

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL**  
**CABINET**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2026 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 (Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Cllr G Farquhar and Cllr T Slade

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

104. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Millie Earl declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 110 (Two Riversmeet Studios) as a BCP Leisure member in Poole and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

105. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

106. Public Issues

Cabinet was advised that there had been no petitions or questions submitted by members of the public on this occasion, but that one statement had been submitted in relation to Minute No 108 (Council Tax – Tax base 2026/27) and this is set out below.

Public Statement

**Public Statement from Darren Pidwell, Chair of the Mudeford Sandbank Beach Hut Association (MSBHA) on Agenda Item 6 (Council Tax – Tax base 2026/27)**

We are frustrated that BCP Council are again targeting Mudeford Sandbank hut owners to raise additional revenue and with no prior consultation. Annual costs will rise by 24%, to £5200 pa, doubling since April 2023. For many, this will become a significant financial burden.

This is additional to the 2023 harmonisation increases, when we were told that a significant proportion of that money raised would be invested into beach facilities. None happened, the infrastructure is now almost untenable.

The huts have no mains water, electricity or sanitation. Public toilets and standpipes have to suffice. They can be occupied for only 8 months of the year. How can these be considered as "homes"? What is the legal basis for Council tax?

We recognise the Council's difficult financial position, but further penalising hut owners is no longer fair or viable. This proposal must therefore be rejected.

107. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

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

The Chair of the Board, Councillor Kate Salmon presented the recommendation from the Board as set out below, copies of which had been circulated to Members of the Cabinet and published on the Councils website prior to the meeting.

***Recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Board Meeting held on 5 January 2026***

***O&S Board agenda item 8 Regeneration Progress Report***

*The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that, to enable effective lobbying of Government in the future, the draft of the BCP Growth Plan be shared with O&S Board Members when available and that Overview and Scrutiny be embedded in the plan's development and approval process.*

*(Majority Decision)*

The Leader thanked Councillor Salmon and the Board for bringing their recommendation to Cabinet and advised that she was minded to accept the recommendation and that a formal response would be provided to the Board.

108. Council Tax - Tax base 2026/27

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 calculated and presented the proposed council tax base for council tax setting purposes in line with current legislation and guidance.

In presenting the report the Portfolio Holder provided an explanation of how the base was calculated.

Members of the Cabinet spoke in support of the report highlighting the difficult financial situation of the Council and the importance of maintaining the same level of council tax support scheme.

Further to this Cabinet acknowledged the representations received in relation to the Mudeford Beach Huts and the increased council tax charges for hut owners.

**RECOMMENDED that Council approves: -**

- (a) the report for the calculation of the council's tax base for the year 2026/27 and recommends the tax base to Full Council; and**
- (b) pursuant to the report, and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, the amount calculated as the council tax base for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council for 2026/27 is 152,481.7**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Finance

**Reason**

The Council is required by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, to calculate the council tax base for the financial year 2026/27.

**109. Housing and Property Compliance Update (Housing Revenue Account)**

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 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report provided performance information setting out how the council meets its responsibilities in ensuring that all council housing within the Housing Revenue Account is managed in a way that meets compliance with current health and safety legislation, best practice and regulatory standards to ensure the health and safety of residents, and that it also sets out issues concerning compliance and demonstrates how these are being managed.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that the report included an update on Damp and Mould, Decent Homes, Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), Stock Condition and an internal Compliance Audit as part of a commitment to keep Cabinet informed on a quarterly basis on BCP Homes matters.

Cabinet members expressed thanks to officers for their work on this particularly in regard to dealing with issues of damp and mould.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet noted the compliance information provided which details how the council is performing against statutory building compliance and property related matters on its council housing.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

The council, as a landlord, has many legal obligations it must satisfy to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its tenants and leaseholders. It must also adhere to the regulatory standards as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing, particularly the Safety and Quality Standard.

Councillors should also have oversight and assurance of compliance against the legal and regulatory requirements that are placed upon it through this annual report to Cabinet.

110. Two Riversmeet Studios

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 the report detailed the feasibility and financial considerations for capital borrowing to fund a two-storey extension to Two Riversmeet Leisure Centre (2RM) to address the identified need for dedicated studio space in Christchurch, and that the investment aimed to enhance the centres health and fitness offer, increase membership and income whilst supporting community wellbeing and aligning with the Councils corporate strategy.

Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet questioning the priorities of the Cabinet and whether this was an essential choice, the timing of the report and the appropriateness of the involvement of the Audit and Governance Committee.

In relation to this the Chief Financial Officer advised that there was a requirement for such recommendations to go to the Audit and Governance Committee in order for them to be satisfied with the project and assured of the ability to pay back additional prudential borrowing.

Cabinet members spoke in support of the recommendations and of the important investment highlighting that the investment would subsequently generate the additional income to cover the borrowing and that the scheme was in effect a stand-alone scheme.

Further to this Cabinet members emphasised the need to invest in all of the council leisure centres in the future.

**RECOMMENDED that Council: -**

- (a) agrees to option 2 approving the building of a two-storey facility extension at Two Riversmeet Leisure Centre (2RM) creating two brand new multi-use studios costing £1.8m, subject to planning permission;**
- (b) notes the detail in the financial and legal implications; and**
- (c) delegates to the Director of Commercial Operations in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations, the implementation of this decision.**

**It is RECOMMENDED that Audit and Governance Committee recommend to Council: -**

**Approval of an increase in the authorised borrowing limit of the Council to accommodate the £1.8m financing for the extension at Two Riversmeet Leisure Centre proposal.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations

**Reason**

Enhancing 2RM Leisure Centre with dedicated studio space will allow for the centre under BCP Leisure to grow and develop enhancing the financial position by giving a fresh dedicated offer within Christchurch. The project aligns with the corporate strategy ensuring people can be active and healthy maximising opportunities for our communities.

Councillor Millie Earl declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as a BCP Leisure member in Poole and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

111. 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.

112. Cabinet Forward Plan

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

The meeting ended at 11.10 am

CHAIRMAN