropriate outcome for a child who has committed a criminal offence. Whenever possible we seek to use an informal option which does not criminalise the child. It is recognised that receiving a formal justice outcome is in itself detrimental for children. Verbal feedback from HMI Probation, after their inspection of our work with children on Out of Court Disposals, noted that *"There is a clear focus and shared commitment across the partnership both strategically and operationally to divert children from the criminal justice system wherever this is possible"*.

National Performance Data

National performance data for First Time Entrants is drawn from the YJB's uploads of information from YJS case management systems.

In the past, DCYJS consistently had a higher rate of First Time Entrants than the national and regional averages. It is pleasing to note that there has been a consistent and sustained reduction in local First Time Entrants, with DCYJS now having a lower rate than the national average.

The following chart shows the last four quarters of national First Time Entrants data, with a consistent rate of around 160 First Time Entrants per 100,000 10-17 year-olds. This compares to a rate of 234 First Time Entrants per 100,000 10-17 year-olds in the year to December 2022.



Local Performance Data

DCYJS tracks data on its own case management system to monitor the number and characteristics of children entering the justice system. Local data shows a significant reduction in the number of children entering the justice system compared to the year before the pandemic:

Year	BCP First Time Entrants	Dorset First Time Entrants	Total DCYJS First Time Entrants	% Difference from previous year
2019-20	104	78	182	
2020-21	78	48	126	-30.8%
2021-22	77	47	124	-1.6%
2022-23	79	39	118	-4.8%
2023-24	52	56	108	-8.5%
2024-25	57	49	106	-1.9%

There was a notable reduction in First Time Entrants in BCP in 2023-24, which was sustained in 2024-25.

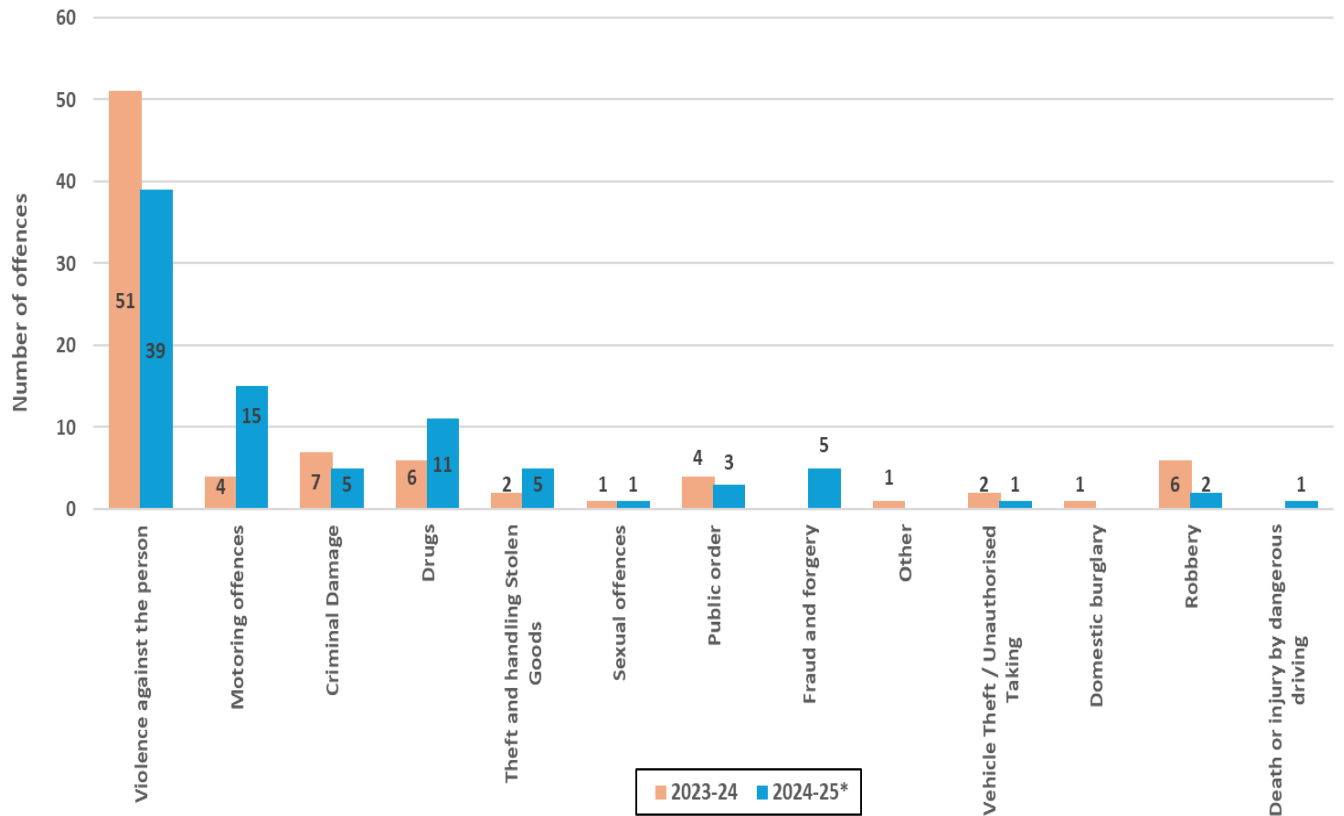
The increase in Dorset First-Time Entrants in 2023-24 reflected a marked increase in April and May 2023 relating to older offences which could have been dealt with during the previous year. It is pleasing to see the number of Dorset children entering the justice system dropping again in 2024-25.

Information about the ethnicity and gender of First Time Entrants is included later in this document, in section 5.1 on 'Over-Representation'.

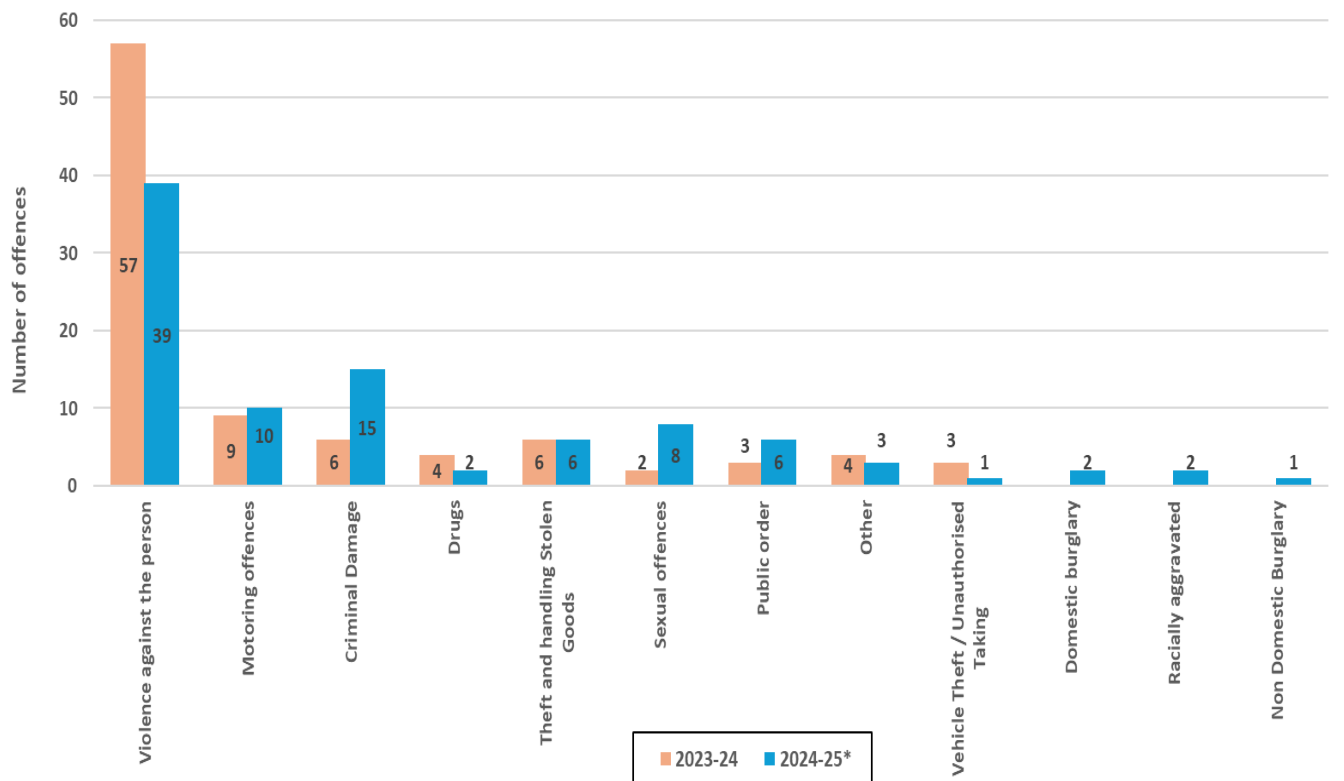
Offences Leading to Children Entering the Justice System

Decisions about whether to offer a diversion option, instead of a caution or court appearance, depend to some extent on the nature of the offence committed by the child. The following charts shows the offences which led to children in each local authority becoming First Time Entrants during the past year:

Offences resulting in BCP Children becoming First Time Entrants
Comparison of 2023/4 and 2024/5* (to end of Feb 25)



Offences resulting in Dorset Children becoming First Time Entrants
Comparison of 2023/4 and 2024/5* (to end of Feb 25)



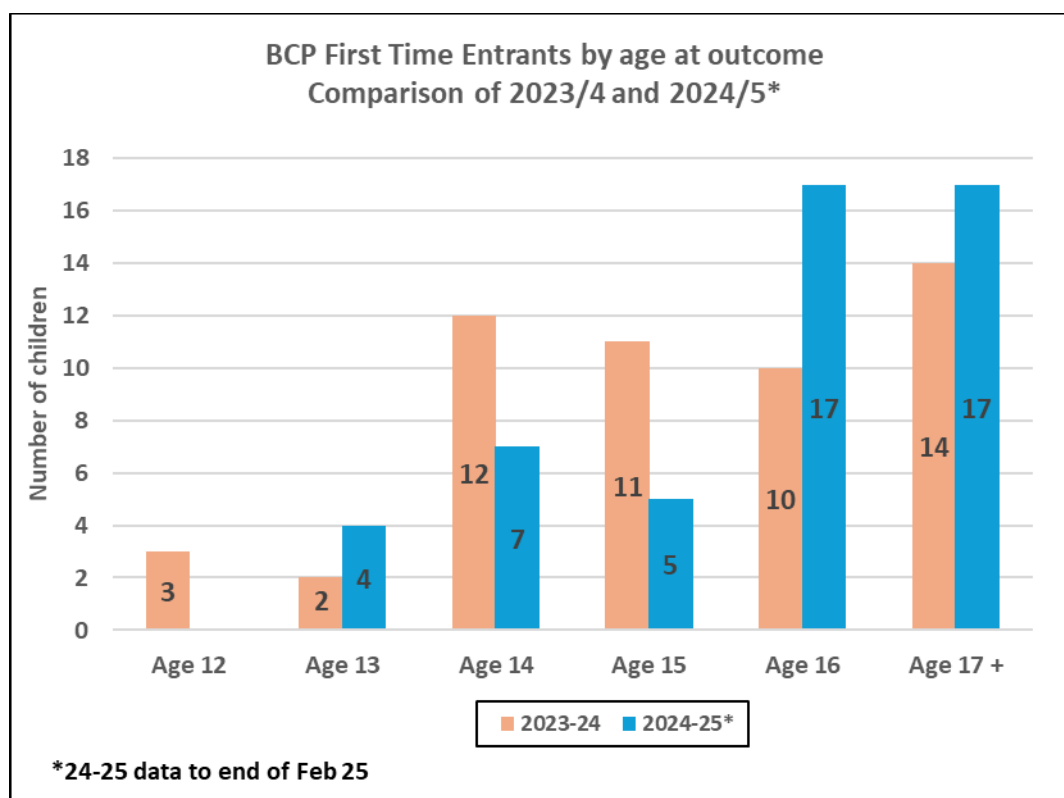
Offences involving possession or use of a weapon, or assaults on emergency workers, are included in the 'Violence against the Person' category and in almost all cases result in a caution or court disposal. Diversion options for these offence types are only considered in exceptional circumstances. There has been a reduction in both local authorities in the number of Violence against the Person resulting in a child entering the justice system.

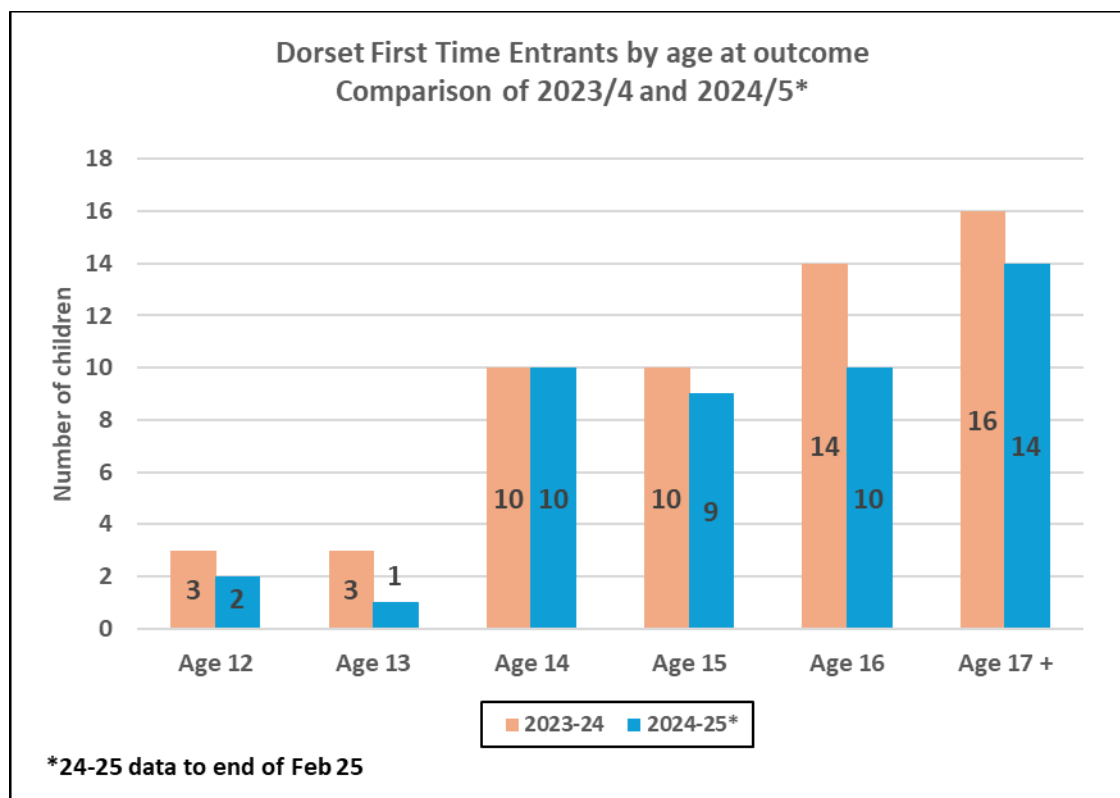
Some children are counted as entering the justice system for motoring offences which result in a court appearance for points to be added to the young person's driver's licence. Speed awareness courses are only available to people aged 18+, which means that a 17 year-old who commits a speeding offence is taken to court to be fined. In our view, such behaviour should not be viewed as criminal activity which counts as entering the justice system. DCYJS and Dorset Police are working locally and regionally, with support from the Youth Justice Board, to agree diversion options for young people with motoring offences.

Age of Children Entering the Justice System

Previous analysis has shown that children who enter the justice system before the age of 14 are likely to have complex needs and may go on to commit further, more serious offences. During 2023-24, a total of 11 children under the age of 14 entered the justice system across our two local authorities. This year, 2024-25, saw a total of 8 children under the age of 14 who entered the justice system, indicating a reassuring reduction in young First-Time Entrants.

The following charts show the ages of First-Time Entrants in each local authority in the past two years. The age of First-Time Entrants in the BCP Council area has risen in 2024-25:



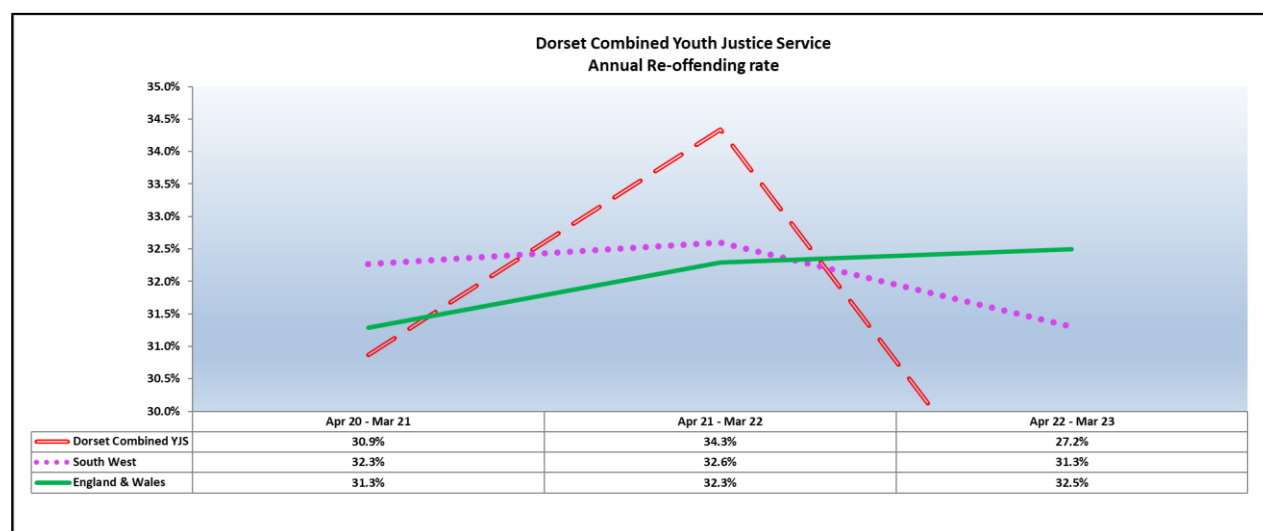


[Rate of Proven Reoffending](#)

National re-offending data is published in two formats: the 'binary' rate shows the proportion of children in the cohort who go on to be convicted for subsequent offences in the 12 months after their previous justice outcome; the 'frequency' rate shows the average number of offences per reoffender.

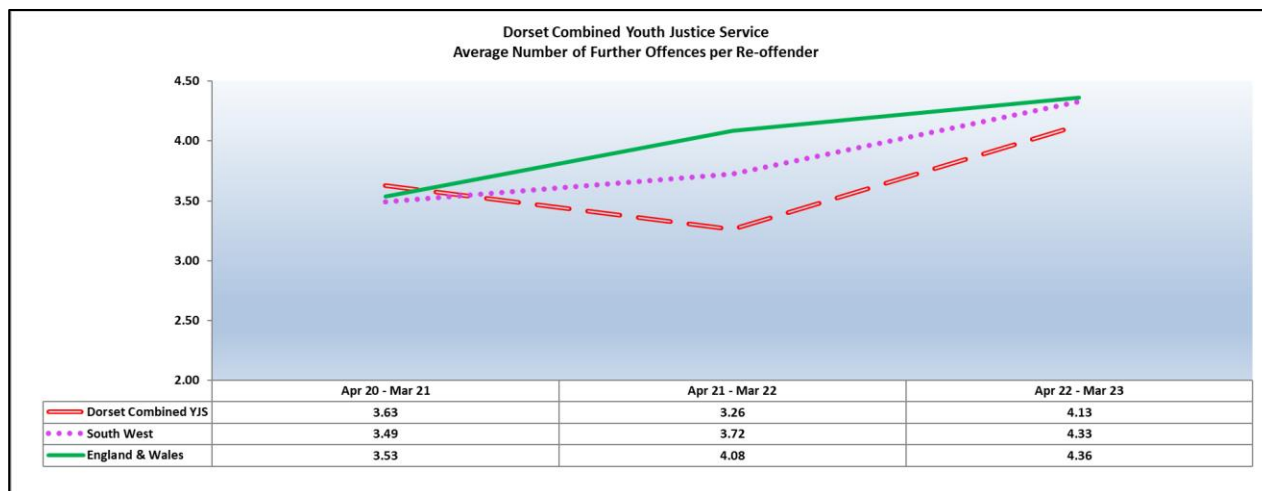
Reoffending data is necessarily delayed in order to allow time to see if the child is reconvicted and for that later outcome to be recorded. The following data therefore relates to children with whom the service worked up to March 2023.

Reoffending rate (Reoffenders/Number in cohort)



The binary reoffending rate for the most recent year, to March 2023, shows a significant reduction on previous years, with DCYJS performance exceeding the regional and national averages.

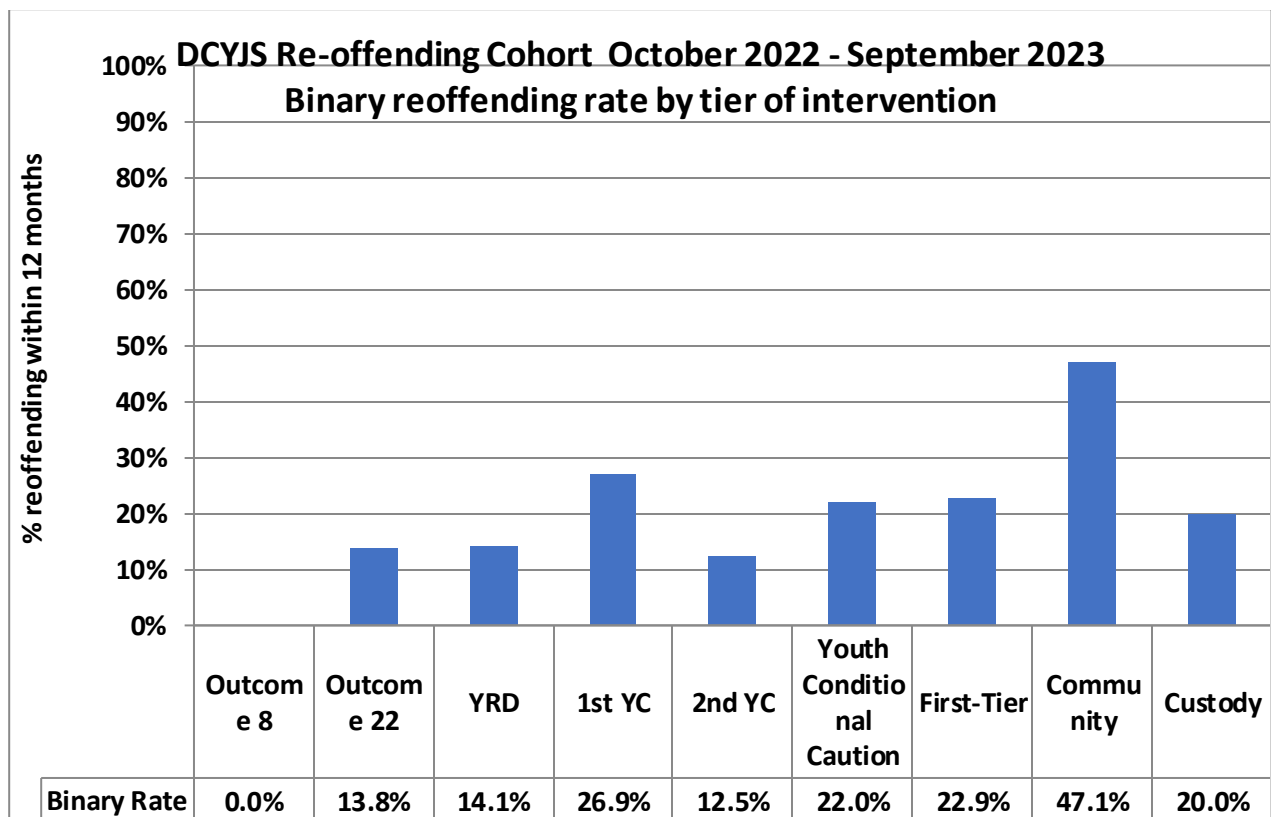
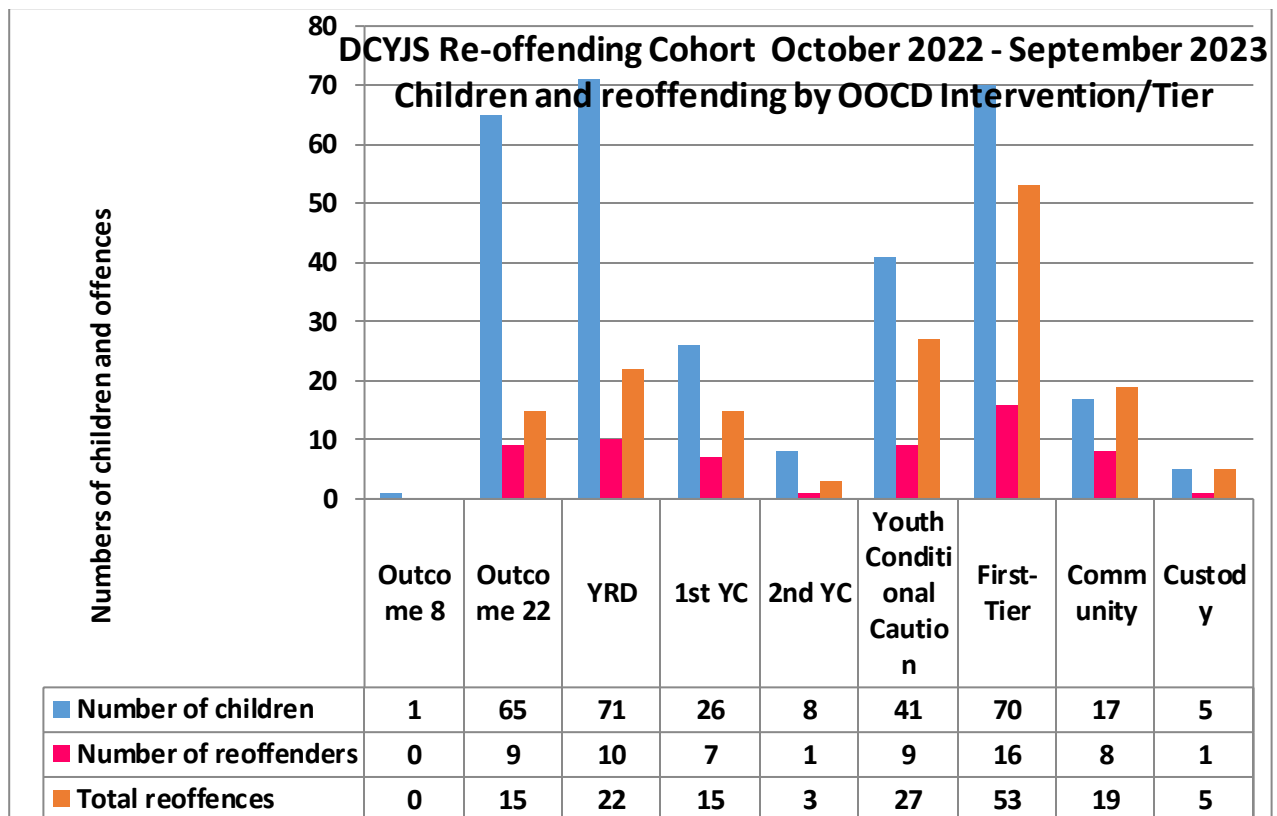
Reoffences/Reoffenders



There has been an increase in the average number of offences per reoffender, but DCYJS has remained below the regional and national averages for this measure.

Local data, stored on the DCYJS case management system, can also be scrutinised to show information about reoffending. Our most recent analysis looked at children on the DCYJS caseload between October 2022 and September 2023, giving us a more detailed understanding of reoffending by local children

Analysis of reoffending by disposal type shows that informal, diversion options have the lowest rate of reoffending (nb 'Outcome 22' is a police recording code, showing that no further action was taken but the child received an intervention to prevent future offending; 'YRD' refers to a Youth Restorative Disposal, the local name for a Community Resolution, which is also known as Outcome 8). It should be noted, however, that diversion options may be more likely for children with a lower risk of reoffending.



The local reoffending data also shows that:

- 15 and 16 year-olds are more likely to reoffend than other age groups.

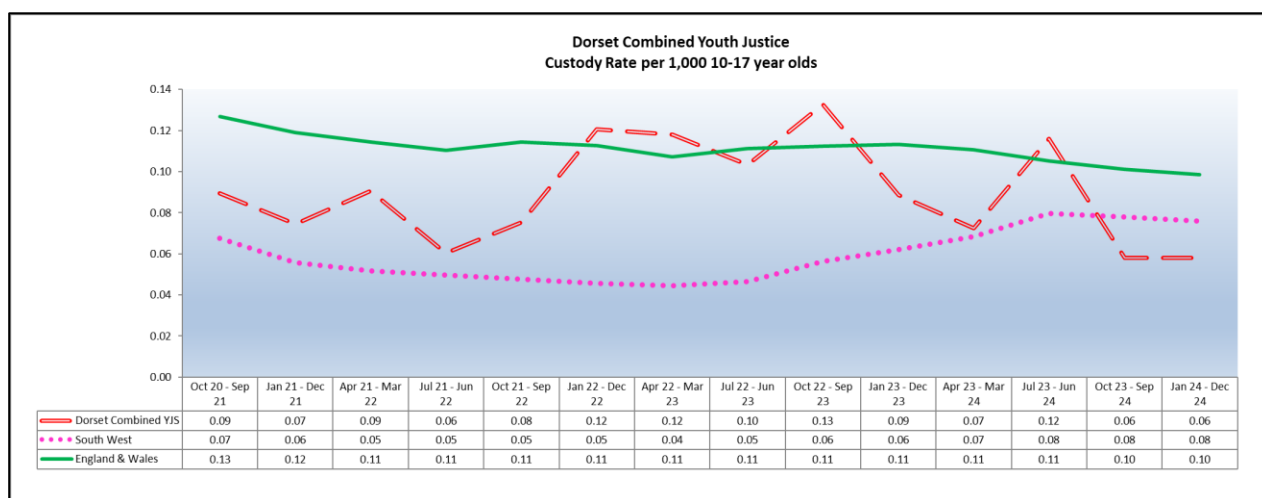
- Boys are more likely to reoffend than girls.
- Black and mixed heritage children show a higher reoffending rate than white children, but the numbers of black and mixed heritage children are low, meaning each child has a greater impact on the percentage rates.
- Children in the BCP Council area had a higher reoffending rate than children in the Dorset Council area.
- Children who were currently in care were more likely to reoffend than children who had never been in care.
- Children who committed burglary, robbery, thefts or vehicle thefts had higher rates of reoffending than children who committed other types of offence.
- 38% of reoffenders committed less serious further offences, 39% committed offences of the same seriousness and 23% committed more serious offences.

Analysis of local reoffending data helps the YJS to focus its work and to identify groups who may need additional attention.

Use of Custodial Sentences

DCYJS continues to see low numbers of children sentenced to custody.

The latest national data is copied below. The context of this data is a large reduction over recent years in the number of children in custody in England and Wales. This means that small changes in numbers can have a noticeable effect on the local and national rates.



During the most recent period on the above chart, January 2024 – December 2024, a total of 6 children and young people received custodial sentences (4 from BCP Council, 2 from Dorset Council).

The trauma-informed approach to youth justice work encourages us to ask “what happened to you?” rather than “what’s wrong with you?”. In this context, it is interesting to look at some of the common experiences of these 6 children and young people.

One of these young people was not known to DCYJS. He entered a Not Guilty plea as a child but was tried, convicted and sentenced after he turned 18. We do not therefore hold information about his past experiences and needs.

Analysis of the other 5 children and young people who received custodial sentences in 2024 shows that:

- All 5 were male.
- 4 of the 5 defined their ethnicity as White British, one identified as Mixed Heritage.
- At the time of sentence, 1 was aged 18, 2 were aged 17, and 2 were aged 16.
- All 5 were a Child in Care or a Care Experienced Young Person.
- All 5 had been identified as being at risk of harm from criminal exploitation. 4 of the 5 had been referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), and the other was assessed as being at significant risk of extra-familial harm.
- All 5 were identified as having Speech, Language and Communication Needs, following assessment by the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapist.
- All 5 had been permanently excluded from school.
- 4 out of 5 had an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- All 5 had had past contact with CAMHS, with a common experience of childhood trauma, and evidence of neurodiversity amongst some of these children.

The pattern of being a Child in Care, having experienced child exploitation, having been excluded from school, having speech, language and communication needs, and health needs related to past trauma and neurodiversity, shows the need for effective multi-agency working. DCYJS works closely with other children's services to provide community sentences which have the confidence of our local courts so that custodial sentences are only used as a last resort, for the most serious or persistent offending.

Section 6.1 of this document provides further analysis of the over-representation of Children in Care in the local youth justice system, and actions being taken.

[New Youth Justice Key Performance Indicators](#)

The Youth Justice Board introduced a new set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be collected from April 2023. The following measures are reported:

- Accommodation – the percentage of children in suitable accommodation.
- Education, training and employment (ETE) – the percentage of children attending a suitable ETE arrangement.
- SEND – the percentage of children with SEND who are in suitable ETE with a current, formal learning plan in place.
- Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing – the percentage of children identified as needing an intervention to improve their mental health or emotional wellbeing and the percentage being offered and attending interventions.
- Substance Use – the percentage of children identified as needing an intervention to address substance misuse and the percentage being offered and attending interventions.
- Out of Court Disposals – the percentage of out of court disposals that are completed or not completed.
- Management Board attendance – the attendance of senior representatives from partner agencies and if partners contribute data from their services to identify ethnic and racial disproportionality.
- Wider services – the percentage of YJS children who are currently on an Early Help plan, on a Child Protection Plan, classified as a Child in Need or a Child in Care.
- Serious Violence – the rates of children convicted for a serious violence offence on the YJS caseload.
- Victims – the percentage of victims who consent to be contacted by the YJS; of those, the percentage who are engaged with about restorative justice opportunities, asked their views prior to out of court disposal decision-making and planning for statutory court orders, provided with information about the progress of the child's case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate support services (when requested).

The new KPIs have required significant additional work to adapt recording systems and to adjust recording practices. The consistency, accuracy and usefulness of this data remains a work in progress. The YJB stated in March 2025 that the data collected nationally in 2023/24 and 2024/25 is 'low quality and cannot be used for analysis, reporting, and decision-making'. It is hoped that the extra activity associated with these additional measures will eventually prove to be useful.

4.3. Risks and issues

Like other youth justice services, DCYJS operates in a context of system challenges and resource pressures.

Current issues and future risks being faced by DCYJS include the following:

Issue/risk facing DCYJS	Actions being taken in response
Delays in the youth justice system, often arising from prolonged police investigations, make it harder to work effectively with children to prevent future offending and harder to provide timely support to victims and to engage them in Restorative Justice.	Monitoring instances of children released under investigation or on bail, to consider voluntary support options for the child during the investigation period. Work with Dorset Police and the CPS to prioritise, progress and resolve investigations for children on a case-by-case basis.
Funding and resources – real terms reductions since DCYJS was formed in 2015, no budget uplift to fund annual staff pay awards, uncertainty about future funding.	The combined service, working across two local authorities, provides resilience and savings of scale which has enabled the service to maintain high practice standards in the context of reducing resources. Some staffing reductions were required in 2024-25. Further reductions may be needed in 2025-26 if budgets remain frozen.
Permanent exclusions from school, and difficulties finding suitable alternative provision.	Re-Engage project to provide Speech and Language assessments and support to schools for children at risk of school exclusion before contact with the youth justice system.
Additional data recording and reporting requirements for the YJB KPIs and the Turnaround programme coinciding with a reduction in the YJS staffing resource for performance data.	Revisit staffing capacity for performance data, ensure efficient and accurate data recording procedures.
The YJS is likely to be required to vacate its current office premises in Bournemouth and its reparation/child contact premises in Dorchester during 2025. This could affect the work that can be done with children and the quality of joint work by team members.	YJS managers are seeking assurance from local authority facilities managers in BCP and Dorset that suitable alternative accommodation will be located.

5. PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

5.1. 'Child First' practice

DCYJS applies 'Child First' practice principles to underpin its work. The Child First approach is embedded in the YJB national guidance documents 'Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System' and 'Case Management Guidance'. These documents direct the work of youth justice services.

The Child First approach is built on evidence demonstrating its effectiveness to prevent offending by children who are at risk of entering the justice system and to reduce offending by the small number of children who do enter the youth justice system. The research evidence is summarised in this document: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/subjects/social-policy-studies/research/child-first-justice/>.

DCYJS supports these principles and promotes them in its own work and in its interactions with local partners in children's services and the youth justice system.

The Child First approach has four tenets, listed below.

The ABCD of Child First practice	Examples of how DCYJS implements this in our work
As children: recognise how children are developmentally different from adults and require different support.	<i>DCYJS uses Speech and Language assessments and trauma formulations to help identify each child's communication needs and developmental stage and the appropriate support for the child.</i>
Building pro-social identity: promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop a pro-social identity, focusing on positive child outcomes rather than just trying to manage offending.	<i>DCYJS work with Upton Country Park to provide the 'Discover You' project, aimed at building children's skills, confidence and employability. Positive outcomes from the project include a child who has become a volunteer with Upton Country Park. A new Youth Justice Activities Coordinator joined us in February 2025 to develop our positive activities and build a stronger child voice into our service design and delivery.</i>
Collaborating with children: involve children meaningfully to encourage their investment, engagement and social inclusion.	<i>Children are actively involved in developing the plans for our work with them, as part of the DCYJS commitment to working restoratively. Case records are written 'to the child' to be more inclusive and to help shift the worker's perspective. Training for the team is currently focusing on how to collaborate with children to agree their intervention plan.</i>
Diverting from stigma: promote supportive diversion from the criminal justice system where possible, or minimising stigma within it, as we know that stigma causes further offending	<i>The 'Turnaround' programme has helped us to embed the use of Outcome 22 to divert children from formal justice outcomes. YJS Speech and Language assessments are written on Dorset HealthCare documentation, without reference to the YJS, to avoid stigmatising the child.</i>

Appraisals objectives for YJS practitioners and managers for 2025/26 were structured around the four tenets of Child First practice, to help embed these principles in our day-to-day work.

The strategic priorities in the DCYJS Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26 are aligned with the Child First principles, reflecting work to strengthen the local implementation of the four tenets of Child First practice.

Voice of the child

DCYJS works collaboratively with children to hear their voice during their contact with our service. Case records are addressed to the child and quote their words, to ensure the child's voice is prominent.

The team's Speech and Language Therapists complete assessments so that we can adapt our work to each child's communication needs. The Speech and Language Therapists also provide advice to colleagues in the YJS about how to work with each child. The following example illustrates how this can work in practice:

A YJS case manager had been struggling to engage a child who has communication needs. The case manager asked the Speech and Language Therapist for suggestions about alternative ways of working with the child. They agreed to try a session with a video clip and a cartooning exercise, to shift from language-based interventions to something more visual. The new approach was successful, as shown in this extract from the child's case record:

You watched a TikTok video of an incident where two men were arguing and one man goes to grab a bottle, the video cuts off before the you see the bottle being used. Your mum was present and consented to you watching the video. You drew a comic strip of the video and spoke about the behaviour, why it happened, what was happening, body language and what you think the consequences were of the behaviour.

You engaged well in this session, you previously were not talking to me nor were you showing an interest in the work we were doing, however, this particular style of work seemed to help you engage you in the session, you asked questions and actively took part drawing the comic strip, rewatching the video to make sure you were remembering it correctly and when I said that we were finished, you were surprised. It is positive you took such an active role in your session, you appeared to enjoy this and wanted all your sessions to be like this.

Another child had struggled to express how they experience life as someone with autism. Their case manager asked them to write about it, encouraging them to have confidence in expressing themselves. The child produced a striking and insightful description of their perspective which they read out to their parents and the case manager. Their account was subsequently edited to create this poem:

I'm Paradoxical

Autism is like a lonely boat at sea, navigating on its own;
Autism faces challenges in social interactions,
Communication, and sensory processing.
Daily routines can be demanding,
and sensitivity to sensory stimuli may lead to overwhelming experiences.

ADHD is depressing,
it's a mix of everything.
You will fit in everywhere, but nowhere.
You are extremely arrogant, but very much aware of your own faults

Capable of everything, yet not motivated to do a thing
Witty and charismatic, but have a low tolerance for BS people.
Great with advice but follow none of it.
You're most likely a genius but have trouble handling your emotions.

You are an extrovert, who needs a lot of personal space.
You love being different but hate being misunderstood.
Have brilliant ideas, but lack the patience to follow through with them.
You have more interests than anyone you know, but will get bored of every one of them.
You easily understand the thoughts of others, but find it hard to translate your own.

Surprisingly compassionate, but seemingly very cold.
We make it look fun, but it's really not.
People judge me before knowing me
My disabilities are hidden
so people just think I'm acting that way
which makes me more angry.

I'm paradoxical,
I like to be happy
But I think about sad things all the time
I don't really like myself
But I love the person I have become
I say I don't care
But I care too much - Deep into my bones

I crave attention
Yet, I reject everything that comes my way
I healed people
But I broke my own heart trying to fix them
I love to listen
But never tell them what's inside me.

Autism is part of who I am,
not a barrier to who I can become.
I may be as mysterious as the ocean,
but within the depths of my mind,
waves of brilliance and success
continuously ebb and flow.

As well as hearing the child's voice in the team's day to day practice, there are also processes in place to gather the views of children and other service users about their experience of the service's work.

Spontaneous comments from service users about their experience of our service are recorded and analysed, using a data report from our case management system.

Examples of recent comments from service users include:

Working with C is really helpful and I feel like a weight has been lifted.

We have talked about quite a lot, I really like J. She just listens, sometimes when I have had workers before it feels like a job, with J I feel like she actually cares. She calls me to check in on me and she keeps my mum updated too.

It has been really eye-opening. My original thought was that social services was a bad thing but it has changed my view because it has been supportive. It has been good for her because her worker is an open-minded person and has not judged her. It has been relaxed and here to help her rather than to make her feel bad

I met with you at your panel meeting today, thank you for allowing me to attend, it was good to put a face to your name. You told me that the style of your panel suited you and you felt comfortable with panel members being in the room and you coming in with your parents. You also said that the panel members asked if you would like to write your contract, you said they could but you told them what to write. This is good to hear that your voice has been captured. You and your parents told me that L has been great with you. She has helped you to understand the process, helped you to think about the impact your behaviour had on the victim and your parents too. You said that you liked L and you trusted her.

Each year the YJS undertakes a case audit on a priority area of YJS work. In 2024 the audit focused on our work with girls. As part of the audit, we talked with some of the children and parents in the audit sample.

One of the themes to emerge from the audit was the impact of delays in the justice system. One girl commented that:

Work with YJS was good, but it would have been more helpful before when I actually needed it. I had already made loads of changes myself. The gap was too long, it was two years between the offence and the matter going to court.

5.2. Resources and Services

The funding contributions to the DCYJS partnership budget are listed in Appendix Two, showing the figures for 2024/25. Indicative budget contributions for 2025/26 from local partners have been agreed. Local authority contributions will remain frozen at the 2022/23 levels, with no uplift to meet the cost of annual pay awards. The Youth Justice Grant allocation for DCYJS in 2025/26 has not yet been announced, although the YJB shared information in late March 2025 to indicate that the national Youth Justice Grant will be increased by 1.46%.

All local authority staff in DCYJS are employed by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Other DCYJS staff are employed by Dorset Police, the Probation Service (Dorset) and Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust. A DCYJS Structure Chart is included in Appendix One, showing the posts provided through our partnership resources. DCYJS has a strong multi-agency and multi-disciplinary identity, meeting the staffing requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

Like all public services, DCYJS operates in a context of reducing resources. Ensuring value for money and making best use of resources is a high priority for the service. The combined

partnership, working across Dorset's local authorities since 2015, has enabled the service to maintain high practice standards while managing real terms budget reductions over that period.

During 2024/25 short-term funding was also provided through the Ministry of Justice Turnaround programme, to enable additional work with children on the cusp of the youth justice system. Funding was also received from the Home Office Immediate Justice pilot scheme, to augment work with children who received Out of Court Disposals for offences which caused harm to local communities. The Ministry of Justice has announced that funding will be provided in 2025/26 to continue Turnaround work, albeit the funding has been reduced from £182,595 in 2024/25 to £123,184 in 2025/26.

The Youth Justice Board Grant is paid subject to terms and conditions relating to its use. The Grant supports the front-line delivery of essential youth justice services for children. The Grant may only be used towards the achievement of the following outcomes:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system;
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system;
- Improve the safety and wellbeing of children in the youth justice system; and
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

The conditions of the Grant also refer to the services that must be provided and the duty to comply with data reporting requirements.

The Youth Justice Grant contributes to the Partnership's resources for employing practitioners who work with children to prevent and reduce offending and to keep children and other members of the community safe from harm. Resources from the Youth Justice Grant are also used to provide restorative justice and reparative activities, to promote pro-social activities for children building on their strengths and to improve the education, training and employment opportunities of young people in the local youth justice system. The Youth Justice Grant contributes to the performance achievements described in section 4.2, reducing the number of children entering the justice system, reducing reoffending by those who do enter the justice system, and maintaining low numbers of children being sentenced to custody.

In addition to the service outcomes listed above, the Youth Justice Grant and other Partnership resources are used to achieve the strategic priorities set out later in this Plan. Progress against those priorities is reported to the DCYJS Partnership Board, with oversight also provided by the relevant scrutiny committees of the two local authorities.

5.3. YJS Partnership Board Development

HMI Probation's Joint Inspection of Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service was published in January 2023. The inspection included scrutiny of the Board's work. The inspection report rated the service's Governance and Leadership as 'Good'.

HMI Probation also met with members of the DCYJS Partnership Board in February 2025 as part of their thematic inspection of work with children on Out of Court Disposals. Inspectors identified a strategic commitment to diverting children from the justice system wherever possible.

The YJS Partnership Board has an established cycle of performance review, strategic oversight and forward planning. During the past year, the Board's activities have included scrutiny of the local use of stop-search and strip-search of children, decisions on the future delivery of diversion activities after the initial Turnaround programme, and action to address the over-representation of Children in Care in our youth justice system.

The YJS Partnership Board's plans for 2025-26 include increased oversight of our work with victims, to ensure we are compliant with the new youth justice inspection criteria.

5.4. Workforce Development

The YJS is committed to good practice, using staff supervision, peer support, team workshops and external training courses to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of our workers. Informal feedback from HMI Probation, after their recent inspection of our work with children on Out of Court Disposals, noted that *“Staff are highly motivated and build strong relationships with children and families, as reflected in the feedback received from children, parents, and carers. YJS staff are skilled, knowledgeable, and feel well supported. There is a strong capacity for reflection at all levels of the service.”*

The DCYJS Workforce Development Policy identifies core training for different roles in the team. As well as refresher training in child safeguarding, extra-familial harm and information governance, team members are also trained in Motivational Interviewing, AIM3 Harmful Sexual Behaviour assessments and Restorative Justice with complex and sensitive cases.

Team members will continue to attend training and development activities in these approaches in 2025/26. A Motivational Interviewing Development Group was established in 2024, facilitated by an expert external trainer. This will continue in 2025/26.

The team's work with children showing Harmful Sexual Behaviour is supported by a quarterly YJS HSB Practitioner's Group, which sometimes includes contributions from external speakers.

During 2024/25 a quarterly YJS Weapons Offences Practitioner's Group was established. This initiative derived partly from a YJS multi-agency case audit in 2023 of our work with children who have committed offences involving weapons.

The YJB mandated the use, from April 2024, of the 'Prevention and Diversion' assessment tool for children receiving Out of Court Disposals. The YJS has held workshops with line managers and case managers throughout 2024/25 to support the implementation of this new assessment tool. This gave us an opportunity to embed Child First principles in working collaboratively with children during the assessment and planning phase.

Volunteers play an important role in the work of the YJS, especially as Referral Order community panel members. We appreciate their engagement during 2024/25 in several training sessions aimed at aligning our Referral Order panel meetings with Child First practice.

In addition to the core training courses, the service's development plans for 2025/26 require staff training in the following areas:

- Prevention and Diversion Assessment tool – improve the plans that are devised with children, with a focus on collaborative planning and exit planning.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour – train the team's HSB workers in 'Technology-Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour'; commission an external consultant to run a session with the team's HSB workers on working with denial.
- Revise the training for new volunteers to emphasise Child First practice.

DCYJS also supports individual career progression plans for team members. Plans for 2025/26 include:

- a Youth Justice Worker continuing with his social work qualification through the Social Work Apprenticeship with BCP Council and Solent University.
- a Youth Justice Worker studying for the Level 5 Youth Justice Practitioner Apprenticeship.
- a Youth Justice Officer working towards her Practice Educator qualification.

DCYJS also hosts student placements for students studying for social work qualifications and for trainee Speech and Language Therapists.

5.5. Evidence-based practice, innovation and evaluation

Evidence shows that the key determinant for positive change is a pro-social relationship with a trusted adult. The primary focus for effective practice in DCYJS is therefore the quality of workers' relationships with children, alongside positive relationships within the team and with other professionals. The approach also builds on previous feedback from young people on the DCYJS caseload about what was most important to them in their experience of the service. The whole service training in 'Working Restoratively' in January 2024 was aimed at supporting this key aspect of our evidence-based work.

Employment and training support for 16-17 year-olds

The service has continued to focus on improving young people's employment and training prospects.

DCYJS partners with Upton Country Park to provide the 'Discover You' project. The project aims to improve young people's self-esteem, practical skills and employability, to increase their chances of accessing employment and training.

21 young people attended the project between September 2024 and March 2025. Some of the positive outcomes for these young people included:

- Access to online learning within different subject areas e.g. Food Hygiene, First Aid, Health & Safety in the workplace, Manual Handling, Customer Service, Fire Safety and Barista Training.
- AQA Certificated Learning –most young people complete around 5-10 awards, depending on how long they attend and what they engage in. Awards include Team Building, Employment and Training, Practical Tasks, Communication Skills.
- Work Experience options around Upton Country Park within the Welcome Centre and Café.
- Conservation Volunteering Activities – Working with the Ranger onsite to complete practical activities around the site like planting trees, taking out hedgerows, coppicing, painting, creating woodwork items, putting stag beetle loggery (different things available at different times of the year).
- Team Building – different opportunities like den building and orienteering.
- Life skills – budgeting/managing money, dealing with bills, communication skills.
- ETE and Careers – Careers Information Advice and Guidance – Career Action Planning, CV work, Applications for College and Jobs, Interview Skills.
- Other Support towards qualifications - CSCS Practice, Maths and English Assessments, and working towards exam readiness..
- Completing practical tasks for Upton Country Park, e.g. animal habitat, bird feeders, designing and building play resources for school/nursery groups, redesigning a bird screen and creating art work and bird facts to go on the completed bird screen.
- Raising money for charity by making items to sell at Upton Country Park, eg Halloween items, Christmas items, nature-themed items and outdoor objects such as planters, bird boxes, bug hotels, bird feeders.
- Development into mentoring opportunities for young people who continue to volunteer at Upton Country Park after attending the Discover You project.

The Discover You project received Lottery Heritage funding until March 2024. Other funding was used in 2024/25, including a contribution from the Immediate Justice pilot scheme. We are seeking funding to continue and develop the project in 2025/26.



Animal Habitat built by children on the Discover You project

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner also continued to provide funding for young people to work with training providers to gain their 'CSCS' card to increase their chances of work in the construction sector.

Early identification of speech and language needs for children at risk of school exclusion

Our local Youth Justice Partnership's strategic priorities include reducing school exclusions, to prevent offending, and meeting the speech, language and communication needs of children who may enter the youth justice system. The DCYJS Partnership Board allocated funding for a two-year project, known as 'Re-Engage', to identify and support the speech, language and communication needs of children at risk of school exclusion.

The Re-Engage project commenced in summer 2024, working with schools to focus on children in Key Stage 3 who are at risk of permanent exclusion and whose behaviour indicates a risk of future offending. The project is staffed by a Speech and Language Therapist and a Speech and

Language Associate Practitioner. Their roles are to assess the communication needs of children who are at risk of school exclusion and to support schools to respond to the child's specific needs. Training sessions are also offered to schools as part of their staff development.

At the end of February 2025, halfway through the school year, 50 children had been referred to the project, from 18 schools across the Dorset and BCP Council areas. Assessments had been completed for 30 children. The results showed that 76% of these children had communication needs which had not previously been identified. 33% of the assessments indicated that the child had significant communication needs, with a diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder.

Evaluation of the project will include 'before and after' data on the child's attendance, behaviour incidents and exclusions, as well as feedback from schools, children and parents/carers.

5.6. Standards for work with children in the youth justice system

All Youth Justice Services are required to comply with the Youth Justice Board's 'Standards for work with children in the youth justice system' (2019). The Youth Justice Board oversees a programme of self-assessments to monitor compliance.

The last YJB self-assessment exercise took place in 2023, when all services were directed to audit their work under 'Standard 2: Work in Court'. The YJB provided an audit tool, comprising 22 questions. The DCYJS self-assessment rated our work in court as Good, with most of the audit questions being rated Good or Outstanding.

The positive outcome from our audit of court work reflects the strong partnership between DCYJS and our local youth courts. The chair of the Dorset Magistrates Youth Panel sits on the DCYJS Partnership Board, enabling other partners to hear the views of magistrates.

The YJB did not require Youth Justice Services to complete a National Standards audit in 2024/25 and has stated that there will also be no requirement for a National Standards audit in 2025/26.

5.7. Response to inspections, reviews and audits.

Inspection reports, learning reviews and case audits all contribute to our service planning.

The most recent full inspection of our service was published in January 2023, rating the service as 'Good'. The inspectors made 6 recommendations, which were followed up through an action plan, overseen by the YJS Partnership Board. Actions have been completed for all of the recommendations.

Dorset Police and DCYJS were jointly inspected in February 2025 as part of a national thematic inspection of work with children on Out of Court Disposals. This thematic inspection is being conducted by HMI Probation and HMI Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services. The report will be published in summer 2025. Informal feedback from the inspectorates after our inspection visit recognised strong partnership working between Dorset Police and DCYJS. The inspectorates identified examples of good practice in our work and gave us some helpful advice on areas for development which will be included in our plans for 2025/26.

In September 2024, HMI Probation published a national thematic report, 'The quality of services delivered to young adults in the Probation Service'. Although this report focused on the work of the Probation Service, there was some consideration of transition arrangements from youth justice to Probation. One of the report recommendations was for HM Prison and Probation

Service to “ensure that any barriers to staff requesting or accessing information from partner agencies, including youth justice services, are addressed”. Locally, DCYJS and the Probation Service in Dorset put steps in place, in 2023, to support Probation Officers to request relevant information from DCYJS when working with a young adult who was previously known to the YJS.

DCYJS contributed to a Child Safeguarding Practice Review in Dorset, relating to the accidental death of a child on a railway line, which was published in May 2024. Learning from this review was identified and actioned in 2023.

There have been no new local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) involving the YJS in the past year. A local multi-agency learning review took place in BCP Council in 2024 relating to a 20 year-old care experienced young person who took her own life, in the context of domestic abuse. A Domestic Homicide Review is also being completed. This young person had been known to DCYJS before she turned 18. No changes to YJS practice have been identified in these reviews.

YJS learning from local CSPRs and multi-agency learning reviews is included in the team’s development plans, and is reported annually to the YJS Partnership Board.

DCYJS undertakes thematic case audits, linked to the service’s priorities. The focus in 2024 was on our work with girls. Areas for improvement in our practice arising from this audit included work with boys on healthy, safe behaviour in relationships, and work with girls and boys to help them explore their online identity and activity. The theme for our case audit in 2025 has not yet been confirmed but is likely to link to our work on the over-representation of Children in Care.

6. Local and National Priorities for 2025/26

This section of the Plan reviews issues of local and national priority for youth justice which contribute to our service priorities for 2025/26.

6.1. Over-representation

National data shows that some groups of children, such as those with diverse ethnic heritage, children in care and children with Special Educational Needs are over-represented in the youth justice system. DCYJS monitors caseload information for children from minority and disadvantaged groups.

Ethnic Disparity

Data from the January 2024 School Census shows that 15.9% of 10-17 year-olds at schools in the BCP Council area identify as not having a white ethnicity. The equivalent figure for schools in the Dorset Council area is 5.6%. This data helps us compare the rate of children on our caseload from different ethnicities with proportions in the local population.

The following charts provide information about the children in the youth justice system in each local authority, separating them by children who were diverted and children who were cautioned or sentenced.

BCP Council children who were diverted from the justice system in 2024/25

BCP Outcomes from 1st April 2024 to 16th March 2025

73

Children

75

Diversion Outcomes

66%

Boys

34%

Girls

93%

White

7%

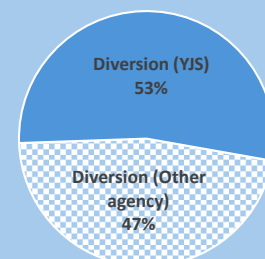
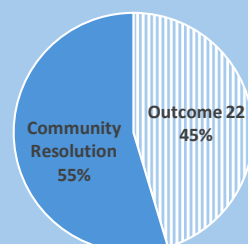
Ethnic Minority Groups

32%

10-14 years old

68%

15-18 years



BCP Council children who were cautioned or sentenced in 2024/25

BCP Outcomes from 1st April 2024 to 16th March 2025

78

Children Cautioned or Sentenced

90

Outcomes

85%

Boys

14%

Girls

1%

Transgender/Fluid

79.5%

White

20.5%

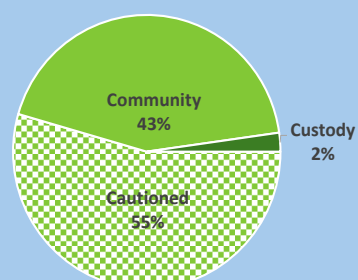
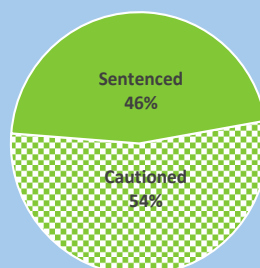
Ethnic Minority Groups

24%

10-14 years old

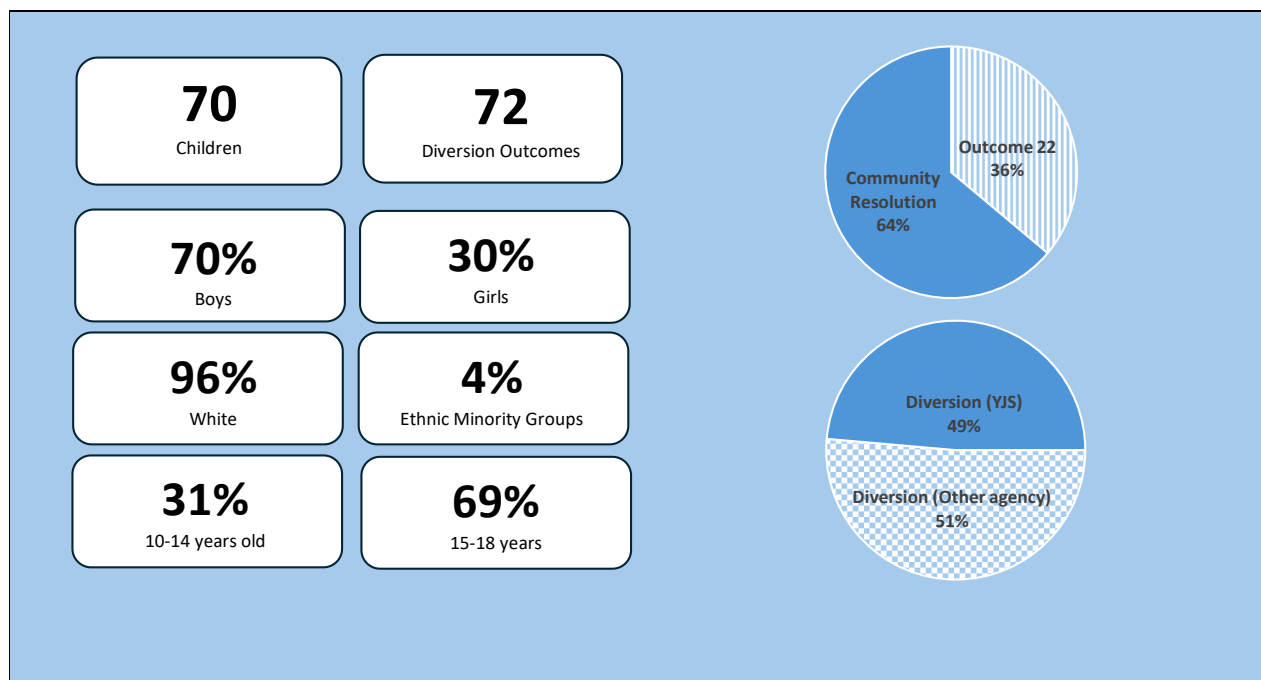
76%

15-18 years



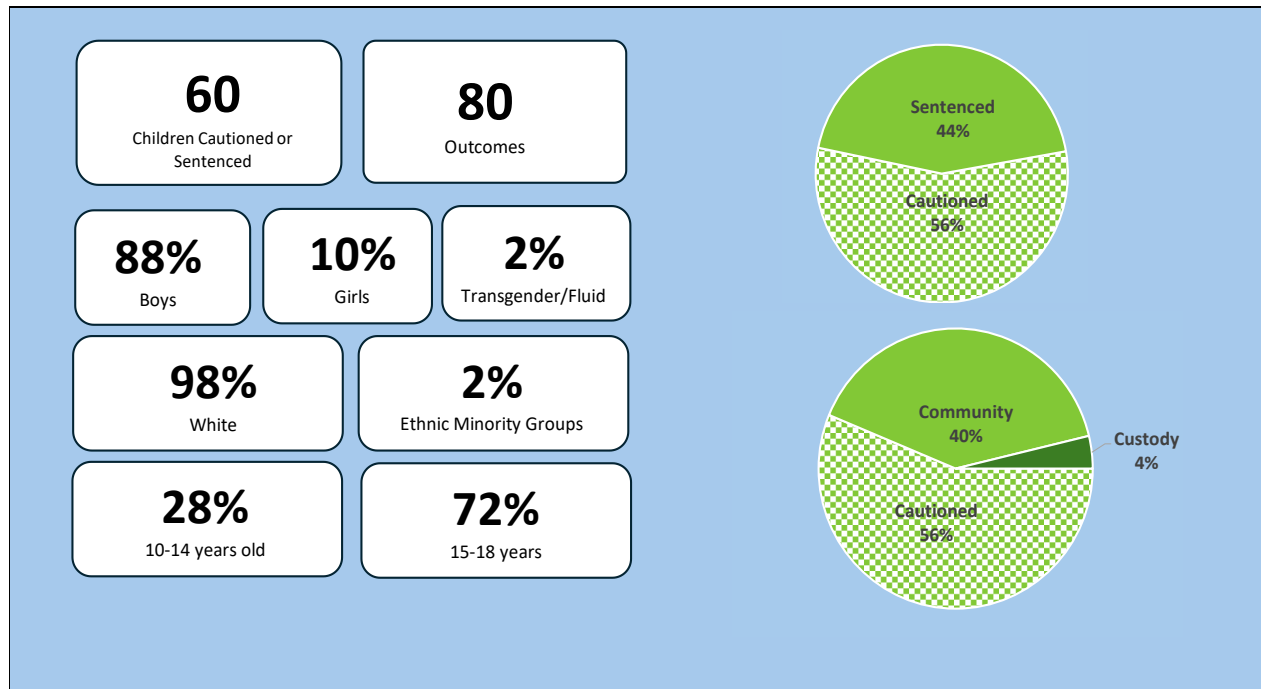
Dorset Council children who were diverted from the justice system in 2024/25

Dorset Outcomes from 1st April 2024 to 16th March 2025



Dorset Council children who were cautioned or sentenced in 2024/25

Dorset Outcomes from 1st April 2024 to 16th March 2025

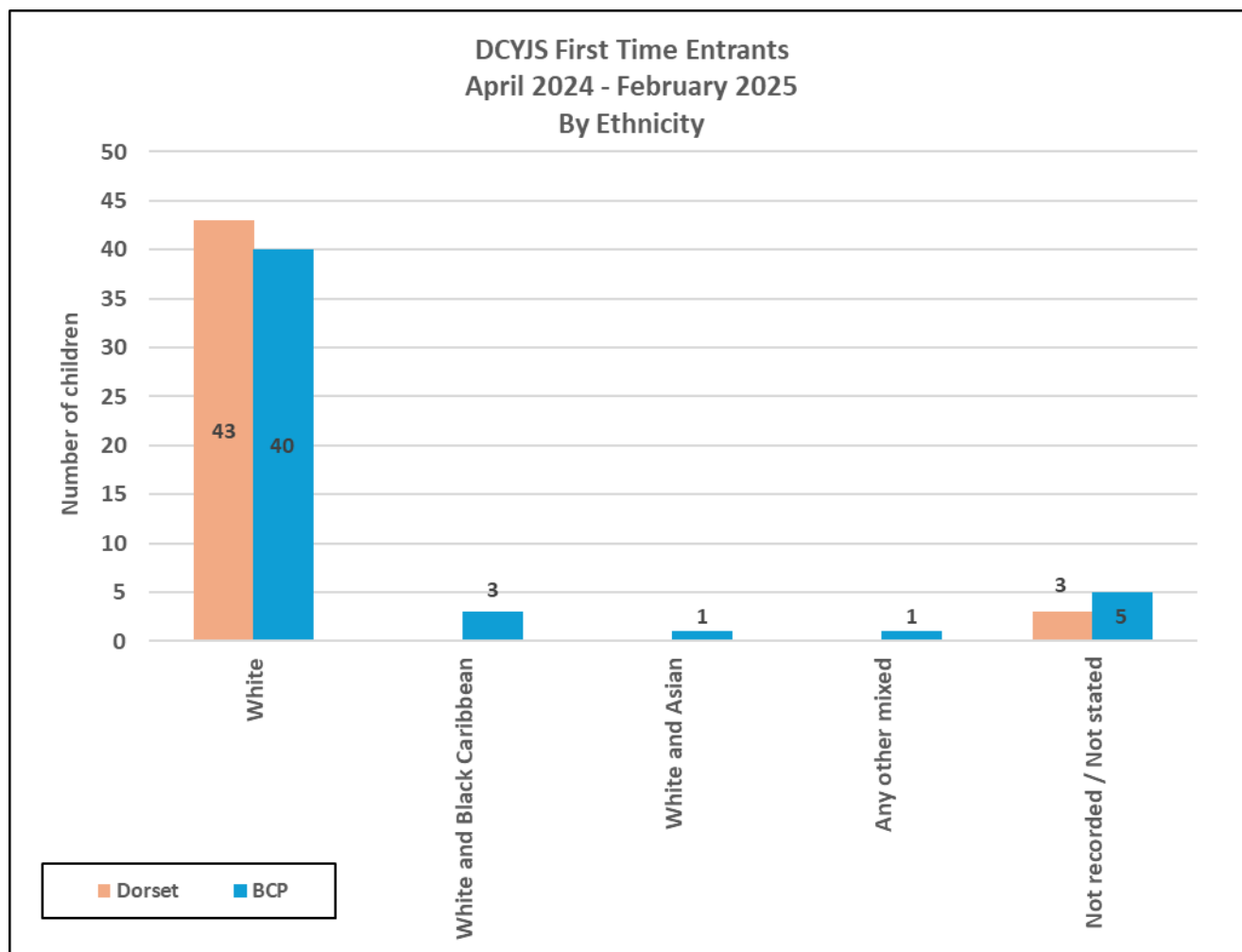


Comparison of these charts shows that:

- There is a notably higher proportion of girls among the children diverted from the justice system compared to the proportion of girls in the groups who were cautioned or sentenced.
- The proportion of children with non-white ethnicity is lower among the children who were diverted than among the children who were cautioned or sentenced.

- Children who do not identify as white are not over-represented in Dorset, or among children in BCP who are diverted, but they are over-represented among children sentenced or cautioned in BCP.
- In both local authorities, there is a higher proportion of younger children among those who were diverted.

Last year's Youth Justice Plan noted that we had not seen over-representation of minority ethnicities among children entering the justice system. This has remained the case in 2024-25 for the overall area, as shown in the following chart:



The explanation for no ethnicity being recorded for 8 of the total 96 first-time entrants is that some children are fined or discharged at court, for offences such as motoring, and have no contact with DCYJS.

43 of the 46 first-time entrants in Dorset defined themselves as having white ethnicity. The other 3 have no ethnicity recorded.

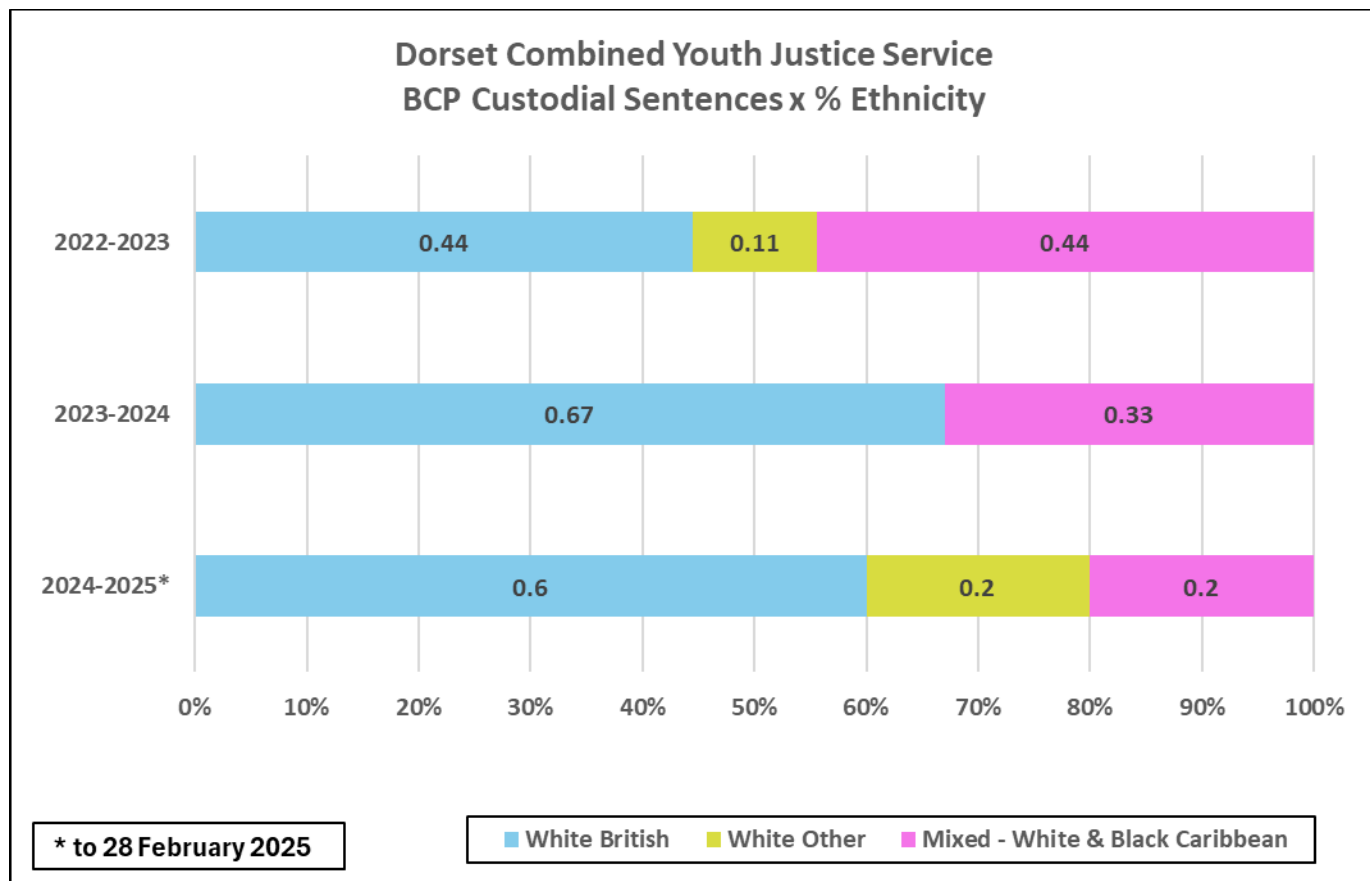
5 out of 50 first-time entrants in BCP did not define themselves as having white ethnicity. At 10%, this is below the School Census rate of 15.9%.

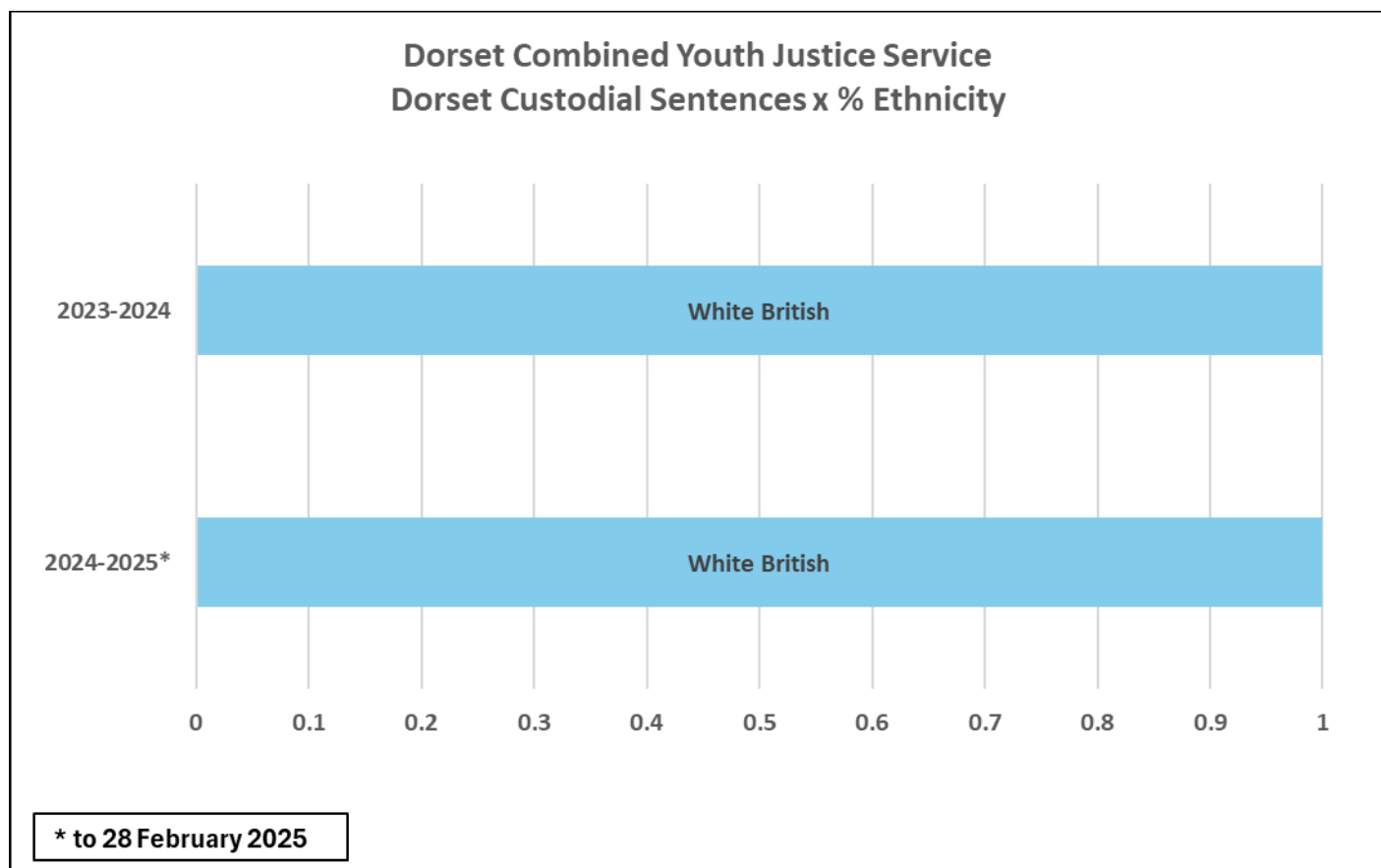
Although we do not see over-representation among first-time entrants, we also track how far children 'progress' into the youth justice system.

The charts showing the numbers of children cautioned or sentenced in 2024/25 indicate that children from ethnic minority groups in the BCP Council area are over-represented amongst

those receiving a caution or court order. More analysis is needed to understand the reasons for this over-representation, noting that DCYJS and Dorset Police also work with Dorset Council children, where children from ethnic minority groups are not over-represented.

At a national level there are enduring concerns about the over-representation of Black and mixed heritage boys amongst children in custody. Low numbers of local children being sentenced to custody make it hard to analyse data based on percentages. The following charts show custodial sentences by ethnicity in each local authority in recent years.





Amongst the BCP Council children who have been sentenced to custody, there has been previous evidence of over-representation of children who do not identify as white, although this has been reducing in recent years.

In summary, there is a nuanced and varied picture locally for over-representation by ethnicity. Overall, local children from global majority ethnicities are not more likely to be criminalised and are not over-represented. There are some subtleties to the data though, such as how children from different groups progress through the justice system, which require further attention.

Gender

We also monitor the gender breakdown of our caseload and the distribution by gender at different stages of the youth justice system. There tends to be a higher proportion of girls among children who are diverted from a formal outcome, with lower proportions of girls amongst those who receive a community or custodial sentence.

At a national and local level there is evidence that boys are significantly over-represented among children in custody. Locally, no girls have been remanded or sentenced to custody in the past 8 years.

The proportion of girls on the DCYJS caseload fluctuates but usually stays within a range of about 15%-20% of the total caseload, consistent with national rates. Girls accounted for 17% of our First Time Entrants in 2024/25, the same percentage as in 2023/24.

It is recognised that girls can have different needs and experiences from boys, requiring differentiated responses from YJS workers. Worker allocation decisions are taken carefully to be sensitive to each girl's needs. During 2024-25 a thematic case audit was undertaken to review our work with girls and to identify areas for improvement, as mentioned in section 5.7.

Children in Care

Local data shows that Children in Care are over-represented in our youth justice system. Analysis commissioned by the YJS Partnership Board for its meeting in October 2024 included the following observations and findings:

- In the previous 2.5 years, approximately 11% of children on the YJS caseload were or had been Children in Care.
- 13.75% of 'First-Time Entrants' over that period were Children in Care.
- The proportion of Children in Care on the YJS caseload between April 2024 and September 2024 was higher amongst children who had received court orders (29.6%), compared to children who had received a Youth Caution or Youth Conditional Caution (14%) and children who had received a diversion outcome (7%).
- 'Violence against the person' offences were more common for Children in Care than for children who had never been in care.
- There were 20 Children in Care on the DCYJS caseload in September 2024. All 20 were born male and identified as male.
- 15 of the 20 had been placed out of their home area at some point.
- 20 out of 20 had experienced school exclusions and multiple education placements.
- 15 out of 20 had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- 20 out of 20 had had contact with CAMHS and/or paediatric services, though these services struggled to sustain their engagement with the child.
- 5 out of 20 had significant physical health conditions or injuries.
- 19 out of 20 were reported as using drugs and/or alcohol. The average age of first use of cannabis was 11 in BCP and 12 in Dorset.
- 14 out of 20 had been assessed as being at risk of experiencing Extra-Familial Harm.

The YJS Partnership Board has requested actions in response to these findings, to look for opportunities for earlier intervention with Children in Care who are at risk of entering the justice system and to review the effectiveness of current multi-agency work with Children in Care who are known to the YJS. A multi-agency 'task and finish' group is working on these issues. This activity will be one of the YJS Partnership's priorities for 2025/26.

SEND

DCYJS caseload information shows that children in the local youth justice system are likely to have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. In February 2025, 24.6% of school-age children on the caseload had an Education, Health and Care Plan and a further 10.8% had the status of 'SEN Support'. This means that 35% of school-age children were identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, compared to about 20% in the local populations for their age group. It should be noted that the YJS was still collecting SEND information for some of these children, and there are others who are likely to have unidentified needs, meaning that the figure of 35% is probably an under-estimate of the level of SEND. These concerns fit with evidence collected by the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapists, showing high levels of communication needs amongst children in our local youth justice system and indicating the need for YJS workers to adapt their work to the needs of each child.

6.2. Prevention

The rate of children entering the justice system is influenced by the effectiveness of local prevention and diversion activities. 'Prevention' refers to work with children who have been identified as being at risk of going on to commit offences in future if they do not receive additional help. 'Diversion' describes the response to children who have committed an offence but who can be diverted from the justice system.

DCYJS does not directly undertake prevention work, focusing its activities on children who have committed a criminal offence. As described in section 5.5, however, the YJS is currently providing a two-year prevention project to identify the speech, language and communication needs of children in Key Stage 3 who are at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream school.

Each of our local authorities provides early help services, working with other local organisations like schools, the Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team and the voluntary sector.

In the Dorset Council area oversight of prevention activities sits with the Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, supported by more detailed work at locality level. The DCYJS Manager is a member of the Strategic Alliance and team members participate in locality meetings to identify and respond to children at risk. 'The Harbour' is a Dorset Council multi-disciplinary service which works with children who need additional support to prevent negative outcomes such as being taken into care or entering the justice system. DCYJS and The Harbour have close links, including joint work with children who have entered the justice system.

In the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area, preventative work occurs within the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Early Help. Both services use local data to determine the needs in the area and to then provide preventative services to meet those needs. Governance for the Community Safety work sits with the Community Safety Partnership Executive Board. The Board's role includes scrutiny of the work undertaken. It can also agree to commission further services. The YJS Head of Service sits on the CSP Executive board. Targeted early help services are overseen by the Early Help Partnership Board (a multi-agency partnership which also incorporates Family Hubs). The Board agrees what services may be needed and which to provide/ commission. Services are provided based on the *Continuum of need*, with clear pathways in relation to how to access the support and services. Performance monitoring for the Early Help Partnership Board includes data on the rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system.

6.3. Diversion

As mentioned above, DCYJS and Dorset Police were inspected in February 2025 as part of a joint national thematic inspection of work with children on Out of Court Disposals. The inspectors noted, in their informal inspection feedback, that *"There is a clear focus and shared commitment across the partnership both strategically and operationally to divert children from the criminal justice system wherever this is possible."*

Diversion work is undertaken locally on a partnership basis. Dorset Police, DCYJS and local authority Early Help services meet weekly as an Out of Court Disposal Panel to decide the appropriate youth justice outcome for children who have committed criminal offences. The panel looks for opportunities to divert children from a formal justice outcome when possible. This fits with the local priority to reduce First Time Entrants, described above in section 4.2.

Diversion activities usually involve additional support for the child and, when appropriate, some form of restorative response in respect of the criminal offence. The Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team, Early Help Services, Children's Social Care Services and DCYJS each provide support at the diversion stage. The appropriate service for each child is decided on the basis of the child's needs, risks and existing relationships with professionals.

During 2024/25 a total of 146 children received diversion options for a criminal offence, instead of a formal justice outcome. 74 of them received interventions from the Youth Justice Service. 72 received interventions from other services, principally the police Safer Schools and Communities Team or the local authority Turnaround workers.

During 2022/23 the Ministry of Justice announced a new programme, 'Turnaround', aimed at 'children on the cusp of the youth justice system'. Locally we used this programme to divert children from the justice system and to reduce our rate of First Time Entrants. Instead of potentially receiving a Youth Caution, children are considered for an informal response which is recorded by the Police as 'Outcome 22' (No Further Police Action but with support provided to the child).

Turnaround funding was used to employ targeted youth workers in each local authority and a part-time Speech and Language Therapist. Each child on the Turnaround programme was allocated to one of the local authority Turnaround workers who worked with the child and their family to agree a support plan to help them avoid further offending. Since Christmas 2024, this work has transferred to the YJS. The Turnaround Speech and Language Therapist assesses the child's communication needs and provides advice for the child, their family and professionals about the child's individual needs and how best to respond to them.

The local Turnaround programme is overseen by the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board. The Ministry of Justice require Youth Justice Services to submit quarterly data returns. Data up to the end of December 2024 showed that a total of 101 children had completed a Turnaround intervention, with another 21 currently receiving support through the Turnaround programme.

Funding for the Turnaround programme has been confirmed for 2025/26, albeit at a reduced level. The Turnaround eligibility criteria will be amended for 2025/26, to include Children in Care and children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan. Up till March 2025 children in these categories had been excluded from the Turnaround programme; these children were still given access to diversion outcomes, working with the YJS, but this activity could not be included in the Turnaround data returns.

6.4. Education, Training and Employment

Children in the youth justice system are less likely to stay in mainstream schools, to achieve good educational outcomes and to access education, employment or training after Year 11.

In February 2025, 24.6% of school-age children on the caseload had an Education, Health and Care Plan and a further 11% had the status of 'SEN Support'. There are also likely to be other children whose additional needs have not been identified or who would have been categorised as needing SEN Support if they were on roll at a mainstream school.

In recent years DCYJS has worked with local authority colleagues to improve the accuracy of the recording and reporting of school exclusions experienced by children on the caseload. In February 2025, 13 out of 65 school-age children on the caseload had been permanently excluded from school in the past 2.5 academic years, and another 26 children had experienced at least one fixed-term exclusion during that period. In total, 60% of school-age children had experienced a permanent or fixed-term exclusion during the past 2.5 academic years, with some of them experiencing multiple exclusions.

Improving education provision and outcomes for children in the youth justice system remains one of our strategic priorities.

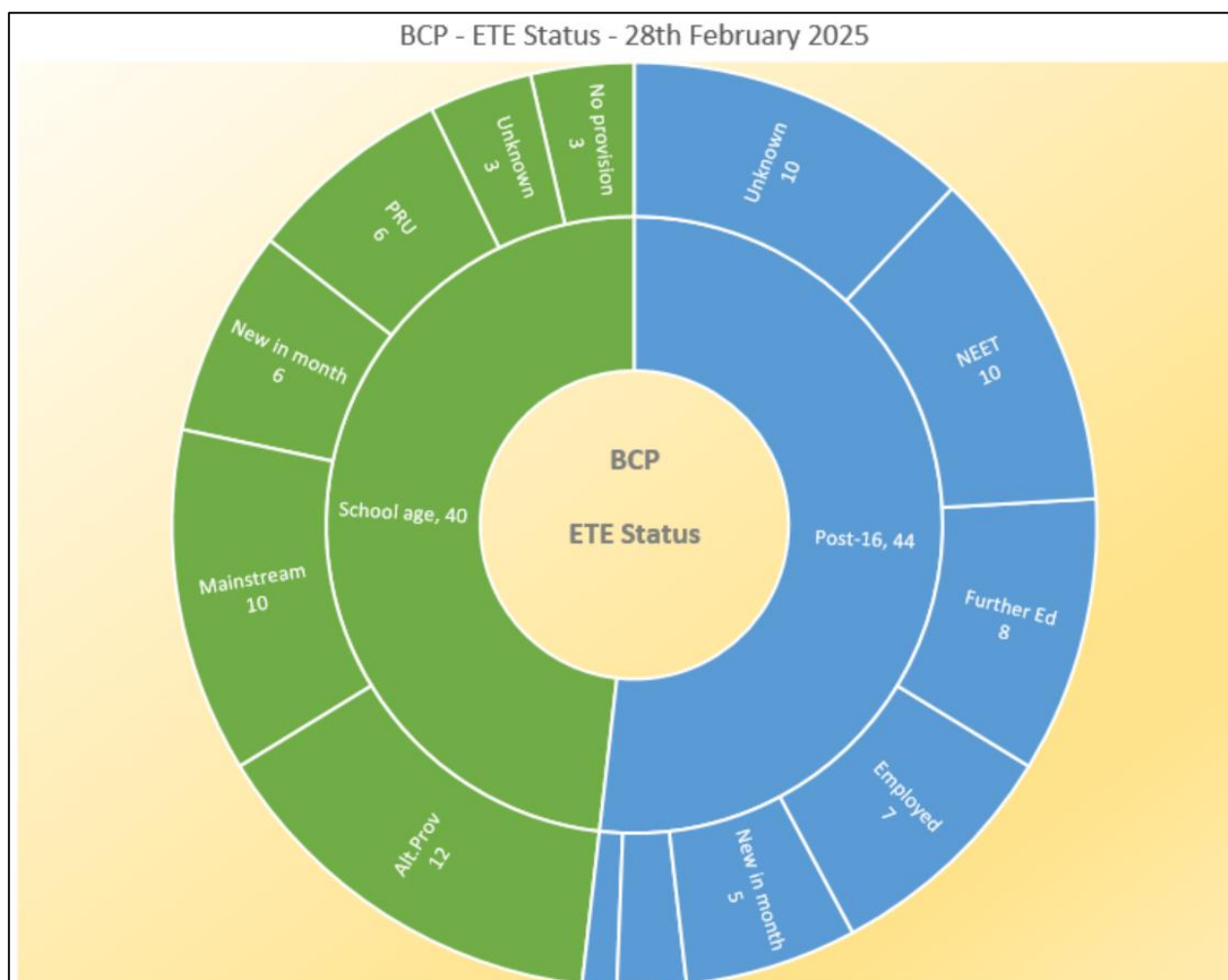
Each local authority's Director of Education is a member of the DCYJS Partnership Board. The headteacher of the BCP Council Virtual School and College is also a member of the DCYJS Partnership Board.

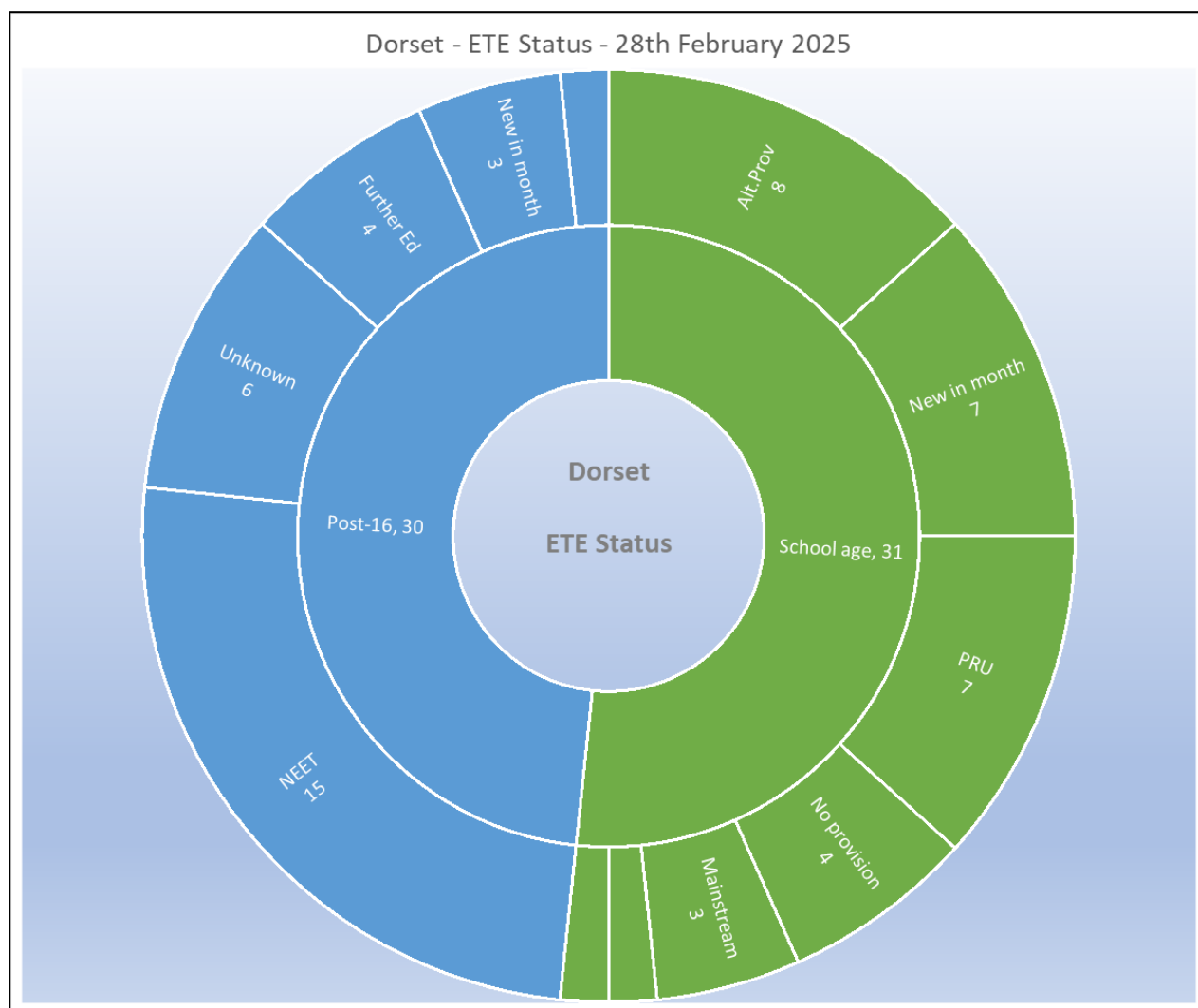
DCYJS employs two Education Officers, one focusing on school-age children and one supporting the post-16 age group. They provide advice to DCYJS case managers and work directly with young people to understand their needs and to support their attendance and engagement. They

also work with schools and local authorities to increase the suitability of provision, maintaining strong links with colleagues in the local authority Virtual Schools, the SEND teams and Inclusion services.

When a child is remanded or sentenced to custody, the appropriate YJS Education Officer is allocated to work on ensuring that the child's education needs are understood and met during and after the period in custody. It is a requirement of the SEND Code of Practice, for children in custody with an EHCP, that an up to date EHCP is shared with the custody education provider to enable the child's specific educational needs to be met. The YJS Education Officers liaise with custody education providers and local authority colleagues to ensure that all relevant information is shared.

The following charts show the education status of BCP and Dorset children on the YJS caseload at the end of February 2025:





These charts show the high numbers of school-age children who are not in mainstream school, and of those in the post-16 age group who are not in suitable employment or training. The service also monitors more detailed information, such as the number of hours offered and attended for each child, the social care and SEND status of these young people, to enable a focused response by our education specialists, working alongside relevant local authority colleagues.

Each local authority has a multi-agency group which monitors and acts on inclusion in education for the school-age children causing most concern in respect of their access to education. The DCYJS Education Officer attends these groups and represents the needs of children who are open to the YJS.

DCYJS occasionally works with children who are receiving Elective Home Education. The YJS Education Officer follows up each case where a child receives Elective Home Education to review the adequacy and safety of the arrangement and to offer more support if needed.

The numbers of young people who not in employment, education or training (NEET) or in employment without training reflects the limited opportunities for YJS young people, who can lack the necessary attainment levels to access the available provision. Actions taken in 2024/25 to address this gap include:

- The 'Discover You' project, run jointly with Upton Country Park, to increase young people's readiness for post-16 training and employment options.

- Funding provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for young people to train for the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS card).
- Increased use of AQA awards to certificate learning from activities undertaken during young people's contact with DCYJS.

Securing the funding to continue the Discover You project will be a priority for 2025-26.

6.5. Health and Communication Needs of Children in the youth justice system

Evidence shows that children who have contact with the justice system are likely to have significant health needs, including difficulties with mental health, physical health and substance use. DCYJS has a strong health team, reflecting the commitment of NHS Dorset and Dorset HealthCare to meeting the health needs of children in the youth justice system. The DCYJS health team is comprised of 2.8 full-time equivalent CAMHS nurses, a 0.8 Clinical Psychologist and 1.4 Speech and Language Therapists.

The health professionals in the YJS work directly with children and provide consultation and advice to YJS colleagues and other professionals. The YJS nurses meet regularly with colleagues in the Child in Care health team and the Criminal Justice Liaison and Diversion Service to ensure the integration of healthcare support for children in the youth justice system.

The specialist skills and knowledge of the YJS nurses and psychologist underpin the DCYJS commitment to trauma-informed practice through the Trauma Recovery Model. Children who will be under YJS supervision for more than 6 months are considered for the Enhanced Case Management (ECM) multi-agency formulation model, led by the YJS Psychologist.

A YJS nurse is allocated to all children who are remanded or sentenced to custody. The aim is to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of health care for the child as they move into custody, during the custodial period and as part of their post-release planning. The YJS nurses liaise with the healthcare provider in the custodial establishment. There have been some instances over the past year of delays in accessing prescribed medication for children in custody. The YJS nurses are tenacious and proactive in ensuring that the custody healthcare provider has all the necessary information to prescribe the correct medication for the child. The YJS health team will continue to strengthen links with custody healthcare providers in 2025/26.

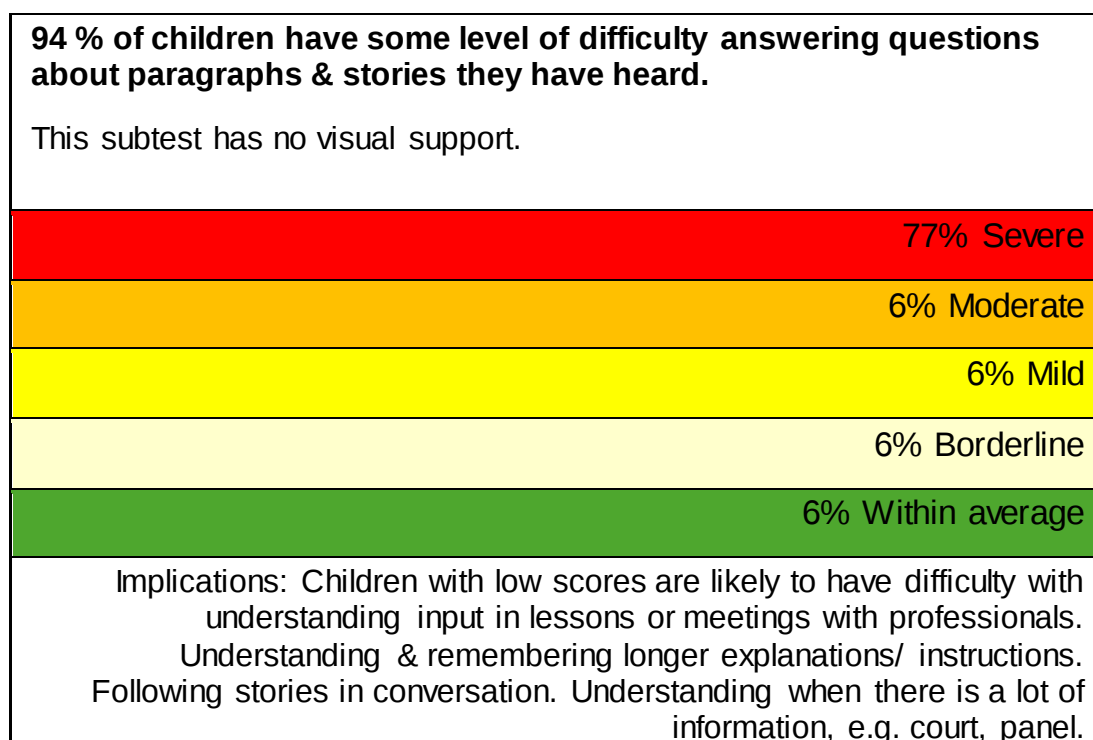
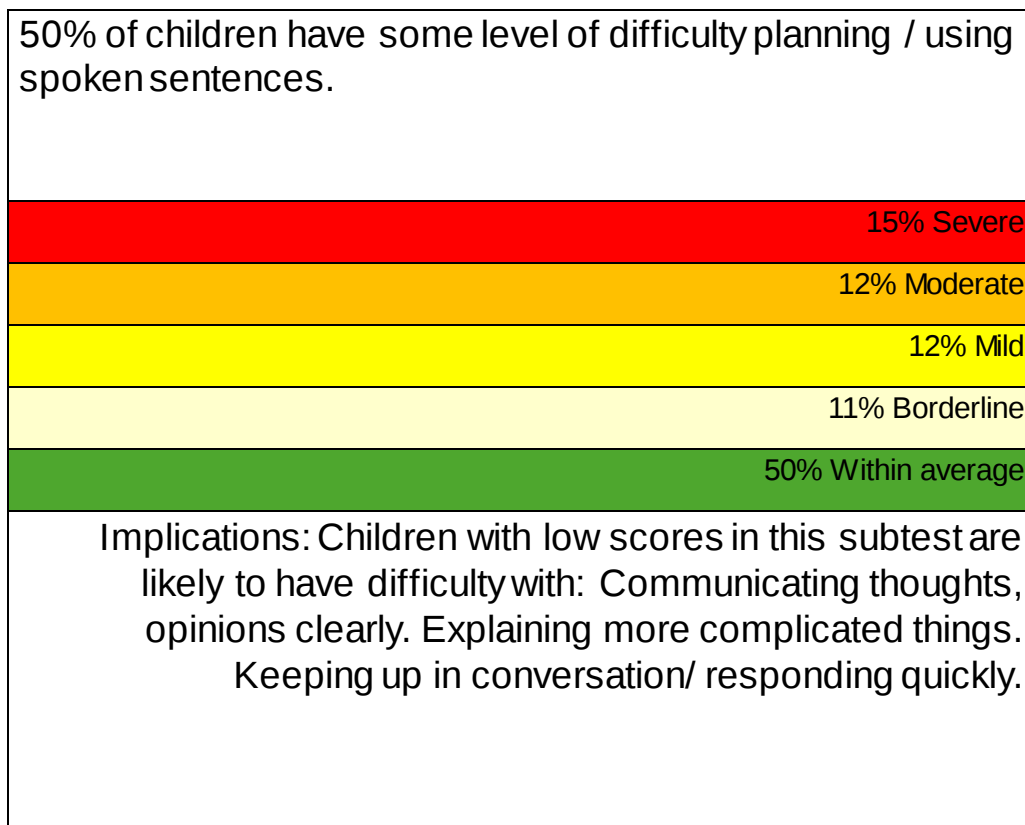
Access to ADHD assessments continue to vary according to the child's home area. If a child also has mental health needs requiring CAMHS support, an ADHD assessment can be accessed via CAMHS throughout the county. Paediatricians can provide ADHD assessments for children who are not open to CAMHS. In the west of the county paediatricians provide ADHD assessments for all children, but paediatricians in the east of the county only provide ADHD assessments for children under the age of 16. Children who are 16 or 17 in the east of the county, and not open to CAMHS, are therefore unable to access an ADHD assessment. YJS Nurses and managers have continued to flag this issue with NHS managers and commissioners. Although this service gap remains, the NHS Dorset representative on the YJS Partnership Board has given assurance that plans are being developed to resolve this issue.

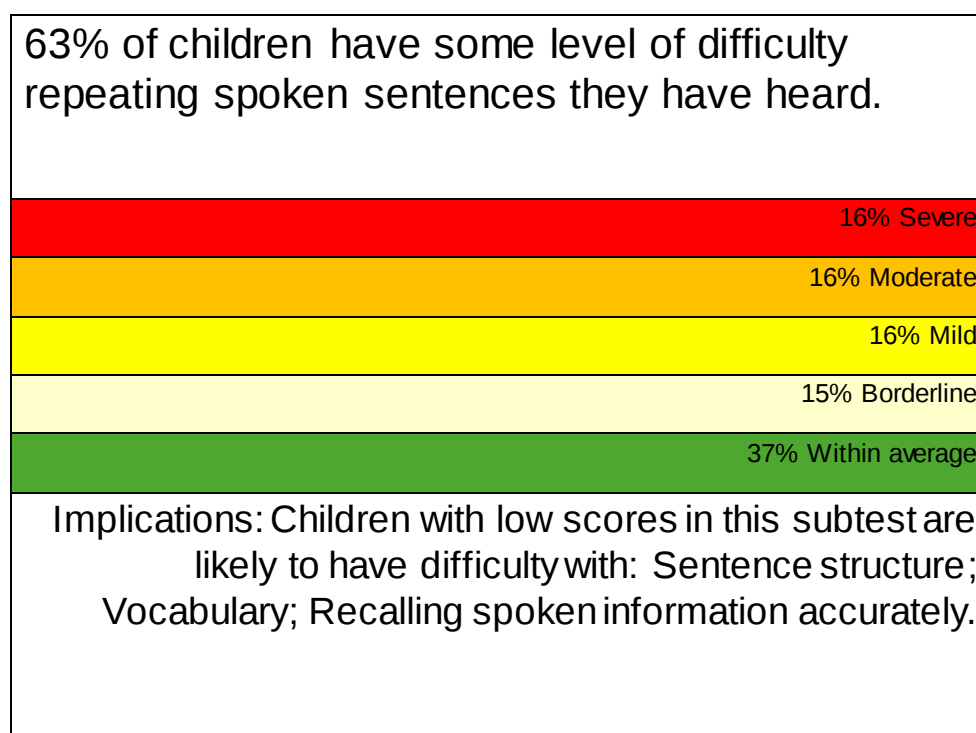
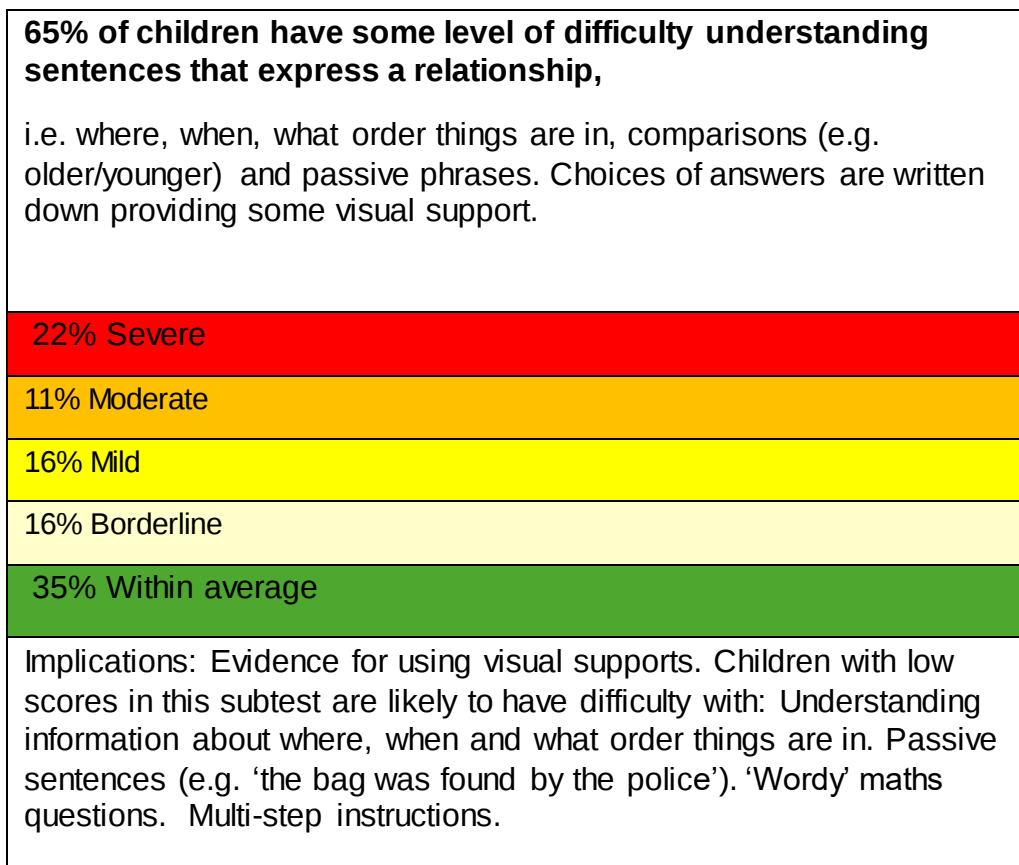
Speech and Language Therapists have been based in the YJS since 2018. Data has been reported in previous Youth Justice Plans to show that over 80% of children in contact with the justice system locally have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

The YJS Speech and Language Therapists use the formal language assessment 'Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – v5' (CELF) as part of their assessments, alongside assessment of Language for Behaviour and Emotions. Each assessment involves several sub-tests, to investigate different aspects of communication.

During 2024/25, the YJS Speech and Language team collated and analysed the results of all assessments of children known to the YJS in recent years.

A total of 202 assessments had been completed by February 2025, providing a robust sample size. The following charts show the aggregated results for each sub-test in the CELF assessment:





The data shows that children who are open to the YJS have particular difficulties in understanding spoken language. 94% did not reach the expected level in the 'Understanding Spoken Paragraphs' sub-test (it is worth noting that this test is carried out in a safe environment by a skilled practitioner. A child's communication abilities will deteriorate in more stressful situations).

The receptive language skills of children in the justice system tend not to be as strong as their expressive language skills. Adults may not realise that the child does not understand or cannot retain what the adult is talking about. These children may have the ability to mask their language difficulties and to use behaviour to prevent adults from finding things hard partially explains why it is so rare for a child's communication needs to have been identified before they enter the youth justice system. Other systemic factors such as services finding it difficult to engage families, disrupted education and reduction in early identification strategies will also have contributed to the difficulties in children having their SLCN identified in a timely manner.

There are important implications from this data analysis for the YJS and for other professionals about how they communicate and interact with children in the justice system. Workers in the YJS are shifting their practice to make greater use of visuals and activities, reducing the use of language-based interventions. It will be a YJS priority in 2025/26 to extend and consolidate these changes, and to support other services in the justice system to consider adjusting their communication styles.

6.6. Restorative Justice and Victims

Alongside the 'Child First' approach, Restorative Justice is a core principle underpinning the work of DCYJS. In January 2024 all YJS team members participated in training in 'Working Restoratively'. The course included a focus on how restorative work fits with and supports a trauma-informed, child first approach.

Whenever DCYJS work with a child whose offence harmed a victim, the DCYJS Restorative Justice Practitioners contact the victim to find out about the impact of the offence and to explain the opportunities for Restorative Justice activities. These contacts help us to meet our obligations under the Victims Code.

Delays in the youth justice system, which are more common in cases that go to court, make it harder to engage victims in activity to repair the harm they have experienced. Contacting the victim many months after the offence requires tact and sensitivity, emphasising the victim's choice in whether or how much they engage with our service.

The DCYJS Restorative Justice Practitioners previously received occasional negative feedback from victims about the decision-making process and outcomes for children who receive Out of Court Disposals (OOCs). Managers from DCYJS and Dorset Police met in March 2024 to review these concerns and to amend the processes for keeping victims informed and considering their views in the decision-making process.

HMI Probation and HMI Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services reviewed victim engagement in February 2025 as part of their inspection of local work with children who received OOCs. The inspectors responded positively to our new arrangements, commenting in their informal feedback that *"The capturing of the victims' wishes by police officers is a strength and inspectors noted the quality of this practice. This also ensures that opportunities for restorative justice can be considered at the earliest stage supporting the overall approach of the YJS in terms of its commitment to restorative justice. The victim agreed to contact from the YJS in almost every case"*.

During the past year the YJS Restorative Justice Practitioners have facilitated successful Restorative Justice Conferences, bringing together the child with the person harmed by the child's offence. The following example illustrates the positive impact that participants can experience from Restorative Justice.

A Restorative Justice Conference was held at a local library. Both parties wanted to explain their actions. The child felt the school had not understood the reason he had been carrying a knife (for self-harm). The headteacher wanted the child to understand the reasons why he had received a permanent exclusion. He also wanted to pass on good wishes from a number of staff members who remembered the child fondly and wanted to know that he was settled and had been able to 'move on'.

At the end of the Restorative Justice Conference, the team's RJ Practitioner spoke with the headteacher to check if the process was what he had expected and if it had achieved what he had wanted. The headteacher said that 'I will take back to the school and the Trust that if the opportunity arises to do an RJ conference it should be grabbed at with both hands. It was everything I hoped for. I feel we should not have to do this through the Youth Justice Service but should set up a way of doing this ourselves for all pupils who have been excluded'.

Another aspect of the team's Restorative Justice work is undertaking 'repairing the harm' activities with children, to help them make amends for their offence. Examples include making wooden planters or bird boxes to be sold for charities chosen by the victim. Other children work on community projects supported by the service or on conservation activities.

During 2024/25 the YJS reparation team successfully held stalls, to sell items made by children, at venues including County Hall in Dorchester, a BCP Council Children's Services event and Moordown Community Centre. The stalls help us both to raise money for charities chosen by victims and to raise the profile of the good work being completed by children working with the YJS.



Stall at County Hall in Dorchester

Over the past two years, the service has strengthened joint work between case managers, restorative justice workers and our reparation supervisor, to tailor each activity to the needs of the child and the wishes of the victim. The aim is to increase the child's sense of doing something constructive and meaningful to repair the harm caused.

Not all offences have a direct victim. During 2024/25 the YJS worked to develop restorative responses for offences like weapon possession and drugs possession.

Recent Youth Justice Plans have reported on progress in developing a restorative response for children who commit offences against police officers and other emergency workers. This approach was extended in 2024/25 to include a reparation project at Bournemouth Hospital, alongside ongoing work with the YJS Police Officers who can meet with young people to help them understand the human impact of offences against emergency workers.

Priorities for 2025/26 will include strengthening links with local communities for restorative and reparative activities, establishing reparative activities at Dorset County Hospital and preparing for the new Youth Justice inspection standards for work with victims.

6.7. Serious Violence and Extra-Familial Harm

Tackling extra-familial harm and reducing serious violence are priorities for strategic partnerships in both our local authority areas (as described in section 2 of this Plan).

During 2023 the YJS completed a case audit to review its work with children who commit offences with weapons. The focus on weapon offences reflected evidence of an increase in these offences in both local authority areas. The audit included the views of children, parents and YJS practitioners and led to changes in our risk planning and interventions for children who committed weapon offences. Work in response to the findings from that audit continued in 2024/25.

DCYJS uses the 'Trauma Recovery Model' in its work. One of the benefits of this approach is to understand and respond to the issues which may underlie a child's exploitation or their use of violent behaviour. As described in section 6.5, the YJS Psychologist leads multi-agency formulations under the 'Enhanced Case Management' approach for children showing the highest levels of trauma and concerns for the safety of them and others.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2021 introduced a Serious Violence Duty for specified authorities, including youth justice services, to work together to share data and knowledge, allowing them to target their interventions to prevent serious violence. The specified authorities in Dorset and BCP agreed to use our two Community Safety Partnerships to lead this work. DCYJS contributed to the Serious Violence Needs Assessment in each local authority, and to the subsequent action planning. In 2024 the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner appointed a 'Head of Violence Reduction and Prevention'. The post holder has joined the YJS Partnership Board and works actively with YJS managers and practitioners to ensure that the YJS is integrated into local initiatives to reduce and prevent violence.

One of the obstacles to effective work with children who have committed serious violence offences is the length of time that can elapse between the offence and the child appearing in court. This is a priority area for the DCYJS Partnership Board, with the aim of reducing delays and of mitigating their impact by offering voluntary YJS contact with young people while their alleged offences are under investigation. The YJS Head of Service has also raised this issue with the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, to add performance monitoring for the time between the offence and the charging decision to the Board's performance information.

The YJS Head of Service is also working with the local MAPPA Responsible Authorities to review MAPPA involvement and risk management while a MAPPA-eligible child or adult is under investigation or going through an extended court process.

Extra-familial harm occurs across the pan-Dorset area, with DCYJS seeing instances of exploitation and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals for children in both local authorities. DCYJS plays an active role in the partnership arrangements in both local authority areas to address child exploitation, participating in strategic and tactical groups as well as other multi-agency initiatives such as the 'Missing, Exploited, Trafficked' (MET) Panel in BCP Council and the Dorset Council Extra-Familial Harm (EFH) panels and the EFH Champions group.

Although it is rare for children to become radicalised or involved in violent extremism, the harms from such behaviours are significant for individuals and for the community. The YJS Head of

Service is a standing member of the 'Channel Panel' in each local authority. The YJS also engages actively as a member of the local Prevent Partnership.

6.8. Policing and Detention of children in police custody

DCYJS and Dorset Police work together closely on issues affecting children in the justice system. As well as the seconded police officers in the YJS, there is active police representation on the DCYJS Partnership Board. At an operational level there is daily contact between YJS Team Managers and the Sergeant in the police Youth Justice team.

In 2023 Dorset Police published its 'Child Centred Policing Strategy 2023-25' which "sets out Dorset Police's commitment to provide children and young people with a first-class policing response that is child-centred and part of an integrated and effective partnership approach. This means we will put the voices and needs of children and young people at the heart of the services we deliver to make them safer".

A 'Voice of the Child Scrutiny Panel' oversees the operational implementation of the strategy. The YJS Head of Service is a member of this panel, along with police leads from across the force.

Dorset Police is committed to reducing the numbers of children who are detained in police custody, as part of its Child-Centred Policing Strategy. A multi-agency 'Child Custody Detentions' group, led by the DCYJS Head of Service, monitors and addresses the use of police custody for children. The aim of the group is to reduce the number of children being arrested and, when an arrest is appropriate, to reduce the time the child stays in custody.

Data on child arrests is also reported to the YJS Partnership Board. The following table shows the child arrests in Bournemouth, Weymouth and Poole during 2024/25.

2024/25	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Auth Detention	21	27	19	29	35	25	39	24	17	13	29	28
Det Not Auth	4	2	1	1	6	2	4	2	1	3	4	1
10-13 Y/O	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	0	0	2	1
Overnight	9	8	6	10	11	7	22	11	7	5	15	17
Strip searches / Clothing Changes	3/0	1 / 0	3 / 1	4 / 5	4 / 3	2/3	2 / 0	3 / 3	1 / 2	0 / 1	5 / 0	2 / 1
Remand/warrant	0/4	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	2 / 2	1/4	0 / 1	0 / 2	0 / 0	0 / 0	5 / 0	0 / 1
C114 requested	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	5	0

These figures show the success of Dorset Police's active work to reduce the numbers of children being arrested locally. Custody managers have strengthened the challenge on whether the detention is justified, evidenced by the monthly figures showing the number of 'Detentions not Authorised'. This means a child has been brought to the custody suite but the custody sergeant has refused to authorise the detention.

The number of child arrests in Dorset has declined in the past 4 years, from a total of 501 arrests in 2021/22 to a total of 306 arrests in the past 12 months.

Although there has been less progress in reducing the duration of child detentions, the overall reduction in arrest numbers means that arrests tend to reflect more complex cases, potentially requiring longer detention periods.

Dorset Police have changed their approach to custody arrivals during the evening to reduce the numbers that are detained overnight. The following table shows both the reduction in child

arrests and the significant reduction in the numbers being detained overnight (a 47% reduction over the past 4 years):

Year	Average number of child arrests per month	Total annual overnight detentions
2021/22	42	242
2022/23	36	182
2023/24	32	150
2024/25	26	128

The Child Custody Detentions group previously identified a number of factors which can prolong a child's detention in police custody, including the availability of Appropriate Adults (AAs) and the time of day when the child arrives in the custody suite. The timeliness of Appropriate Adult attendance has improved since 2021, when the service was commissioned externally from 'The Appropriate Adult Service' (TAAS). The average response time for an AA from TAAS for a child in a Dorset custody suite was 57 minutes in the period July 2024-December 2024. This is a deterioration from past performance by TAAS, reflecting intermittent shortages of available Appropriate Adults. TAAS have committed to recruiting additional AAs to reduce the average arrival times.

When the police remand a child, ie charge them with an offence and refuse to grant the child bail, there is a legal requirement (under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984) to transfer the child to local authority accommodation until their appearance at the next available court. A child arrested on a warrant or for breaching bail must remain in police custody. In recent years, BCP Council and Dorset Council operated a joint arrangement whereby a foster carer was on standby each night to accommodate a child in this situation. Usage of this foster placement was very low, partly reflecting the very few remands of children in police custody. The standby foster carer arrangement was ended in April 2024, with each local authority making alternative arrangements.

The Child Custody Detentions group reviews every instance of a child being remanded, to check that the procedures and decision-making were correctly applied. The table on the previous page shows that there were only 8 instances of a child being remanded in 2024/25.

6.9. Transitions to Probation

The seconded Probation Officer post in DCYJS has been vacant since September 2024. The Probation Officer plays an important role in supporting transitions for young people who are moving from the YJS to Probation. In the period up to September 2024 we made progress to improve the transition arrangements, including the following changes:

- New process for Probation to request YJS information for young adults committing new offences who were previously known to YJS. 125 requests for information were made under this process during 2023.
- Extending the transition process for young people transferring from YJS to Probation, with additional joint meetings.
- Training session delivered by the YJS Speech and Language Therapist to Probation staff to help them respond to the communication needs of young adults.
- YJS attendance at MAPPA Level 2 or 3 meetings for new cases aged 18-21 when the YJS previously supervised the young person.

While the Probation Officer post has been vacant, there has been regular dialogue between the lead managers in the YJS and Probation for transition arrangements. Recruitment to the vacant post was delayed by staffing problems in the Probation Service, but the recruitment process commenced in March 2025.

The planned activity for 2024/25, to develop our methods for gathering feedback from young people about their experience of the transition process, has been delayed until the new Probation Officer has joined the YJS. We will also seek the views of practitioners in the YJS and Probation, to identify further opportunities for improvement.

6.10. Remands

There were 7 episodes of children being remanded in custody during 2024/25, the same number as the previous year.

Children who are remanded in custody gain 'child in care' status if they are not already a child in care. 3 of the 7 children were already a child in care before being remanded into custody.

One of the children was remanded in custody for one night, before being bailed the next day.

Another child was remanded into custody for 7 weeks, before making a successful bail application, supported by the YJS. This child was later convicted at trial and sentenced to custody.

Three children were remanded in custody for 5 weeks as co-defendants for the same offences before the CPS discontinued the charges against them due to insufficient evidence. The YJS is making enquiries about whether there is any review process in the CPS or police when a child is remanded into custody without sufficient evidence to go to trial.

The remaining two children are both care experienced young people who were remanded into custody shortly before their 18th birthday and remained on remand as young adults at the end of March 2025.

There were also 3 instances of children being remanded into the care of the local authority during 2024/25. Two of these children were already a child in care; the other child remained living at home with family during the remand period.

Each remand in custody is reviewed in team meetings to consider if alternative options could have been taken. In most cases the remand decision reflects the seriousness of the alleged offence, and may also reflect patterns of offending and previous non-compliance with bail conditions.

In November 2023, HMI Probation published a thematic inspection report on work with children subject to remand in youth detention. One of the recommendations from this report was for the YJS to help colleagues in Children's Social Care to understand the practice and procedure requirements for children who are remanded in custody. A YJS Practice Manager produced written guidance in 2024 about remand procedures to help social workers and social work managers when they work with children on remand.

6.11. Custodial Sentences and Resettlement

Six local children received custodial sentences during 2024/25 (the same number as the previous year). Information about custodial sentences and analysis of the young people is included in section 4.2 of this document. Information about the support for the health needs and education needs of children in custody is included in sections 6.4 and 6.5.

In recent years very few children have been released from custody before their 18th birthday. With low numbers going into custody, and some not being released before becoming adults, the approach to resettlement for each child is planned individually.

Finding suitable accommodation for children leaving custody can be challenging. DCYJS contributes to local authority care planning processes, promoting the early identification of the child's release address. The DCYJS Manager reports to the DCYJS Partnership Board on the timeliness of accommodation being confirmed for children being released from custodial sentences. This measure is also now included in the new youth justice Key Performance Indicators. The release address for children leaving custody is sometimes not confirmed until the last few days before release. As well as causing the child a lot of anxiety and distress, this makes it difficult to plan the child's resettlement, affecting access to education, health care and constructive activities.

'Release on Temporary Licence' (ROTL) is an option for children nearing the end of their time in custody. Day releases for specific purposes are agreed, for children with good behaviour records in custody, to help prepare them for release. DCYJS worked with a secure establishment in 2024 to confirm ROTL plans for a child who was approaching his release date. DCYJS managers attended briefings in March 2025 about new ROTL arrangements which are being piloted in 5 child custodial establishments.

6.12. Working with Families

DCYJS Parenting staff provide support to the parents and carers of children on the YJS caseload. Support can be provided under a Parenting Order but in practice it is always achievable on a voluntary basis. Most contact is provided on a one to one basis, focusing on communications, relationships, setting boundaries and applying consequences. The workers remain alert to risk and safeguarding issues, attending multi-agency meetings and supporting parents in their interactions with other services.

When appropriate, separate parenting workers can be allocated to a child's father and mother, in order to enable engagement with both parents.

Plans for 2025/26 include development of the YJS Parent Forums and building links with other services and provisions in the local authorities, such as the Family Hubs.

6.13. DCYJS Priorities and Plans for 2025/26

The following table shows the priorities and plans for DCYJS in 2025/26. This is a dynamic plan which will continue to be updated, recognising that other priorities will arise during the year.

DCYJS Partnership Priority	Area for Development	Partners and Staff Providing Support	Benefits
Earlier identification of speech, language and communication needs for children at risk of school exclusion	Continue to provide and develop the Re-Engage project to identify and support the communication needs of children at risk of school exclusion	Dorset HealthCare BCP Council and Dorset Council education services Schools and PRUs DCYJS SALTs and Head of Service	Reduction in school exclusions and future offending
Diverting children from the formal justice	Work with Dorset Police to develop	Dorset Police DCYJS HoS and Team	Avoid first-time entrants for motoring

system	alternative non-court options for motoring offences	Managers	offences such as speeding
Diverting children from the formal justice system	Take action in response to the 'areas for improvement' identified in the thematic inspection of work in Dorset with children on OOCs	DCYJS practitioners and managers Dorset Police BCP Council Dorset Council Dorset HealthCare Trust	Improved practice to strengthen confidence in diversion options
Reducing Serious Violence and Extra-Familial Harm	Regular dialogue and scrutiny meetings between Police CPS and YJS to track and progress delayed investigations	Dorset Police CPS DCYJS managers	Improved timeliness for offences reaching court.
Reducing Serious Violence and Extra-Familial Harm	YJS Nurses to provide one-to-one First Aid sessions to children for responses to weapon injuries	YJS health team Dorset HealthCare Trust	Children are better able to respond in an emergency, and they have increased awareness of the potential harm from weapons.
Reducing over-representation	Investigate and agree actions in response to black or mixed heritage children being over-represented amongst children on court orders	DCYJS practitioners and managers	Reduce the proportions of black or mixed heritage children amongst children on court orders
Reducing over-representation	Multi-agency task and finish group to agree and implement actions to reduce the over-representation of children in care in the justice system and to report on progress to the YJS Board	DCYJS managers and practitioners BCP Council Child in Care services Dorset Council Child in Care services Dorset HealthCare and NHS Dorset Child in Care health leads Dorset Police	Earlier identification to prevent children in care entering the justice system. Improved multi-agency support for children in care who are in the justice system.
Improving education outcomes	Secure funding to continue the Discover You programme	DCYJS funding partners DCYJS HoS DCYJS Education Officers	Improving young people's readiness for post-16 ETE options
Improving health outcomes – mental health	Improve YJS data recording and analysis of children's mental health needs and access to suitable support	DCYJS Dorset HealthCare	Assurance that children with mental health needs are receiving suitable support
Improving health outcomes – substance use	Review and develop joint working between YJS and young people's substance use treatment services	DCYJS With You Reach Public Health commissioners	Assurance that children with substance use needs are receiving suitable support

DCYJS practice improvement	Develop the team's use of collaborative planning, including exit planning, with children and families	DCYJS managers and practitioners	Working in partnership with children and families will strengthen their capacity to sustain positive changes without professional support
DCYJS practice improvement	Increase feedback from young people and practitioners about the transition from YJS to Probation	Probation DCYJS managers and practitioners	Identify and apply improvements to the transition process
DCYJS practice improvement	Develop the use of activities and visual resources for work with children in response to the evidence about difficulty processing and retaining spoken language	DCYJS practitioners and managers, supported by the DCYJS SALTs	Workers are better able to engage children in YJS interventions
DCYJS practice improvement	Build team members' knowledge and confidence to work with children on the impact of their online experiences and identity	DCYJS practitioners and managers	Better understanding of and support for children's online safety and reduced harm arising from online activity.
Child voice	Establish new methods to hear from children and engage them in our service development	DCYJS managers and DCYJS Activity Coordinator	Improved experiences and outcomes for children working with the YJS
Restorative Justice	Review current RJ and victim work in context of the new inspection criteria, including increased Board oversight of this activity	DCYJS Head of Service and the RJ manager	Meeting the new inspection standards for victim work will help to ensure the quality of our work with victims
Increasing public awareness and confidence in work undertaken by children to repair the harm from their offence	Increase the number of community projects, stalls and donations to charities	DCYJS RJ manager and RJ team	Enhanced victim satisfaction and increased public confidence
Custody and remand	Strengthen joint working with custody health and education providers, and community health and education services	Dorset Council and BCP Council Children's Social Care and Virtual School Dorset HealthCare DCYJS managers and practitioners	Improved health and education support and outcomes for children in custody and on release

7. Sign off, submission and approval

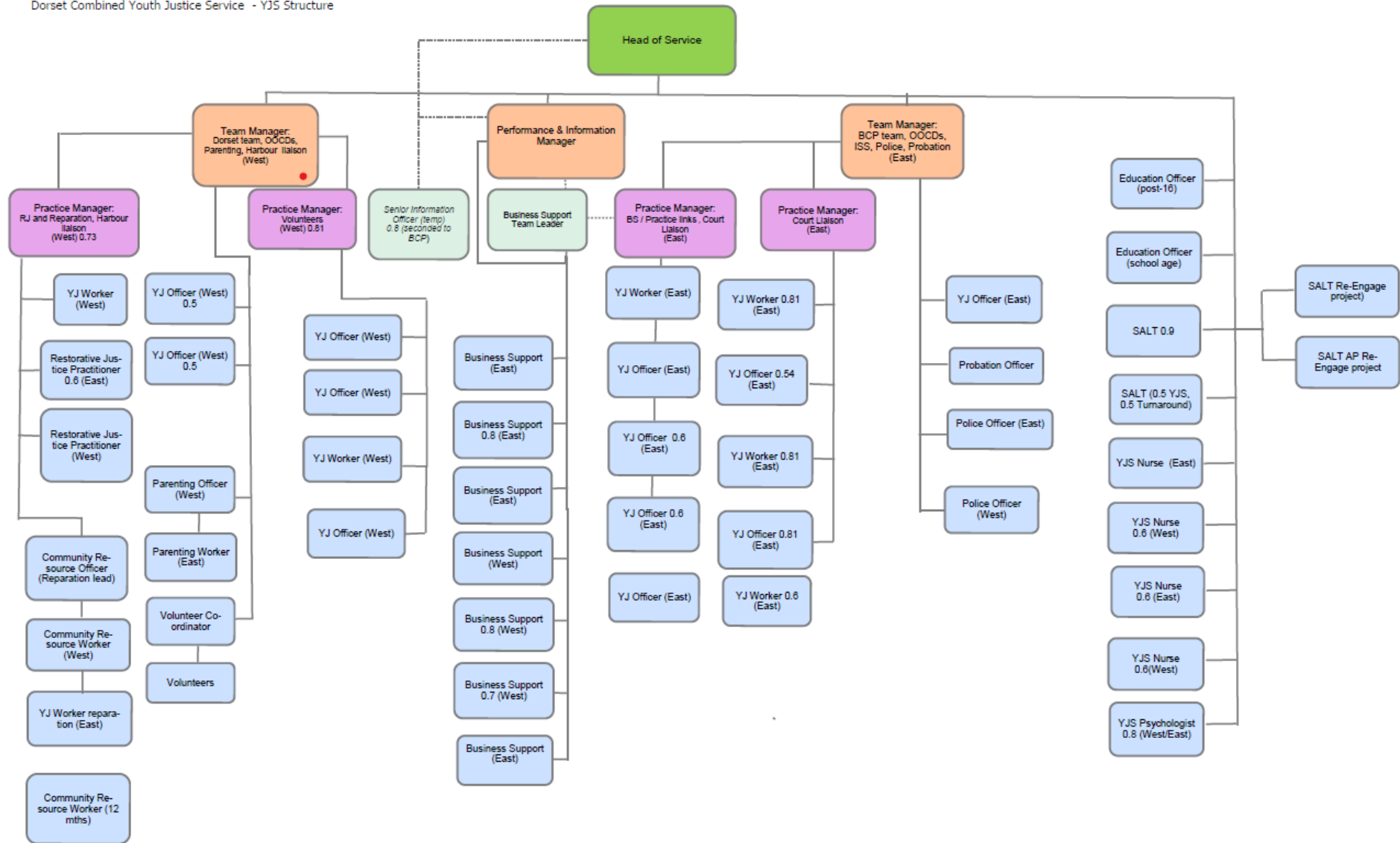
This Youth Justice Plan has been approved by the YJS Partnership Board in April 2023.

In accordance with 'Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000', Youth Justice Plans must be approved by the full council of the local authority. This Youth Justice Plan is subject to the scrutiny and approval processes of our two local authorities. It will be considered for approval by the full council of Dorset Council on 10/07/2025 and by the full council of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council on 22/07/2025.

Chair of YJS Board - name	Paul Dempsey
Signature	
Date	

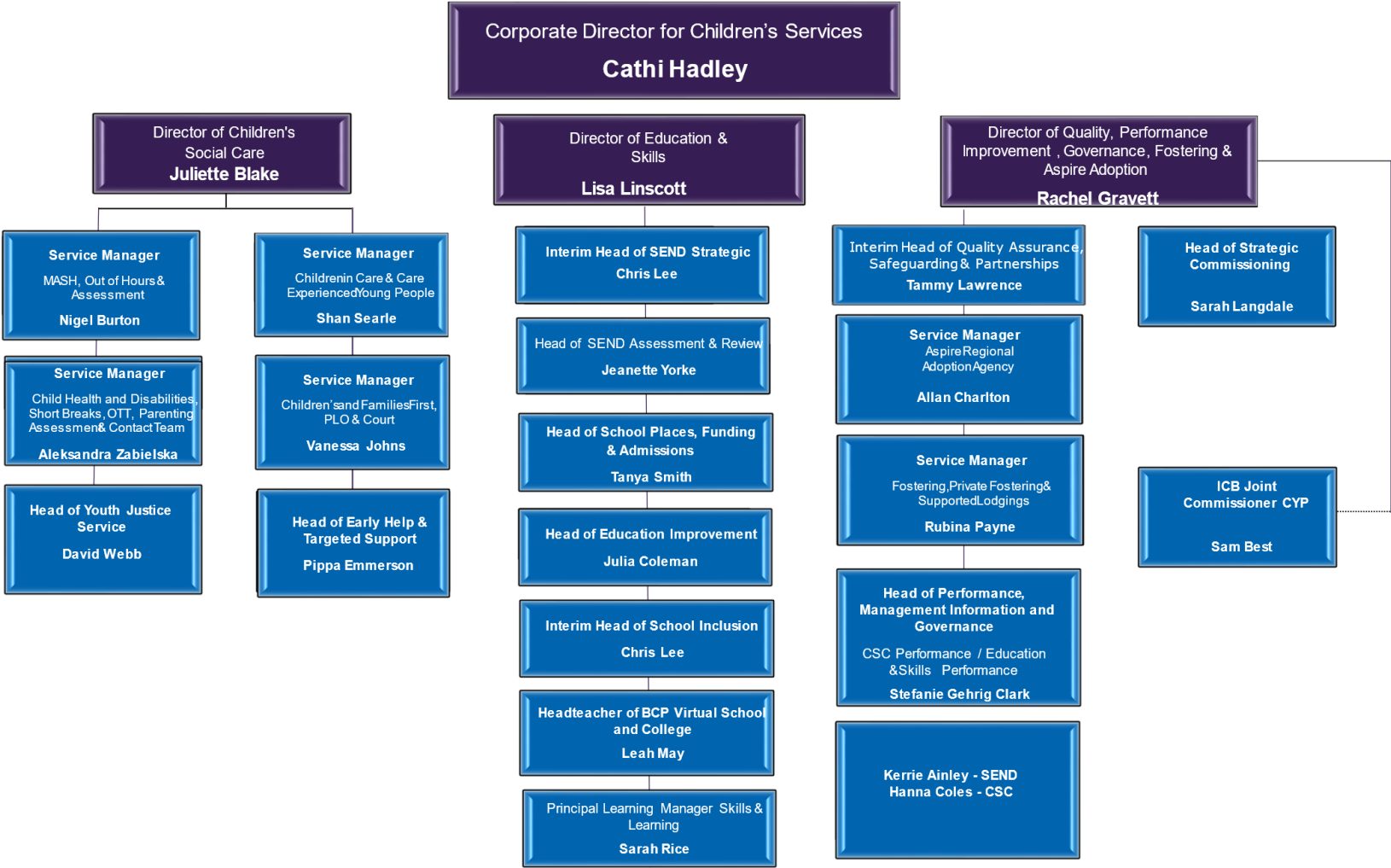
8. Appendix 1 – Service Structure Chart

The following structure charts show the staffing structure of Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service and where the service sits in the two local authorities.

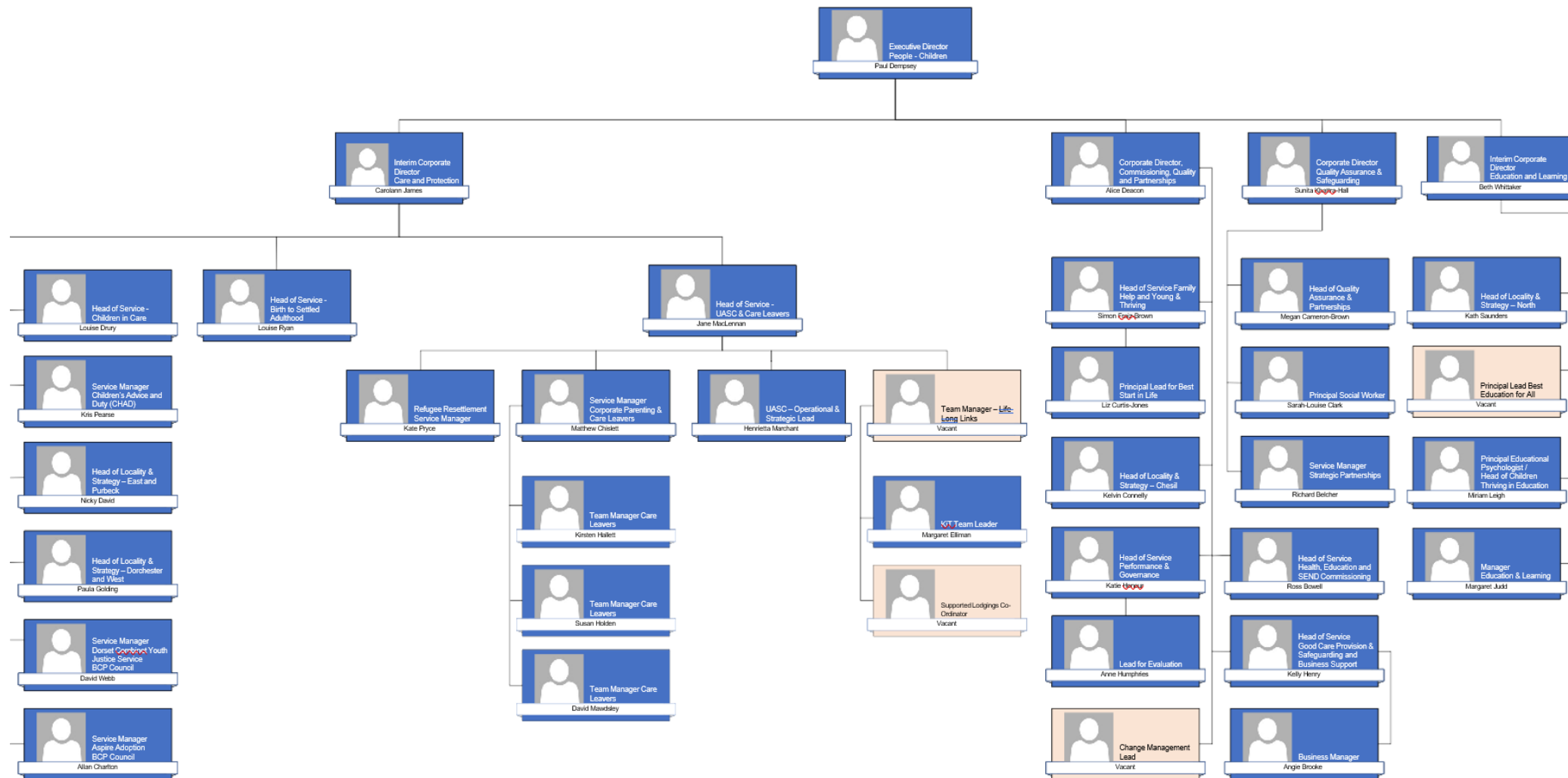


Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
January 2025

BCP Council Children's Services Extended Leadership Team



Dorset Council Children's Services Extended Leadership Team



DCYJS Staff and Volunteers:

The following table shows the gender, ethnicity and disability status of DCYJS staff members and volunteers:

YJS Staff at 3 March 2025

	Male	Female
White British	9	42
White Irish	1	0
White Other	0	1
Mixed	0	1
Prefer not to say	0	2
	10	46

YJS Volunteers at 3 March 2025

	Male	Female
White British	7	12
White Other	1	1
	8	13

Four staff members in DCYJS are recorded as having a disability.

9. Appendix 2 – Budget Costs and Contributions 2024/25

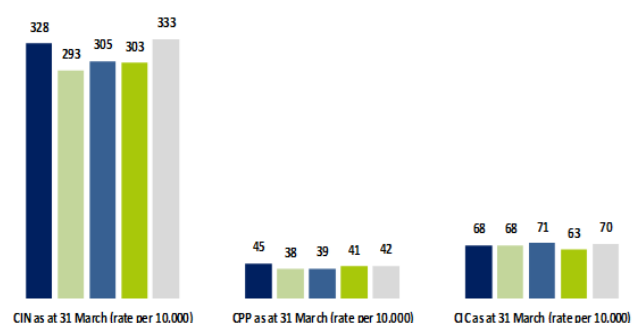
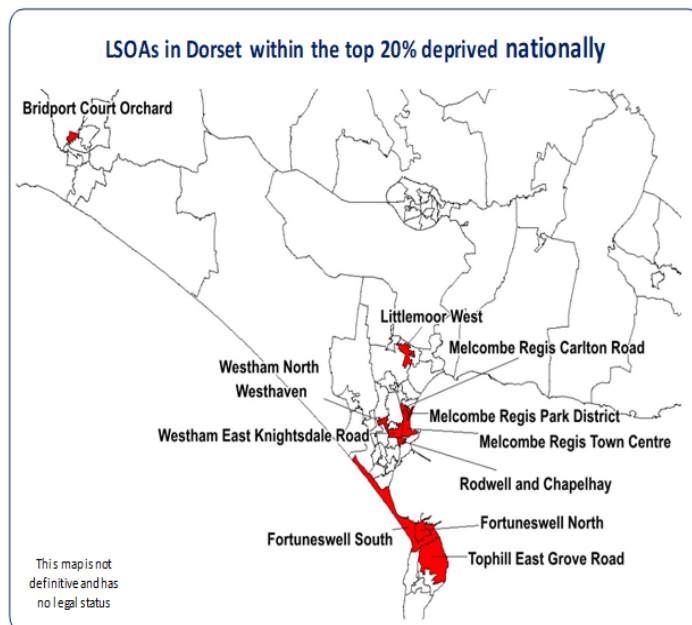
Partner Agency	24/25 Revenue (excluding recharges)	Staff
Dorset Council	£536,164	
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£628,622	
Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner	£81,927	2.0 Police Officers
The Probation Service (Dorset)	£5,000	1.0 Probation Officer
NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group	£22,487	2.8 FTE Nurses, 0.8 Psychologist, 1.4 Speech and Language Therapists
Youth Justice Grant	£767,922	
Total	£2,042,122	

Appendix 3 – Local Authority Demographic Information



Population	Age 10-17
Number of Children ¹	33,694
Male ¹	51%
Female ¹	49%
Pupils eligible for Free School Meals ²	22.0%
Pupils with SEN Support ²	14.6%
Pupils with an EHC Plan ²	6.7%
Pupils from Non-white Minority Ethnic groups ³	5.6%
25.7% children living in Poverty after housing costs ⁴	
Safeguarding	Age 10-17
Number of Children in Need ⁵	562
Male ⁵	50.5%
Female ⁵	48.9%
Indeterminate ⁵	0.4%
Number of Children with a Child Protection Plan ⁷	100
Number of Children in Care ⁶	315
Male ⁶	59.7%
Female ⁶	40.3%
Indeterminate ⁵	0%
Number of children and young people at risk of exploitation ⁷	
Significant	12
Moderate	30
Emerging	20

1. Dorset mid-year 2023 population estimates (published July 2024).
2. October 2024 School Census (includes all pupils at a Dorset School aged 10-17: ages as at 31 August 2024).
3. January 2024 School Census (all non-white pupils at a Dorset School, excluding 'Refused' and 'Information not yet obtained').
4. Based on the DWP/HMRC statistics "Children in low income families: local area statistics" (March 2024).
5. From MOSAIC, as at 31 December 2024. Excluding CP and CIC. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unborn.
6. From MOSAIC, as at 31 December 2024. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unborn.
7. From MOSAIC as at 31 December 2024.



■ Dorset 2023/24 ■ Stat Neighbours 2023/24 ■ Good+ 2023/24 ** ■ South West 2023/24 ■ England 2023/24

** Good+ Local Authorities are: Cornwall, East Sussex, Norfolk, Shropshire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Worcestershire

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole



Population¹: Age 10-17

Number of Children¹ 35,208
Male¹ 51%
Female¹ 49%

Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals² 20.5%
Pupils with SEN Support³ 14.3%
Pupils with an EHC Plan⁴ 5.2%

Pupils from Non-white Minority Ethnic groups⁵ 15.9%

25% children living in poverty after housing costs⁴

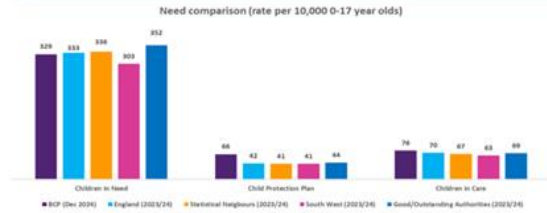
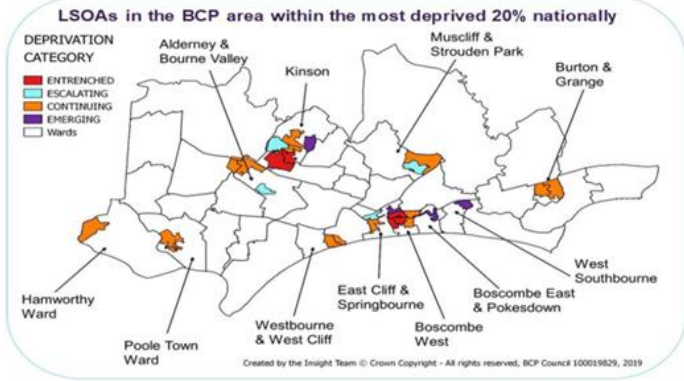
Safeguarding Age 10-17

Number of Children in Need⁵ 531
Male⁵ 58.0%
Female⁵ 42.0%

Number of Children with a Child Protection Plan⁷ 203

Number of Children in Care⁶ 376
Male⁶ 58.7%
Female⁶ 41.0%
Indeterminate⁶ 0.3%

Number of children and young people at risk of exploitation⁸
Suffering⁸ 18
Risk of harm⁸ 41
Potential concerns⁸ 35



1. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole population estimates (published July 2024)
2. October 2024 School Census (includes all pupils at a BCP School aged 10-17. Ages as at 31st August 2024)
3. January 2024 School Census (all non-white pupils at a BCP School, excluding 'Refused' and 'Information not yet obtained')
4. Local Child Poverty Statistics - <https://findchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty-2024> (June 2024)
5. From MOSAC, as at 3 February 2023, including CP and CC. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unknown
6. From MOSAC, as at 3 February 2023. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unknown
7. From MOSAC, as at 3 February 2023.
8. From MOSAC, as at 31 December 2024.

** Good+ Local Authorities are: Cornwall, East Sussex, Norfolk, Shropshire, Somerset, Suffolk, Wiltshire and Worcestershire

Common youth justice terms – national glossary

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health and life outcomes
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, Intervention and Moving on; an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenets to this approach which should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion

Child looked-after, also Child in Care	Child Looked After/Child in Care; where a child is looked after by the local authority
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
Community resolution	Community resolution; an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan; a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training or employment
EHE	Electively home educated; children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
EOTAS	Education other than at school; children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPPA	Multi agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not

	sent to court
Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
RHI	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
SLCN	Speech, Language and communication needs
STC	Secure training centre
SCH	Secure children's home
Young adult	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
YJS	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
YOI	Young offender institution

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CABINET FORWARD PLAN – 1 DECEMBER 2025 TO 31 MARCH 2026

(PUBLICATION DATE – 18 November 2025)



What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Council Budget Monitoring 2025/26 at Quarter Two	To update Cabinet with the financial position for 2025/26 and agree budget virements as necessary.	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Nicola Webb	Open
Individual Performance Framework Update	To consider an update report on the Performance Framework	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025				Sarah Deane, Katie Tomkins	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Vitality Stadium land - draft heads of terms	To outline the draft heads of terms and lease terms for the land parcels associated with the expansion of the Vitality Stadium, and provide officer recommendations on the preferred options.	No	Overview and Scrutiny Board 17 Nov 2025 Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; East Cliff & Springbourne; Littledown & Iford; Queen's Park			Gwilym Jones	Open
BCP Homes Asset Management and 30 year Business Plans	To set out and seek approval for an asset management plan to ensure that council homes are maintained to appropriate standards and a 30-year business plan that sets the long term funding for maintenance, new homes and services to council tenants and leaseholders.	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings, resident panels and feedback from tenants and leaseholders.	Kelly Deane, Matti Raudsepp	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Poole Crematorium - update and next steps opportunity	To update Cabinet on outcomes of commitment to meet with representatives of the bereavement industry and faith sector to discuss the feasibility of working in partnership to deliver cremator provision at Poole Crematorium and seek approval on proposed next stage options.	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	All Wards			Kate Langdown	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Sea Cliff and Chine Management	This report seeks approval to allocate the identified funding of £1.446m towards the management of the seafront cliffs, prioritising this funding against the identified actions required though the Cliff Management Working Group.	Yes	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; Bournemouth Central; Canford Cliffs; East Cliff & Springbourne; East Southbourne & Tuckton; Hamworthy; Highcliffe & Walkford; Mudeford, Stanpit & West Highcliffe; West Southbourne; Westbourne & West Cliff			Alan Frampton	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Home to School Transport	Present the findings from the in depth review completed by Edge Public Solutions on our Home to School Transport function, with a particular focus on how to transform the function to reduce costs and operate a more efficient service. Provide a recommended route forward and secure approval for next steps.	No	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25 Nov 2025 Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	All Wards			Lisa Linscott	Open
Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-2026	For information only.	No	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 10 Jun 2025 Cabinet 26 Nov 2025 Council 9 Dec 2025	All Wards			David Webb	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Poole Business Improvement District	To consider the report	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	Poole Town			Hannah Porter	Fully exempt
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update		No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025				Adam Richens	
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Expenditure Forecast	To seek approval for the overspend on the DSG for 2025/26	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards	Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the high needs block issue at the November 2025 meeting.	n/a	Nicola Webb	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Corporate Performance Report - Q2	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open
Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	To approve the ambitions, principles and a delivery framework to manage waste produced from homes and businesses across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole for the next 10 years.	Yes	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 19 Nov 2025 Cabinet 17 Dec 2025 Council 24 Feb 2026	All Wards	Residents, businesses, special interest groups,		Georgina Fry	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Housing and Property Compliance Update (Housing Revenue Account)	To provide information on how the council is meeting its responsibilities in ensuring that all council housing is managed to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings and residents panels.	Matti Raudsepp	Open
Financing Nature	To recommend options for improving nature through use of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Ruth Wharton, Martin Whitchurch	Open
Statutory Duty to Biodiversity	To report on our statutory duty to biodiversity and approve an action plan to support nature recovery	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Martin Whitchurch	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Designation of High Street Rental Auction area for Bournemouth town centre	To seek approval from Cabinet to designate the area in Bournemouth town centre for the High Street Rental Auction (HSRA) Programme.	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	Bournemouth Central	- Higher Education – BU, AUB, BPC, HSU - Agents - Bournemouth Property Association - Poole Property Club - Developers - Landlords - BIDs – TC, Coastal, Christchurch, Poole - DMB and BAHA - Bournemouth Chamber - Dorset Chamber - BH Live - Police/PCC	EHQ webpage and an online form asking agreement with the proposed area and any comments on the area. Respondent type was also collected, together with equalities questions. The consultation stage is now complete. The period opened on 15 July 2025 and closed on 12 August 2025.	Charles Fynn	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Water Safety Framework	The Water Safety framework's aim is to provide a clear approach to water safety for the prevention of drowning across the BCP Council conurbation	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Amanda Barrie, Helen Wildman	Open
Council Budget Monitoring 2025/26 at Quarter Three	To update Cabinet on the financial position for 2025/26 and budget agree virements as necessary.	No	Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Nicola Webb	Open
Regeneration Progress Report	This report advises Cabinet on progress on the Holes Bay, Poole Dolphin Leisure Centre, Bournemouth International Centre and Towns Fund projects.	No	Overview and Scrutiny Board 5 Jan 2026 Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; Hamworthy; Poole Town			Emily Cackle	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Investment & Development Directorate - Regeneration Programme	To provide a bi-annual update on the progress of the Council's regeneration programme	No	Overview and Scrutiny Board 5 Jan 2026 Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards			Amena Matin, Jonathan Thornton	Open
Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy 2025 to 2035	To introduce the Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy for the next 10 years	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9 Jul 2025 Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards	Experts by experience, Adults Social Care, Childrens Social Care, Adults Commissioning, Childrens Commissioning, NHS Dorset, Dorset Healthcare, Local Registered Providers	Workshops and meetings Autumn 2025	m	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Budget Monitoring 2025-26 at Quarter three	To update Cabinet on the financial position of the council.	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	N/a	N/a	Adam Richens	Open
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget setting 2026-27	To seek approval for rent and other charges to tenants and leaseholders for 2026-27 and proposed expenditure on the repair and maintenance of council homes.	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings and panels	Kelly Deane	Open
BCP Homes Performance	To provide quarterly performance to Cabinet to provide assurance that the management of council homes is effective	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings	Kelly Deane	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Bournemouth Development Company: Winter Gardens Site Development Plan	To present Cabinet with a new Site Development Plan for the Winter Gardens.	Yes	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	Bournemouth Central			Rob Dunford	Open
Revised Local Validation Checklist	To provide an update the clear list of required documents and plans required to validate a planning application	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026		agents/ developers and officers	28 days. now completed.	Katie Herrington	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Bus Subsidy Review	To consider the outcome of a full network review of the council's subsidised local bus services and to recommend changes to Council to support budget setting for 2026/27 as well as informing the Medium Term Financial Plan.	Yes	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026 Council 24 Feb 2026	All Wards	Bus Passengers Bus Passenger Representative Organisations (including groups representing older people and people with disabilities) Schools Bus Operators Neighbouring authorities	Public consultation 16 June to 27 July 2025. On-line plus on-bus paper surveys.	John McVey, Richard Pincroft	Open
Corporate Performance Report - Q3	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
The development of a framework of registered housing providers (RPs) to deliver affordable housing using BCP sites		Yes	Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards			Kerry-Marie Ruff	
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031	To inform on the impact of the Strategy since 2021, propose new Strategy and agree the related Delivery Plan	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25 Feb 2026 Cabinet 1 Apr 2026	All Wards			Rachel Stewart	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
BCP Homes Performance	To provide quarterly performance to Cabinet to provide assurance that the management of council homes is effective	No	Cabinet 27 May 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings	Kelly Deane	Open
Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)	To present outputs from Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) consultation and to present proposed LTP4 Policy Document complete with Implementation Plan for approval/adoption.	Yes	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20 May 2026 Cabinet 27 May 2026 Council 2 Jun 2026	All Wards	Residents (BCP and neighbouring authorities), partners, organisations and businesses that operate/exist in BCP area and are impacted by transport.	Exact dates tbc, but 6 to 8 week public consultation required, note: LTP4 engagement was facilitated in Spring 2024.	Wendy Lane, Richard Pincroft	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Housing Strategy Review	To provide an annual update about the delivery of the BCP Housing Strategy 2021-2027	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20 May 2026 Cabinet 24 Jun 2026	All Wards			Rachel Stewart	Open
Special School Funding	It is recommended to: - Note the contents of this report - Agree for this piece of work to proceed as noted and be further considered with financial modelling available	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards				Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
DfE SEND review next steps	To consider the DfE review next steps	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed				Rachel Gravett, Shirley McGillick, Sharon Muldoon	Fully exempt
Children's Services Early Help Offer	Summary of findings and recommendations from an ongoing review of our current Early Help services	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards			Zafer Yilkan	Open
BCP Council Domestic Abuse Strategies	To gain agreement by Cabinet to publish the Prevention of Domestic Abuse Strategy, Safe Accommodation Strategy and the Perpetrator Strategy including delivery plans.	Yes	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards	People with lived experience, Health, Social Care, Police, third sector specialist organisations, Local Providers have all been consulted prior to the Public consultation.	Public consultation 09-03-25 to 28-04-25 O&S Safe Accommodation Working Group.	m	Open