

Notice of Council



Date: Tuesday, 22 July 2025 at 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY

Chairman:

Cllr L Dedman

Vice Chairman:

Cllr S Bull

Cllr C Adams
Cllr S Aitkenhead
Cllr H Allen
Cllr M Andrews
Cllr S Armstrong
Cllr J Bagwell
Cllr S Bartlett
Cllr J Beesley
Cllr P Broadhead
Cllr D Brown
Cllr O Brown
Cllr R Burton
Cllr J J Butt
Cllr P Canavan
Cllr S Carr-Brown
Cllr J Challinor
Cllr A Chapmanlaw
Cllr B Chick
Cllr J Clements
Cllr E Connolly
Cllr P Cooper
Cllr M Cox
Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson
Cllr B Dove
Cllr M Dower

Cllr M Earl
Cllr J Edwards
Cllr G Farquhar
Cllr D Farr
Cllr A Filer
Cllr D A Flagg
Cllr M Gillett
Cllr C Goodall
Cllr A Hadley
Cllr J Hanna
Cllr E Harman
Cllr R Herrett
Cllr P Hilliard
Cllr B Hitchcock
Cllr M Howell
Cllr A Keddie
Cllr M Le Poidevin
Cllr S Mackrow
Cllr A Martin
Cllr D Martin
Cllr G Martin
Cllr J Martin
Cllr C Matthews
Cllr S McCormack
Cllr P Miles

Cllr S Moore
Cllr A-M Moriarty
Cllr B Nanovo
Cllr L Northover
Cllr R Pattinson-West
Cllr M Phipps
Cllr K Rampton
Cllr Dr F Rice
Cllr J Richardson
Cllr V Ricketts
Cllr C Rigby
Cllr K Salmon
Cllr J Salmon
Cllr P Sidaway
Cllr P Slade
Cllr T Slade
Cllr V Slade
Cllr M Tarling
Cllr T Trent
Cllr O Walters
Cllr C Weight
Cllr L Williams
Cllr K Wilson
Cllr G Wright

All Members of the Council 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 attend or view the live stream of this meeting at the following link: <https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Mid=6078>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services on 01202 096660 or 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

GRAHAM FARRANT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

14 July 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
(janie.berry@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. 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 3 June 2025.

15 - 32

4. Announcements and Introductions from the Chairman

To receive any announcements from the Chairman.

5. 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.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeID=151&Info=1&bcr=1>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is mid-day Wednesday 16 July 2025 (3 clear working days before the meeting).

The deadline for the submission of a statement is mid-day Monday 21 July 2025 (mid-day the working day before the meeting).

The deadline for the submission of a petition is Tuesday 8 July 2025 (10 working days before the meeting).

6. Petition: 'End Council Support for Netanyahu Twinning'

Council is advised that a petition with 2000+ valid signatures has been received, titled: 'End Council Support for Netanyahu Twinning'.

Statement:

We the undersigned petition the council to take all measures within its power, to cease support for the twinning relationship with Netanyahu, Israel, including but not limited to: Supporting any official or unofficial visits, exchanges, or cultural programs linked to the twinning. Promoting or endorsing any materials or signs related to the twinning, and consequently, remove all signs, plaques, and promotional materials related to the twinning from council-controlled spaces. Providing any financial or logistical support to Netanyahu or its representatives. Disclose all council expenditures related to the twinning and commit to full transparency moving forward. Taking this action will allow the council to demonstrate its commitment to upholding

human rights, equality, and peace.

Justification:

Reasoning:

Netanya is a city in Israel that supports and benefits from the ongoing occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people. At a time when Israel is carrying out a genocide in Gaza, continuing this twinning sends the wrong message. Ending council support reflects our community's commitment to human rights, equality, and peace.

Notices of Motions in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 relating to this matter

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillor K Salmon and seconded by Councillor J Salmon.

Motion: suspension of council support for the Bournemouth–Netanya twinning arrangement

Council notes the content of the public petition presented at its meeting of 22 July 2025 and resolves to:

1. Suspend all support for the Bournemouth–Netanya twinning arrangement with immediate effect until Council decides otherwise;
2. Remove existing road signs and anything else within the Council's control that refers to the twinning within the public realm (including online), within two months of this resolution; and
3. Instruct the Leader and Chief Executive to write, within four weeks, to the Mayor of Netanya and the Chair of the Bournemouth-Netanya twinning association confirming the Council's suspension of civic support until circumstances allow the matter to be reviewed.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Recommendations from Cabinet and Committees

7. Standards Committee 8 July 2025 - Minute No. 8 - Annual Report on Code of Conduct Complaints

33 - 40

RECOMMENDED that the Annual Report of the Standards Committee be noted.

8. Recommendations from Cabinet - 16 July 2025

To consider the recommendations arising from the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 16 July 2025. The recommendations will be circulated as soon as practicably possible following the meeting of the Cabinet. A copy of the reports and appendices to the Cabinet have been published and are available on the Council's website on the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=6064&Ver=4>

<p>9. Amendments to the Constitution arising from the Standards Committee</p> <p>Following the recommendation of the Standards Committee this report seeks Council approval to amend the Constitution to include the Officer Code of Conduct and to update the training requirements for Councillors who are appointed to the Standards Committee.</p>	<p>41 - 56</p>
<p>10. Members' Allowance Scheme</p> <p>This report seeks Council's approval of the Scheme of Allowances for 2025-2026 Municipal Year and incorporates the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on their review of the Members' Scheme of Allowances for 2025/26.</p> <p>Consideration of the Scheme of Members' Allowances was deferred by Council on 10 December 2024 pending the conclusion of the Pay and Reward review which is included as a separate item on the agenda for this meeting.</p>	<p>57 - 88</p>
<p>11. Notices of Motions in accordance with Procedure Rule 10</p> <p>1. REPAIR AND REUSE INITIATIVES</p> <p>The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillor R Herrett and seconded by Councillor E Harman.</p> <p>This Council notes:</p> <p>The UK is the second highest producer of electronic waste per capita in the world. Repair and reuse is central to achieving a truly circular, less wasteful, economy. They help to tackle climate change and achieve our net zero ambition, reduce living costs for UK households and create green skilled jobs.</p> <p>There is strong public support for further repair and re-use initiatives, and for manufacturers to enable spares and repairs to be easily accessible, affordable and installable.</p> <p>This Council believes:</p> <p>We should be responding to increasing public demand for repair services and skills, advocating for a return to a strong UK fixing economy and championing reuse to give products a second life.</p> <p>Repair should be a thriving sector of our economy. Where products are designed to be durable and easily repairable by default and in which</p>	

manufacturers actively support their products for as long as possible. A future where products are given a second life through reuse, repair is the easiest option for everyone when something breaks, and recycling is saved for the very end of a product's useful life.

This Council resolves to:

- a. Endorse the Repair and Reuse Declaration.
- b. Support the Bournemouth Repair café and other organisations promoting Repair and Reuse across the BCP area through access to networks and space, and funds where available.
- c. Write to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, and Energy and Climate change asking that they support the Repair and Reuse Declaration and examine measures that the government can take to further repair reuse in manufacturing, training in repair skills and supporting the community.

2. VACANT SITES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillor P Cooper and seconded by Councillor P Canavan.

This Council notes:

- The escalating need for affordable and social housing across the BCP area, with many residents in housing stress or on long waiting lists.
- The growing number of vacant and underused sites including:
 - The long-neglected Sydenham's timber site,
 - The derelict Old James Brothers scrapyard, and
 - The stalled former Power Station development land.

These sites have remained undeveloped for years, blighting the area, attracting anti-social behaviour, and contributing nothing to local housing need or community wellbeing.

This Council believes:

That speculative land banking is unacceptable in the face of a

housing crisis.

That there is a duty to local residents to use all available means to bring these sites forward for affordable housing development, in line with Labour's policy of delivering social and council homes.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Undertake an urgent audit of all vacant or stalled development sites across BCP.
2. Assess each site's potential to deliver affordable housing, with a published report outlining options and obstacles.
3. Use all available legal, planning and enforcement tools – including compulsory purchase powers where justified – to persuade developers and landowners to act.
4. Press central government for stronger powers to deter land banking and support councils to deliver genuinely affordable homes for local people.

3. MANAGING SEASONAL PARKING PRESSURES

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillor P Canavan and seconded by Councillor E Connolly.

This Council notes:

- The concerns raised by residents and stakeholders regarding the recent BCP Council parking consultation, which proposed parking restrictions for large numbers of residents without prior engagement, notice or with input from ward councillors and other key stakeholders;
- The recurring seasonal pressures on local parking infrastructure, ongoing issues of illegal, dangerous and inconsiderate parking experienced on busy days, particularly near the beach and other public open spaces;
- The importance of tourism to the area and regional economy alongside the need to protect residents from the impact of that

tourism;

- That available car parking space does not meet demand at peak times in the year;
- The challenges in enforcing poor parking, due to both the Council's limited resources and national limitations such as on parking fines;
- The growing number of people living in vehicles, including van dwellers, near public open spaces, which can exacerbate seasonal pressures on parking, on top of year-round pressures on parking experienced in some residential areas.

This Council recognises:

The need to explore alternative methods to tackle illegal and inconsiderate parking at peak times of year;

The financial and operational challenges BCP Council faces, including limited resources, and that parking enforcement alone is insufficient to manage complex, evolving parking pressures;

That visitors arriving in BCP after driving long journeys can find limited opportunities on arrival to park conveniently and appropriately in a way that benefits residents;

That a more joined-up, forward-looking strategy is needed, with solutions developed collaboratively, reflecting the views of all communities and maintaining fairness;

That the motion on developing a Community Pact with van dwellers, previously supported by this Council, will be discussed at the Environment and Place Overview Scrutiny Committee in September, including identifying designated stopping points for van dwellers, which should help alleviate the additional pressures from people living in vehicles.

This Council resolves to:

- a) Ask the Overview & Scrutiny Board to undertake a review of the recent parking consultation, with the aim of improving future engagement processes. This review to include feedback from residents, business owners, tourism representatives and other stakeholders.

- b) Undertake a feasibility study for a Park & Ride scheme, either during peak months or as a permanent arrangement, working in partnership with local transport providers.
- c) Develop a Seasonal Parking Strategy that assesses both parking provision and seasonal demand and explores;
 - i. Temporary use of suitable vacant or underused council-owned land to meet short-term seasonal demand;
 - ii. Liaison with the Police around greater enforcement against illegal and antisocial parking and explore other enforcement options;
 - iii. Improved signage directing visitors away from congested roads and warning of the risk of fines, clamping and being towed;
 - iv. Greater use of preventative measures such as temporary physical barriers to areas with recurrent dangerous parking e.g. that restricts emergency vehicles access;
 - v. Updating parking restrictions in popular areas such as Boscombe Overcliff Drive, such as removing overnight parking.
- d) To lobby Government again on increasing parking fines to levels that will deter illegal and inconsiderate parking, or to provide alternative support to tackle the challenges of seasonal tourism.

4. STANDING UP FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillor K Salmon and seconded by Councillor S Bull.

Council notes that:

1. Following assurances from government that a permanent solution to the SEND funding crisis would be found this financial year, BCP Council is already having to borrow c.£60m to plug the gap between Government grant and our High Needs spending in 2025/26, placing an extra interest burden of £7.5m on budgets and services this and subsequent years.
2. There was no announcement on SEND reform as part of the

Spending Review, other than that this would now come later in the year. Instead, the statutory “DSG override” that keeps the deficit off local-authority balance sheets has been extended for a further two years, offering no long-term solution to spiralling costs and leaving BCP Council in an increasingly precarious financial position.

3. The Leader of BCP Council has recently written to the Deputy Prime Minister requesting an urgent amendment to the financial arrangements around the DSG deficit, in order to prevent the council from imminent financial collapse.
4. Research by the Institute of Fiscal Studies and the London School of Economics clearly states that the UK government’s two-child benefit cap is dragging an ever-increasing number of children into poverty, and that this has a detrimental effect on their development and life chances.
5. Professional bodies including Adoption UK, Beacon House and Kinship warn that the dramatic cuts made to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF) in April 2025 are already having a devastating impact on vulnerable care-experienced children.
6. Local parents and carers tell us that assessment waits, placement shortages and post-permanence support cuts are harming children’s education, wellbeing and family stability.

Council believes that:

1. Every child - irrespective of family income, order of birth or route to permanence - deserves timely assessment, appropriate support and the chance to thrive.
2. Long-term structural under-funding cannot be fixed by short-term borrowing that simply shifts the cost onto council tax-payers.
3. Our five constituency MPs have a critical role in securing fair national funding and legislative change, and they must hear directly from the families affected.

Council resolves to;

1. Convene, within three months, a public roundtable hosted in an appropriate venue and invite;
 - All 5 of our conurbation's MPs;
 - Parents and carers of children with SEND;
 - Adoptive parents and special guardians;
 - Children and young people with SEND and/or who are care experienced.

The MPs will be asked to set out the actions they will take in Parliament and to report back to Full Council with what steps they are taking to get concrete solutions from Government.

2. Instruct the Leader of the Council and political group leaders to draft a joint letter to the Chancellor and the Secretaries of State for Education and for Health and Social Care, calling urgently for;
 - a funded plan to write off historic DSG deficits and provide sustainable high needs funding going forward;
 - removal of the two-child cap in Universal Credit and Child Benefit to reduce child poverty;
 - immediate restoration of the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund to pre-April 2025 levels and index-linking thereafter, with funding confirmed for multiple years ahead.
3. Ask the Chief Executive to work through the LGA to explore collective legal or lobbying options should Government continue to fail to act on the DSG deficit.

5. PREVENTING ILLEGAL PARKING IN THE BCP COUNCIL AREA

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillor R Herrett and seconded by Councillor M Earl.

This Council notes;

The widespread issue of poor parking significantly affects all road and

pavement users as well as people living in the most affected areas. Such behaviour is not only a nuisance but it also endangers the public and hinders the ease of travel, with a particularly disproportionate impact on those using pushchairs, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and those with mobility issues.

A government consultation on pavement parking closed in November 2020, the results of which have not been released. Pavement parking in London has been illegal since 1974, Local authorities can only enforce where there are already waiting restrictions, or introduce additional TRO's at a local cost.

Current measures available to local authorities are inadequate. Successive governments have failed to adjust fines for inflation and, since 2008 the maximum fine in England (excluding London) has remained at £35 if paid within two weeks. The use of cameras for parking enforcement, except at bus stops and zig-zags, was abolished in 2014. Moreover, modern technologies are not yet permitted for use in enforcement by councils, despite being available and used for parking enforcement in non-council owned car parks.

This council has been actively lobbying for increased fines for errant parking, advocating for penalties that serve as a true deterrent. Additionally, we propose setting towing fines at levels that ensure full cost recovery while also acting as a deterrent.

A permanent, or seasonal Park and Ride would not be commercially viable with the current parking fee structure. Moreover, government guidance issued in 2022 means clamping is not permissible by councils in most circumstances.

The Government Minister fundamentally misunderstands the issue, responding to a question put by a local MP saying that they are 'determined to keep costs low for motorists, which is why they keep a cap on the fines a council can give.' Whilst London has been permitted to lift their fines just this year to £160, (£80 if paid in 14 days).

This Council believes:

That illegal parking affects safety, mobility and impacts the day-to-day life of those who rely on pavements to get around, and that keeping fines

suppressed only benefits those who are willing to break the law.

This Council resolves to:

1. Ask the leader to write to all five MPs, asking they add their signatures to the early day motion for the release of the pavement parking report.
2. Further ask the area's five MPs to write and offer support that BCP Council be able to charge a higher fine due to exceptional geographic circumstances, or enter a trial, with fees set at a level comparable with other areas that have been allowed to increase fees this year, reflecting a need for a deterrent and to fund the service effectively.

12. Questions from Councillors

The deadline for questions to be submitted to the Monitoring Officer is Monday 14 July 2025.

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

To consider any urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution.

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.

This page is intentionally left blank

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 03 June 2025 at 7.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr L Dedman – Chairman

Cllr S Bull – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr C Adams, Cllr S Aitkenhead, Cllr H Allen, Cllr M Andrews, Cllr S Armstrong, Cllr J Bagwell, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr D Brown, Cllr O Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr J J Butt, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr S Carr-Brown, Cllr A Chapmanlaw, Cllr B Chick, Cllr J Clements, Cllr P Cooper, Cllr M Cox, Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson, Cllr B Dove, Cllr M Dower, Cllr M Earl, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr D Farr, Cllr A Filer, Cllr D A Flagg, Cllr M Gillett, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr J Hanna, Cllr E Harman, Cllr R Herrett, Cllr P Hilliard, Cllr B Hitchcock, Cllr A Keddle, Cllr M Le Poidevin, Cllr S Mackrow, Cllr A Martin, Cllr D Martin, Cllr G Martin, Cllr J Martin, Cllr C Matthews, Cllr S McCormack, Cllr S Moore, Cllr A-M Moriarty, Cllr B Nanovo, Cllr L Northover, Cllr M Phipps, Cllr K Rampton, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr J Richardson, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr J Salmon, Cllr P Sidaway, Cllr P Slade, Cllr T Slade, Cllr T Trent, Cllr O Walters, Cllr C Weight, Cllr L Williams, Cllr K Wilson and Cllr G Wright

7. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Beesley, J Challinor, E Connolly, C Goodall, M Howell, P Miles, R Pattinson-West, K Rampton, V Ricketts, V Slade and M Tarling.

8. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Millie Earl declared an interest in Minute No.20 (Motion in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 – Protecting and Revitalising Library Services) and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

9. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 25 March 2025, and the Annual Council meeting held on 6 May 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

10. Announcements and Introductions from the Chairman

The Chairman updated Council on her activity since the last meeting of the Council, which included two events: -

- The 150th Anniversary of East Dorset Sailing Club, which was attended by HRH Princess Anne

- Presenting the Chairmans Awards, the Chairman advised that this year the Mayors of the three towns of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole had been asked to nominate who they thought should receive an award from the Chairman with awards being given to:
 - Bournemouth – Darren Wiles
 - Christchurch – Mary Reader
 - Poole – Poole Borough Band

The Vice Chairman addressed Council congratulating the newly elected Mayors of the three Towns, Councillor Mark Howell – Poole Charter Trustees, Councillor Jackie Edwards – Bournemouth Charter Trustees and Councillor Vivienne Charrett – Christchurch Town Council.

11. Public Issues

The Chairman advised Council that given the significant number of questions and statements received the time limit for public questions and statements would be extended to 30 minutes.

Further to this the Chairman advised that questions and statements from those in attendance in person would be taken first and that in accordance with the Constitution where a question to which an answer is to be given is not reached within the time limit that a written answer shall be provided to the questioner within two working days of the meeting and a copy emailed to all Councillors. In addition, the Chairman advised that remaining statements would be published on the Councils website.

Public Questions

Public Question from Ian Beeching

Jeremy Bentham, the philosopher and jurist, contended that the moral code should provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.

The widely held opinion by the majority of local people reveals the transport and infrastructure policies adopted by BCP Council since 2023 has been an unmitigated and extremely costly failure.

What is the Portfolio Leader going to do about rectifying the disaster of bringing about the longest continuous traffic jam the conurbation has ever seen, when will he stop spending millions of £'s on unused cycle lanes, while trying to placate a vocal minority - BHAT?

As a democratically elected councillor - what right does Hadley have to ignore those ideals to put his own personal happiness above those of the greatest number of people in the BCP area?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Ian, the council's Network Management Team which includes Street Works coordination, the Intelligent Transport Systems and Traffic Signals teams, work collaboratively to try and minimise disruption to the public.

30 years ago, long before I was a Councillor, I can recall that congestion was a growing problem in this area, it is not new or caused by me in the last 2 years despite what some posts on Social Media may tell you.

In recent years the council has been very successful in securing grants from central government for a variety of Local Transport priorities including

- the Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant (TSOG)
- Challenge Fund for resurfacing,
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for bus priority measures and new shelters with real time information and CCTV,
- Active Travel England Funds for walking and cycling
- and the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) for walking, wheeling and public transport improvements.

Delivery of these improvements to the transport network, alongside utilities infrastructure emergency repairs and upgrades inevitably leads to disruption to the transport network.

In regard to your specific point about investment in “unused cycle lanes”, where new lanes have been installed the majority of the cost is often on traffic management and the resurfacing of the carriageway for all users.

These grants have been secured from central government against national competition to deliver change in line with two national policies: Gear Change and Decarbonising Transport: A Greener, Cleaner Britain.

Post-scheme monitoring indicates that there is a site dependent increase in cycle usage on the TCF schemes, averaging 13%, with one site seeing a 61% increase.

For pedestrians, increases are indicating an average of 28% increase, again site dependent

This is not about my personal happiness, but about supporting safety and choice for road users rendered vulnerable by the actions of others, and the huge impacts onto families affected by trauma or death on the highway.

Public Question from Gabriele Sanger-Stevens

Last year the Echo ran a series of stories featuring the Ark Cafe business in Poole Park. The articles advised of substantial business loss and demands for the opening of Whitecliff Gate, that being the cause for these losses. “Legal action” and “very expensive proceedings” to be brought were the quotes used.

Can the Council detail what actions have been received from that or any other business and is the Council, or it’s appointed representatives, in any ongoing negotiations involving Whitecliff Gate?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Gabriele, I am advised that beyond an initial letter, and the press coverage you mention, no further actions have been received from this or any other business in the park.

Public Question from Marian Cousins

Has BCP council asked for (or received) any feedback from the emergency services regarding traffic delays that they have experienced, as a result of several major roads being narrowed due to Cycling Infrastructure projects,

such as Whitelegg Way, Wallisdown and Wimborne Road, including bollards and road closures eg: at Poole Quay.

Recently a number of SWAST paramedics have stated on social media platforms that there is a risk to life as a result of these changes.

Has there been any confirmed adverse impact to serious Police or Fire Service incident responses, or to health conditions and/or any additional deaths due to the increased Ambulance journey times, which all our emergency services are now subjected to because of the reduced road widths? Please share the sources used to support your response.

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Marian, the council engages with emergency services who are a statutory consultee for proposed changes to the highway.

These are the same people who attend the serious injuries or fatalities on our highways caused by excessive speed and careless/reckless driving. They know the true outcomes of providing separate protected space.

Whilst members of the public and individual emergency service practitioners may report their views on social media, if they have genuine concerns, these should be raised internally so that these can be reflected through from their organisations.

There have been no confirmed adverse impacts reported to the council from the emergency services.

There is nothing to share.

Public Question from Michael Wescombe

Assuming that the Council supports the universally accepted concept that movement of people is the sign of a vibrant economy, and yet wishes to reduce traffic on our roads, then surely the Council has to accept the idea of mass movement in the form of public transport, primarily bus services in our conurbation, and the associated infrastructure, is the solution to encourage residents of BCP to forego their cars rather than providing for relatively small numbers of cyclists, and accordingly this should be reflected in Council spending, however sourced. Does the Council accept that this should be so?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Michael, thanks for your question. There are many signs of a vibrant economy, and given the need to travel has in some instances been replaced by virtual meetings, a busy and overcrowded highway may not be the best measure.

The Council does work closely with the bus and train operators. We regularly meet with Go-Southcoast (trading locally as MoreBus), and in the last couple of weeks I have had 3 meetings with Network Rail, Southwest Trains, Highways England and Ministers from DfT to press the case for investment in our area.

In particular, through our Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership, we work

closely with bus companies, and attracted a sizeable grant to develop services. Our local Bus patronage bucks the national trend of decline, and is being enhanced both through the BSIP and measures in the Transforming Travel programme.

However, supporting Walking, Cycling and micromobility is also important for short journeys, and for first/last mile connections to public transport.

In short, the Council attempts to balance the many demands on use of our public space for mobility.

Public Question from Kevin Diffey

Air pollution has been reported to be a problem in BCP. This is only in a limited number of areas with high buildings and slow-moving traffic. The reduction of road widths has made this problem worse.

It has been suggested that the LTNs and an ULEZ are being considered.

LTNs will force more traffic on to the already congested roads, and introducing an ULEZ on BCP would not help the situation, as today, the majority of vehicles are ULEZ compliant. The cost of cameras and an online payment system may not be covered by fees so increasing costs for BCP residents.

So what does the council intend to do to reduce pollution levels within BCP? Surely the solution is to keep the traffic moving whilst maintaining our trees and natural environment which filter pollutants and absorb CO2.

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Kevin, air pollution comes from a number of sources, road traffic is a significant one, but burning of fossil fuels for heating is another.

The reduction of carriageway widths has in many cases been achieved without removing lanes, to provide separated space for walking and cycling. If we can encourage some trips to be made without the car, this has a far more positive impact on Air Quality than attempting to “keep traffic moving”, because we have a very constrained urban environment. “Keeping cars moving” is often at the expense of pedestrians attempting to cross the street, or those attempting to exit from side roads.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are proven to remove traffic, just as new roads induce extra traffic, because people make individual decisions based on safety and convenience. This will reduce congestion, increase air quality, and also provide opportunities for planting more street trees to filter pollutants and absorb CO2 further.

Public Question from Mark White

The Leader's Portfolio Holder for Finance has publicly stated that the formation of town councils is "a government requirement "this is completely untrue", it's government guidance only! The administration has stated that new town councillors will not be paid, this is also not true. Town councils can pay allowances to council members, ask Cllr Cox where his comments are documented in Christchurch Town council minutes

A submission for a "Poole Town Council" was NEVER put forward by the public but created by the working party at Stage 2 of the consultation, in turn they did reject many other small parish Councils submissions, Canford Cliffs to wealthy, Hamworthy not a distinct community, Hamworthy the oldest community in Poole trumped by Broadstone.

The leader argues the policy of transparency, but how can we trust the leader when there is a total lack of transparency about parish and town councils.

Response by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Millie Earl

Thank you for your question Mr White and welcome to council this evening. The findings of the Task & Finish group have been published as part of the consultation and I can confirm that Poole was one of the most popular submissions to the community consultation. The findings show that the submission received regarding Broadstone was detailed and persuasive and came from an already established Neighbourhood Forum, and provided evidence of a strong community identity with details of activities, projects and other community-based events that are held separately to the rest of Poole.

The Task and Finish Group considered the proposals for other areas but felt that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposals would lead to, or bring about, improved community engagement, cohesion or local democracy which oppose the aims of the Community Governance Review. In many cases, the proposed boundaries sub-divided key retail areas and community facilities and, as a result, the submissions were not supported at that stage. This is all in the findings which are public which you may wish to refer to if you feel there is a lack of transparency as you may find many of the answers to your questions are already available.

Public Question from Dr Lisa Lobo read by Niamh Trickett

Does BCP council agree that the Dorset County Pension Fund should not be investing in companies that enable and support war crimes nor companies responsible for the worsening climate emergency? The Dorset County Pension Fund has £173.9 million pounds invested in companies complicit in Israel's breaches of international law including maintaining Israel's apartheid regime and its illegal occupation of Palestinian territories (as determined by the ICJ) and now the horrific mass slaughter of tens of thousands of civilians - including over eighteen thousand children, and the enforced famine which the UK government has also recently condemned as "morally unjustifiable" and "abominable". Our pension fund also invests over £75 million in fossil fuel holdings which are responsible for the climate and ecological collapse that this council recognises to be an emergency. What measures will BCP council take to ensure that public funds are not being invested in companies supporting these atrocities?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Mike Cox

Thank you for question on such an important subject. I am sure all members of the Council deplore the loss of life resulting from this conflict and all the many other conflicts currently happening around the world.

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council is part of the Dorset Local

Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which is administered by Dorset Council.

Dorset Council has in turn delegated its responsibilities as a Local Government Pension Scheme administering authority to a Pension Fund Committee, in common with most other LGPS administering authorities.

Your concerns will be considered by the Pension Fund Committee at its next meeting on 24 June 2025.

The Dorset Pension Fund Committee's approach to fossil fuels, as set out in its Investment Strategy Statement requires all external investment managers to consider and manage all financially material risks arising from environmental issues, including those associated with climate change.

At its meeting in September 2020, the Dorset Pension Fund Committee agreed to a strategy of decarbonisation meaning a reduction in allocations of investment to companies which are high carbon emitters and looking to influence the demand for fossil fuels and their financing, not just their supply. Significant decarbonisation has been and will continue to be achieved through the transition of assets to the management of Brunel Pension Partnership. Approximately 10% of the pension fund's assets are invested in Brunel's global sustainable equities fund, with all other actively managed Brunel funds committed to a policy of a 7% year on year reduction in their carbon footprint.

The pension fund no longer has any direct investments in individual companies, including 'fossil fuel' companies, but it does have indirect exposure to such companies through its holdings in pooled investment vehicles. As at 31 December 2024, the value of the pension fund's investments in companies primarily involved in the exploration, production, mining and/or refining of fossil fuels was estimated at approximately £68m (1.7% of total investment assets).

Public Question from Sarah Ward

For 19 months we have witnessed daily images of families in Gaza being bombed, ethnically cleansed and starved, whilst in the West Bank and Occupied East Jerusalem atrocities continue with apparent impunity. Whilst the ICC continues its' investigation against Israel for probable genocide and other crimes against humanity including apartheid, BCP council chooses to continue to use the Dorset County Pension fund. In doing so it is contributing to the *£173 million of complicit investments in Israel's breaches of international law and Palestinian human rights abuses. What specific actions are the council taking to ensure that funds being invested into any pension scheme are not being used to fund war crimes and crimes against humanity and thereby risking the council potentially being complicit in the breaking of international law?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Mike Cox

As set out in response to the previous question the matters raised will be discussed at the next Dorset Pension Fund Committee on 24 June 2025.

Public Question from Michael Wescombe

Can you explain how the following actions support the concept of supporting public transport?

- Road narrowing, especially at junctions, and elimination of segregated turning lanes, which delay buses, cause increased operating costs and make bus driving more stressful. (e.g. Lansdowne, Wimborne Road (Poole), Wallisdown Road).
- Reduction of coach picking up bays to provide electric charging points at the Lighthouse and in Old Orchard.
- Bike parking on the quay roundabout creating difficulties for coaches turning resulting in a need to reverse in an area with high pedestrian traffic.
- Uneven road levels which worsen the bus passenger experience, e.g. Serpentine Road/ Wimborne Road roundabout.
- Provision of floating bus stops where passengers step out into a bicycle lane, especially where the wheelchair ramp has to be employed.
- Placing bus stops at Oakdale New Inn contrary to established design principles of siting them past stops in the opposite direction to reduce collision risks.

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Michael, your question demonstrates the challenges that the Council face. We have limited space and need to attempt to balance conflicting priorities.

Re : Road Narrowing, and elimination of turning lanes:

The lanes are often being narrowed to enable bus or bike lanes. There are many considerate people using all forms of transport, but motorists seeing the occasional right turning vehicle holding up a queue will often give them space. Dedicated right turn lanes usually compromise pedestrian and cycle space at junctions.

We have been working with the bus company on priority measures, including removing bus laybys, so that buses do not lose their place in congested traffic.

Removing segregated right turn lanes supports major flow movements but is a balance of how space is allocated across traffic modes.

On Floating bus stops: putting cycle bypasses behind bus stops, rather than outside the bus helps reduce potential conflict and danger. There are ramps and zebra crossings to highlight the priority to users.

The geometry of available road space is often difficult to fit the optimal arrangements. The bus stop location at Oakdale New Inn was based on longstanding location, and to attempt to best serve the sheltered housing dwellings nearby.

Public Question from Mark White

You are asking the residents of BCP and more importantly Poole the biggest single question since LGR. The issue of adding a new layer of government should not be addressed only by means of a consultation

alone. This administration has a bad reputation when it comes to consultation with residents widely cynical with this administration. The public are aware that any responses given are largely ignored.

With many having given their lives so we can live in a democracy, will the leader commit to putting this to the public vote either now or in 2027. If this is about greater democracy as she constantly argues and giving people more of a say let us the people decide via the ballot box in a referendum. If not, please tell me and the whole of council here tonight why you will not allow a vote?

Response by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Millie Earl

As Councillors who have been elected by their communities, we have to take into account a wide range of views in decision making but we also have to balance those against the priorities which we were elected to deliver.

Here I have the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Liberal Democrat priority publication which was widely distributed by me, my fellow candidates and our campaign volunteers in the 2023 BCP Council election. It clearly states that we will create community councils to put power back into the hands of residents and work positively with Parish Councils to get the best for residents. This is because as Lib Dems and also our colleagues across the Three Towns Alliance, we believe in localism, decision making at grass roots, community level and as opponents to local government reorganisation which was thought up and delivered by our Conservative colleagues at the time and some of whom who are now independent and Poole Engage. We want to see local people making decisions on the things that affect them, their families and their neighbourhoods.

Having won the popular vote in 2023 with 62,000 votes on this very clear mandate, we have to take into consideration that when we make decisions on the Community Governance Review, that residents asked for that in 2023.

Public Statements

Public Statement from Russell Trent

I'm Russell Trent, the new chair for BH Active Travel, taking over from Lucie Allen.

Lucie has been the driving force behind active travel for many years and I thank her for all her efforts.

BHAT is about building positive relationships with Councillors and Officers to help create an active travel network of cycle lanes, reliable bus services and safer pavements.

Thank you to the current administration and officers for the recently completed and ongoing active travel projects, a massive improvement also for new 20 mph zones, I welcome them making it safer for everyone including children walking and cycling to school.

We understand budgets are tight and funding is limited but without the infrastructure in place to make cycling safer and bus travel more reliable we face a car-based grid locked crisis across this area.

Please, think big, be brave, do the right thing and stick to the plan!

Public Statement from Azlin Bloor

BCP Council must recognise its legal obligations under the Genocide Convention (1948).

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has determined that there is a plausible case that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people.

As a public authority, BCP has a duty to prevent complicity in genocide, including through its pension fund investments. Continuing to invest in companies that supply arms and equipment to the Israeli military risks breaching this obligation.

We urge BCP to divest its pension fund from all such companies and to take all possible steps to avoid legal complicity in these atrocious crimes.

Upholding international law is not optional - it is a binding duty for all public bodies in the UK.

Public Statement from Stephanie Enderby

BCP Pension Fund holds £2.0 million in Honeywell, a key supplier of components for bombs, missiles, and drones used in Israel's military assaults on Gaza. Honeywell's technology has been directly linked to the destruction of homes, hospitals, and schools, contributing to one of the deadliest assaults on civilians in modern history. By investing in Honeywell, BCP risks complicity in the ongoing atrocities in Palestine. We urge BCP Council to immediately divest from Honeywell and ensure the pension fund is not supporting the destruction of civilian life and essential infrastructure in Gaza.

Public Statement from Josh White

I am deeply concerned that BCP Council continues to use the Hamworthy Club as a venue for public events, despite the fact that the club recently hosted Katie Hopkins - an individual who has openly mocked disabled people and spread racist views. By choosing to hold events at such a venue, the Council sends a message that it is willing to ignore the harm caused to marginalised communities. As a taxpayer and resident, I call on the Council to uphold its duty under the Equality Act 2010 and take a clear stand against racism and discrimination. The Council must immediately stop using the Hamworthy Club for official events and commit to working only with venues that align with values of inclusivity and equality.

12. Petition: 'BCP Council must reconsider their current local transport and infrastructure policies'

Consideration was given to a petition calling on BCP Council to reconsider current local transport and infrastructure policies.

The petition organiser, Mr Steve Moody provided Council with background relating to the submitted petition following which Mr Moody to responded to a number of questions from Councillors.

Councillor Kate Salmon proposed that: -

Council resolves that this petition be referred to the LTP4 working group, in accordance with article 13.22.9 of the Constitution, for it to be considered by that body as a piece of evidence to be fed into the continued development of LTP4.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Michelle Dower.

Council debated the petition, and it was:

RESOLVED that the petition be referred to the LTP4 working group, in accordance with article 13.22.9 of the Constitution, for it to be considered by that body as a piece of evidence to be fed into the continued development of LTP4.

Voting: For:51, Against:14

Councillor Tony Trent joined the meeting at 8.10pm

Councillor Jackie Edwards left the meeting at 8:36pm

The Chairman advised Council that the agenda order was being altered to now deal with Agenda Item 13, Recruitment of Chief Executive.

13. Recruitment of BCP Council Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Millie Earl 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.

Council was advised that the report invited the Council to approve the appointment of Aidan Dunn to the position of BCP Council Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service in accordance with the Council's Constitution and statutory requirements.

In relation to this Council was advised that a summary of Aidan's skills, experience and employment history appears at Exempt Appendix 1 of this report, and that a copy of the job description for the post of BCP Council Chief Executive appears at Appendix 2 of the report.

A proposal was put by Councillor Patrick Canavan to move into exempt session, this was seconded by Councillor Chris Rigby and upon being put to the vote was agreed by a majority of members of the Council:

RESOLVED 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 Paragraph 3 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.'

Comprehensive debate took place with members thoroughly discussing the recruitment process.

A recorded vote was requested but upon being put to the vote fell with the majority of members voting against the proposal for a recorded vote.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (a) approved the appointment of Aidan Dunn to the position of BCP Council Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service; and**
- (b) approved the appointment of Aidan Dunn as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole electoral area.**

Voting: For:36, Against:25, Abstentions:3

The meeting adjourned at 9.38pm and reconvened at 9.57pm

Councillors Judy Bagwell, Judes Butt, Anne Filer and Chris Matthews left the meeting at 9.38pm

14. Cabinet 2 April 2025 - Minute No. 142 - Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defence Scheme – CIL Funding Proposal

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley presented the report on the Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defence Scheme – CIL Funding Proposal and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED that Council approved the allocation of £7.3m to the Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defence Scheme from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for the Financial Year 2025/26.

Voting: For:51, Against:1, Abstentions:6

15. Cabinet 2 April 2025 - Minute No. 145 - Children and Young People's Partnership Plan 2025-2030

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Councillor Richard Burton presented the report on the Children and Young People's Partnership Plan 2025-2030 and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED that the Council approved the final content and design of the plan.

Voting: Unanimous

16. Cabinet 13 May 2025 - Minute No. 6 - BCP Local Plan next steps, updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Millie Earl presented the report on the BCP Local Plan next steps, updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (a) agrees that the draft BCP Local Plan be withdrawn from examination;**
- (b) agrees that the draft BCP CIL Charging Schedule be withdrawn from examination;**
- (c) agrees to the publication of a new Local Development Scheme at Appendix 1 and submission to Government, subject to Council agreement to withdraw the draft BCP Local Plan under recommendation a; and**
- (d) agrees the updated Statement of Community Involvement at Appendix 2.**

Voting: For:53, Against:0, Abstentions:6

Councillors Cameron Adams, Hazel Allen, Duane Farr, Claire Weight and Gavin Wright left the meeting at 10.51pm

17. Cabinet 13 May 2025 – Minute No. 7 – Our Place and Environment: Consolidated Active Travel Fund 2025/26

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley presented the report on the Consolidated Active Travel Fund 2025/26.

RESOLVED that Council delegates the investment of the £1.459m of Consolidated Active Travel Fund 2025/26 to the Service Director for Planning & Transport in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy.

Voting: For:51, Against:1, Abstentions:1

Councillor Paul Hilliard left the meeting at 10.57pm

18. Cabinet 13 May 2025 - Minute No. 8 - Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum Arts Council England (ACE) Museum Estate and Development (MEND) Grant

The Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communications and Culture, Councillor Andy Martin presented the report on the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum Arts Council England (ACE) Museum Estate and Development (MEND) Grant.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (a) Accepts the £1,500,817 from Arts Council England MEND Round 4 and delegates authority to the Director of Customer & Property to complete the formal acceptance process on behalf of the Council**

Note: resolutions (b) and (c) were resolved matters by the Cabinet.

Voting: Unanimous

19. Response from an Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a Council recommendation

The Chair of the Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee 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.

Council was advised that the Council's constitution provides that Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees must consider any requests for scrutiny made to it by Council and respond to Council if the response is rejected, with reasons.

In relation to this Council was advised that the report sets out the response to the request for scrutiny made to the Environment and Place O&S Committee by Council.

RESOLVED that Council noted the response from the Environment and Place O&S Committee refusing the request.

Councillor Brian Chick left the meeting at 11.09pm

20. Notices of Motions in accordance with Procedure Rule 10

Council was advised that one motion had been received on this occasion.

Protecting and Revitalising Library Services

The following motion was submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules and was moved by Councillor Peter Cooper and seconded by Councillor Patrick Canavan.

This Council notes that:

- Staffing levels and reduced opening hours across BCP libraries have affected accessibility, especially for families, vulnerable residents, and older people.
- Hamworthy Library serves as a case study highlighting the wider consequences of underfunding library services.
- BCP Council is currently undergoing a community governance review in relation to the development of Town and Parish Councils across the conurbation.

This Council further notes that:

- The closure of the community café in Hamworthy Library, as part of recent budget cuts, has had a deep and disproportionate impact on the local community, despite limited fiscal savings.
- This closure led to the redundancy of valued staff.
- Footfall has significantly declined, and the library has lost its function as a vibrant social and democratic hub. Councillor surgeries, for example, are now less accessible and welcoming, with no option for a friendly cuppa and conversation.

- The café infrastructure remains in place, offering an opportunity for revitalisation with the right support.

This Council believes that:

- Libraries are vital to the social infrastructure of our communities — offering education, connectivity, wellbeing support, and civic engagement.
- Staffing and consistent opening hours should be protected and prioritised in future budget planning.
- Offering Café and community spaces within the same space as a library adds significant social value and should be supported,
- The potential for Town and Parish Councils to take on some responsibility for local library provision should be explored carefully, with attention to the short-, medium and long-term impacts on sustainability including the implications for staff, service quality, and community access.

This Council therefore resolves that in developing the Library Strategy the relevant Portfolio Holders be asked to consider the following:

1. **Prioritise staffing and opening hours in future Library Strategy, to maintain and strengthen access to these vital public services across BCP.**
2. **Conduct a detailed review into the closure of the café at Hamworthy Library, including its social and economic impact, and explore options for reinstatement as well as exploring the provision of similar facilities elsewhere.**
3. **Ensure that the Library Strategy includes an assessment of the condition, usage, and community role of library services across the conurbation, with a focus on restoring or enhancing social space where needed.**
4. **Include an options appraisal outlining the impacts of devolving library assets or responsibilities to Town and Parish Councils, including potential risks, benefits, and support requirements ensuring that library services align with the ongoing community governance review.**
5. **That the final report should specifically reference the actions taken in response to these points.**

Councillor Andy Martin proposed an amendment to the motion with the deletions and insertions as set out below: -

This Council notes that:

- *Staffing levels and reduced opening hours ~~across~~ in BCP libraries, as part of achieving a balanced 24/25 budget, have inevitably affected accessibility, ~~especially~~ for some families, vulnerable residents, and older people.*
- *Hamworthy Library serves as a case study highlighting once again the wider consequences of central government*

underfunding of local government on library services.

- BCP Council is currently undergoing a community governance review in relation to the development of Town and Parish Councils across the conurbation.

This Council further notes that:

- The closure of the community café in Hamworthy Library, as part of the Councils 2024/25 total £40m budget savings, recent budget cuts, has had an ~~an~~ –deep and disproportionate impact on the local community, ~~despite limited fiscal savings.~~
- ~~This closure led to the redundancy of valued staff.~~
- Footfall has significantly inevitably declined, and the library's ~~has lost its function as a vibrant function as a~~ social and democratic hub has been impacted. Councillor surgeries, for example, are now less accessible and welcoming, with no option for a friendly cuppa and conversation.
- The café infrastructure remains in place, offering an opportunity for revitalisation with the right support.

This Council believes that:

- Libraries are vital to the social infrastructure of our communities — offering education, connectivity, wellbeing support, and civic engagement.
- Staffing and ~~consistent~~ opening hours should be ~~protected and prioritised~~ key considerations in future budget planning.
- Offering Café and community spaces within the same space as a library adds significant social value and should be supported, where possible.
- The potential for Town and Parish Councils to take on some responsibility for local library provision should be explored carefully, with attention to the short-, medium and long-term impacts on sustainability including the implications for staff, service quality, and community access.

This Council therefore resolves that in developing the Library Strategy and in the context of ongoing budget constraints, the relevant Portfolio Holders ~~be asked to consider the following:~~

1. ~~Prioritise~~ Recognise the importance of staffing and opening hours in ~~future~~ the forthcoming Library Strategy, to maintain and strengthen access to these vital public services across BCP.
2. ~~Conduct a detailed review into the closure~~ As part of the strategy, look at viable options for the future of the café at Hamworthy Library, ~~including its social and economic impact, and explore options for reinstatement as well as exploring and~~ the provision of similar facilities elsewhere in recognition of the role and importance they play in our

communities.

3. **Ensure that the Library Strategy includes an assessment of the condition, usage, and community role of library services across the conurbation, with a focus on restoring or enhancing social space where needed this is achievable.**
4. ~~**Include an options appraisal outlining the impacts of devolving library assets or responsibilities to Town and Parish Councils, including potential risks, benefits, and support requirements ensuring that library services align with the ongoing community governance review. Subject to the outcome of the Community Governance Review, undertake a further review of the risks, benefits and feasibility of any existing or newly created Town or Parish Councils working in collaboration with CP and the DCMS to support libraries within their area and taking into account legal advice**~~
5. ~~**That Ensure the final report specifically includes reference to these considerations and the actions taken in response to these points.**~~
6. ~~**Urge our five MPs in BCP to make every effort at national level to secure more funding from central government to invest in our vital library service.**~~
7. ~~**Ask the Leader of the Council to write to our MPs and the Culture Secretary to point out that whilst all the ambitions in this motion are admirable and desirable, unless there is a positive change in approach to funding local authorities from central government, then they will remain beyond this council.**~~

The proposer and seconder of the original motion advised that they accepted the amendment. Council agreement was sought to confirm the amendment as the substantive motion which was subsequently carried without dissent.

Councillor Olivia Brown left the meeting at 11.16pm

This Council therefore resolves that in developing the Library Strategy and in the context of ongoing budget constraints, the relevant Portfolio Holders:

1. **Recognise the importance of staffing and opening hours in the forthcoming Library Strategy, to maintain and strengthen access to these vital public services across BCP.**
2. **As part of the strategy, look at viable options for the future of the café at Hamworthy Library, and the provision of similar facilities elsewhere in recognition of the role and importance they play in our communities.**
3. **Ensure that the Library Strategy includes an assessment of the condition, usage, and community role of library services across**

the conurbation, with a focus on restoring or enhancing social space where this is achievable.

4. Subject to the outcome of the Community Governance Review, undertake a further review of the risks, benefits and feasibility of any existing or newly created Town or Parish Councils working in collaboration with CP and the DCMS to support libraries within their area and taking into account legal advice.
5. Ensure the final report includes reference to these considerations and the actions taken in response to these points.
6. Urge our five MPs in BCP to make every effort at national level to secure more funding from central government to invest in our vital library service.
7. Ask the Leader of the Council to write to our MPs and the Culture Secretary to point out that whilst all the ambitions in this motion are admirable and desirable, unless there is a positive change in approach to funding local authorities from central government, then they will remain beyond this council.

Voting: For:45, Against:3, Abstentions:1

Councillor Millie Earl declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item in relation to her involvement with the community fridge and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

Councillors David Flagg and Margaret Phipps left the meeting at 11.39pm

21. Questions from Councillors

The Chairman sought Council approval due to the late hour for all Councillors questions to be replied to in writing with responses being circulated to all members, this was subsequently agreed without dissent.

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

Council was advised that no urgent decisions had been taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution since the last meeting of the Council.

The meeting ended at 11.41 pm

CHAIRMAN

STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Annual Report on Code of Conduct Complaints
Meeting date	8 July 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides a summary of the complaints received and determined which were made against councillors for alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>The Standards Committee has a duty to consider an annual report and to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>the annual report on code of conduct complaints be reviewed and any areas for further work be identified for inclusion in the work programme.</p>
Reason for recommendations	To formally receive the annual report and allow the committee to identify areas for further development to promote high standards of conduct amongst councillors.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer</p>
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for dealing with allegations that councillors have failed to comply with the members' code of conduct in accordance with the arrangements adopted by the Council.
2. BCP Council, and all parish and town councils within the boundary of BCP Council, have a statutory duty in the Localism Act 2011 to 'promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority'.
3. The Standards Committee is responsible for conducting an annual review of the complaints received.

Code of Conduct

4. In accordance with the provisions the Localism Act 2011 the council has an adopted a code of conduct. The code was most recently updated by the Council in November 2021.

Independent Persons

5. The Act also requires that the council appoint "at least one independent person" whose views are sought and taken into account before it makes its decision on an allegation of a breach of the code of conduct. Their view may also be sought in dealing with allegations which have not been investigated and they may be asked to provide support to subject members who are the subject of an allegation.
6. The council currently has two independent persons, Paul Cashmore and Ian Sibley. The monitoring officer is grateful for the time and commitment the independent members have given.

Arrangements

7. A revised standards procedure was approved by the council on 23 March 2021 permitting the Monitoring Officer to enter into early preliminary and informal dialogue with the parties concerned with a view to providing early mediation and resolution.
8. The introduction of this process has continued to assist in resolved appropriate complaints more speedily.

Register of interests

9. The council maintains a register of interests for councillors of BCP Council and these are published on the Council's web site. A periodic reminder is sent to all councillors to request that entries are checked for accuracy and for updates to be registered.

Standards complaints

10. This report covers the four-year period from 1 April to 31 March for 2021/22 to 2024/25. Data for earlier periods will be available in previous annual reports. Complaints are classified to fall within each respective year using the concluded date to ensure that all complaints are captured.
11. Complaints concluded after 1 April 2025 or still pending a decision will be reported as early as possible in the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

Total number of complaints for period	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of BCP complaints	34	61	9	28
Number of Parish and Town Council complaints	1	1	4	6

12. The number of complaints determined in 2023/24 against BCP Councillors was considerably lower than previous years. However, it was noted in the previous report that there was a large cohort of new councillors following the elections in May 2023 being the likely cause.
13. The complaints against parish and town councillors was higher than previous years but still remained relatively low in number. Due to the low number of parish related complaints further analysis has not been undertaken at this level.
14. The following analysis and data tables are therefore based on the complaints made against BCP Councillors for 2021/22 to 2024/25.
15. Complaints received against BCP councillors are now categorised by type of complainant (e.g., public, councillor, officer and other). The table below shows the breakdown by each of these types.

Complainant Type	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Public	29	57	6	23
Councillor	5	3	2	5
Officer	0	0	1	0
Other	0	1	0	0

16. Officers have further analysed complaints to identify the behavioural source of the complaints, the alleged breach criteria and the final outcome. The tables below provide a breakdown of these categories. Complaints may cite more than one source and as a consequence the sum of this table may not match the total number of complaints determined.

Behavioural source for complaint	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Spoken word	2	10	3	2
Email	4	31	5	5
Social Media	18	4	1	22
Lack of response	3	1	0	0
Other	7	15	0	0

17. For clarity, the 'other' criteria referred to in the table includes typically non-behavioural actions, for example, decisions of the council as a whole, allegation of interest conflicts, matters arising from media articles and historic matters.
18. When making a complaint, complainants are requested to indicate which obligations of the Council's Code of Conduct they consider the subject councillor has breached. Complainants are permitted to identify more than one criteria. The following table provides a summary of the respective allegations made by complainants.
19. A new online submission and logging system has been introduced in 2024/25 to provide improved management of complaints and more granular statistics. Consequently, certain lines on the table below will only have data for single years as

this was aggregated in previous years, however, they have been grouped together to show the collective trend and new lines indented.

Alleged Code Breached	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Failing to treat others with respect	26	25	6	-
Failing to treat other councillors and members of the public with respect				25
Failing to treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play				6
Bullying any person	8	6	3	11
Harassing any person				10
Failure to promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person	3	4	0	9
Compromising or attempting to compromise the impartiality of those who work for or on behalf of the Council	5	4	2	3
Unlawfully disclosing confidential information or information believed to be of a confidential nature	0	0	2	2
Improper use of knowledge gained solely as a result of being a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests				2
Preventing a person from getting information that the person is entitled to by law	2	1	2	2
Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute while acting in an official capacity	14	31	3	18
Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer on or secure an advantage or disadvantage for him or herself or anyone else	3	6	5	9
Misuse of Council resources	0	1	1	2
Using or authorising the use of the Councils resources improperly for political purposes	0	1	1	2

Alleged Code Breached	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Failure to undertake Code of Conduct training				3
Failure to cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination				3
Intimidating or attempting to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings	9	7	3	2
Failure to comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct				2
Failing to have regard to the Councils Code of Publicity	2	9	0	-
Failing to have regard to the advice of the Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer	2	1	0	-
Failing to declare the existence and nature of a personal interest	2	5	0	-
Failing, within 28 days, to register and disclose my interests	0	0	0	1
In respect of a prejudicial interest, failing to withdraw from the room or chamber; exercising executive functions; or seeking to improperly influence a decision	2	3	0	-
Failure to register gifts and hospitality offered or received as a councillor				0

20. Finally, the following table provides details of the outcome of the complaints.

Complaint Outcome	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Outside Jurisdiction	3	3	0	5
Dismissed - No Breach of Code	12	43	6	6
Monitoring Officer – Informal Resolution	14	2	0	0
Potential Breach - Informal Resolution	2	9	0	6
Independent Investigation - No Breach	1	0	0	3
Independent Investigation - Breach	1	2	0	0
Non-compliance – Report to Council	1	2	3	1
Withdrawn				1
Incomplete				5

21. Despite the proportion of complaints being dismissed, any complaint received is the result of a perceived dissatisfaction by the complainant and has the potential to damage the reputation of the Council. Administering the complaints process is a

high resource activity and consequently every effort should be made to reduce complaints arising in the first instance. All councillors should be encouraged to play an active role and take responsibility for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct.

22. On analysis of all complaints received, social media activity has returned as the highest source of complaints with a lack of respect remaining the most common alleged breach.
23. Non-compliance with a Code of Conduct determination continues to be an issue which adds significantly to the demands on resources.

Conclusion

24. This report provides information about the council's performance in relation to the code of conduct and the administration of complaints. The data in this report provides a useful four-year benchmark for future annual reports.
25. The Committee may wish to consider referring/recommending this report to Council to ensure all members are fully appraised.

Summary of financial implications

26. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, however, the volume of complaints is considered high and resistance to comply places additional burden on already stretched resources, impacting on the ability to support other core services.

Summary of legal implications

27. The annual review report evidences that the council complies with the duties required under the Localism Act 2011.

Summary of human resources implications

28. There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

29. There are no sustainability impact implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

30. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

31. This report provides statistics for complaints processed in accordance with agreed policy and procedures. Consequently, there are no equality implications arising from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

32. As mentioned previously, any complaint is the result of the complainant being dissatisfied with the actions or behaviours of councillors, which in turn can damage the reputation of the council. Whilst some complaints may be unavoidable, all councillors have a responsibility and duty to promote high standards of conduct.

Every effort should be made to raise the awareness of all councillors by the committee.

Background papers

Records of complaints received by the Council between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2025. These records contain exempt information (Categories 1 (Information relating to any individual) and 2 (Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual)).

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL



Report subject	Amendments to the Constitution arising from the Standards Committee
Meeting date	22 July 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	Following the recommendation of the Standards Committee this report seeks Council approval to amend the Constitution to include the Officer Code of Conduct and to update the training requirements for Councillors who are appointed to the Standards Committee.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The Council's Constitution be updated to include the Officer Code of Conduct at Part 6.</p> <p>Article 8.4 of the Council's Constitution be amended to insert the following provision</p> <p><i>8.4.1 – Standards Committee</i></p> <p><i>No Councillor shall sit as a member, or where applicable, as a substitute member of the Standards Committee unless they have completed all training deemed essential and promoted via the Councils Learning Management and Cyber Security training platforms</i></p> <p>To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to ensure the Council's Constitution remains up to date in respect of these recommendations</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>The Standards Committee recommends the Officer Code of Conduct be included in the Constitution alongside the Member Code of Conduct and the Member Officer Protocol.</p> <p>The Standards Committee has considered the training needs for those Councillors appointed to the Committee and as such has recommended an amendment to Article 8.4.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr J Hanna, Portfolio Holder for Transformation, Resources and Governance
Chair of the Standards Committee:	Councillor V Ricketts
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Recommendation of the Standards Committee, dated 29 April 2025, to include the Officer Code of Conduct at Part 6 of the Constitution

Background

1. The Constitution is the Council's published governance framework and includes key ethical governance Codes and Protocols at Part 6.
2. Whilst the Constitution includes the Code of Conduct for Councillors and the Protocol for Councillor/Officer Relations, it does not include the Officer Code of Conduct.
3. The Officer Code of Conduct is the statement of the Council's acceptable behaviour and conduct principles for all Officers. It is common across many councils to include the Officer Code of Conduct in the Constitution.
4. On 29 April 2025, the Standards Committee, who act as a custodian of the Council's ethical governance framework recommended that for transparency and completeness, the Officer Code of Conduct should be incorporated into the Council's Constitution.
5. It should be noted that as part of this process, the content of the current Officer Code of Conduct has not been consulted on and remains unchanged.

Consultation

6. Following the recommendation of the Standards Committee, the Director of People and Culture and the Trade Unions have been consulted about this proposal and the Trade Unions are supportive of this recommendation.
7. The Chair of the Standards Committee has also consulted with the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee who is also in support of this recommendation.

Options Appraisal

8. Option 1: Council can support this recommendation and the Constitution will be amended by the Monitoring Officer to include the Officer Code of Conduct at Part 6
9. Option 2: Council may reject this proposal in which case the Officer Code of Conduct will not be incorporated into the Council's Constitution. In the event of this happening, the Officer Code of Conduct will remain in force but will be classed as an internal Code.

Recommendation of the Standards Committee, dated 8 July 2025, to update Article 8.4 of the Constitution to include the training requirements for any Councillor appointed to the Standards Committee

10. On 8 July 2025, the Standards Committee considered the training deemed essential for all Councillors. This training covers a number of modules including:
 - Cyber Awareness and Staying Safe Online: Protects the council and individuals from cyber threats and malicious attacks
 - Fraud Prevention and Awareness: Educates on anti-bribery, corruption, and anti-money laundering risks.
 - Introduction to Data Protection: Ensures compliance with data protection legislation and safeguards personal data.
 - The Importance of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Mitigates the risk of discriminatory claims and promotes an inclusive environment.
 - Working Safely - An Introduction to Workplace Health and Safety: Promotes health and safety in the workplace.
 - Working Together to Safeguard Adults: Educates on safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable adults.
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People: Ensures understanding of safeguarding responsibilities for children and young people
 - Sexual Harassment Awareness
11. These training modules are delivered through the council's SkillGate platform, which allows councillors (and officers) to complete the courses online.
12. In addition, mandatory cyber security training and awareness is provided through the Meta Compliance platform and includes several key modules designed to safeguard the council. These modules are delivered in short, bite-sized video formats, making them accessible and engaging for all users. The training covers essential topics such as cyber security, data protection, and compliance with legal requirements.
13. Following debate, the Standards Committee recommended that all Councillors appointed to the Standards Committee should have completed all of the training deemed essential.

14. As a result it is proposed to insert the following wording into Part 2 Article 8.4
Training Requirements

8.4.1 – Standards Committee

No Councillor shall sit as a member, or where applicable, as a substitute member of the Standards Committee unless they have completed all training deemed essential and promoted via the Councils Learning Management and Cyber Security training platforms

Options Appraisal

- Option 1: Council can support this recommendation and the Constitution will be amended by the Monitoring Officer to include the training requirements for those appointed to the Standards Committee at Part 2 Article 8.
- Option 2: Council may reject this proposal in which case Part 2 Article 8 will remain unchanged.

Summary of financial implications

15. None directly arising from this report

Summary of legal implications

16. The Officer Code of Conduct is a key document forming part of the terms and conditions of employment and its contents remain unchanged for the purpose of this report.
17. The mandatory training programme is designed to mitigate key risks around statutory topics, security challenges, and compliance recommendations. The training ensures that councillors are compliant with legal requirements and are prepared to handle various responsibilities associated with their roles.
18. Failure to complete the mandatory training could lead to significant consequences, including reputational and operational damage for the council, personal criticism, financial penalties, potential personal liability and legal challenge. It is crucial for councillors to complete the training to avoid these risks and to ensure they are adequately prepared to fulfil their roles.
19. These are recommendations from the Standards Committee and Council approval is required to update and or amend the Constitution.

Summary of human resources implications

20. The Officer Code of Conduct is a key document forming part of the terms of conditions of employment for Officers at BCP Council. The Trade Unions have been consulted on the proposal to incorporate the same into the Constitution. The content of the Officer Code of Conduct remains unchanged at this time; any changes to the Code would require consultation with the Trade Unions. Council is

unable to recommend any changes to the Officer Code of Conduct as part of its decision making in respect of this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

21. None directly arising from this report

Summary of public health implications

22. None directly arising from this report

Summary of equality implications

23. None directly arising from this report, however, where individual councillors require additional support in respect of undertaking training reasonable adjustments will be discussed on an individual basis

Summary of risk assessment

24. None directly arising from this report, however the training programme is designed to mitigate key risks around specific topic areas.

Background papers

BCP Council Constitution

Agenda, Reports and Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 29 April 2025, and 8 July 2025

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Officer Code of Conduct

This page is intentionally left blank

Code of Conduct Policy

June 2022

Human Resources

Author: HR Senior Management Team
Version: V2
Review date: June 2025



CONTENTS

- 1 Message from our CEO**
- e 2 Nolan Principles:**
 - 2.1 Our Values and**
 - 2.2 Behaviours**
- 3 Code of conduct – our standards**
- 4 Disclosure of information**
- 5 Political neutrality**
- 6 Relationships**
- 7 Appointments and employment matters**
- 8 Equality**
- 9 Leadership**
- 10 Five important points**
- 11 Final Comment**

1 Message from our CEO

It is important for us to be focused on what we need and want to achieve, so our vision is:

‘To be a modern, accessible and accountable Council, committed to providing effective community leadership and services.’

Our strategy, aims to help our communities to lead fulfilled lives by building a sustainable economy, being a dynamic place, having connected communities with brighter futures, and ensuring we have a clear remit of how we will measure success.

Being clear about **what** we do is critical. Just as important, is **how** we do what we do, always displaying the behaviours we expect of each other to ensure we operate to the highest ethical standards. Our values must always be at the very heart of everything we do.

This Code of Conduct explains the values and standards we expect of ourselves and those around us. It helps us to make the right decisions whether serving our customers, delivering new services, recruiting the right people or working together. It is our guide on how we are expected to behave every day, without exception. The Code of Conduct applies equally to me, our leaders, managers and colleagues.

Failing to operate with integrity, causes long-term damage to an organisation and its reputation as well as the community that we live in, so it is important that we must not be one of those organisations.

There will be times when doing the right thing means we don't or can't deliver services. Work that compromises our values or standards, is not work we want to do.

Have confidence that I will support you 100% if you do the right thing because you are not only protecting BCP Council you are providing a valuable service to our public.

Doing the right thing also means speaking up when you think something is wrong and is compromising our standards so, please talk to your Manager, Human Resources, or the BCP Council Monitoring Officer. If you don't feel comfortable doing so, you can call our external confidential reporting line.

The trust our residents, members and partners have in us has been hard earned. It's up to all of us to ensure we continue to build an organisation of which we can all be proud.

Graham Farrant CEO

2 The Nolan Principles

BCP Council subscribes to a set of principles known as the 'Nolan Principles' and they apply to every colleague of the Council. The principles add structure and provide guidance of how we must conduct ourselves whilst working for BCP Council. They are not difficult to understand or follow but they ensure we deliver a service to our public that is professional, courteous and trustworthy.

The seven principles are:

Selflessness: Colleagues should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity: Colleagues must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try to inappropriately influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity: Colleagues must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability: Colleagues are accountable to the public for the decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness: Colleagues 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 reason is for so doing.

Honesty: Colleagues should be truthful

Leadership: Colleagues 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.

2.1 Our Values must be at the heart of what we do

- We treat everyone with respect
- We are passionate about our communities
- We have integrity
- We embrace innovation
- We take pride in what we do

2.2 Our Behaviours - Our behaviours are at heart of how we deliver our services

- Listen
- Trust
- Act
- Collaborate
- Aspire

3 Code of Conduct – Our Standards

3.1 This Code sets out our minimum standards. The aim of the Code is to lay down guidelines for all BCP Council colleagues, including part-time and seasonal staff, to maintain and improve standards and to protect colleagues.

3.2 The Code outlines the conditions of service and regulations to assist the Council and its colleagues in their day-to-day work. It outlines the values and behaviours to which we hold ourselves accountable.

- 3.3 If there is any uncertainty concerning anything in this code, colleagues must seek advice and guidance from their line manager. Colleagues should always check if in doubt regarding any matters relating to their conduct.
- 3.4 Local government colleagues are expected to give the highest possible standards of service to the public and, where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice impartially to Councilors', fellow colleagues and public.
- 3.5 Colleagues are expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service, any impropriety or breach of procedure.
- 3.6 In addition to the Code of Conduct, all colleagues are required to read and comply with Council policies some of which are outlined in the Induction booklet including:
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
 - Grievance Policy and Procedure
 - Financial Regulations
 - Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing Policy
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Dignity at Work
 - Health and Safety
 - Sickness and Attendance
 - Data Protection
 - Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality policy
 - Use of ICT (Social Media)

4 Disclosure of Information

- 4.1 The law requires that certain information should be available to councilors', auditors', government departments, service users and the public. Colleagues should be aware what information may be shared and what cannot and act accordingly.
- 4.2 Colleagues should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for improper personal gain, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way. Information received by a colleague from a councillor, member of the public or other person, that is personal to an individual and does not belong to the Council should not be divulged by the colleague without the prior approval of that individual, except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by the law.

5 Political Neutrality

- 5.1 Colleagues serve the Council as a whole. It follows they should serve all councillors and not just those of the controlling group. They should ensure that the individual rights of all councillors are respected.
- 5.2 Subject to the Council's conventions, colleagues may also be required to advise political groups. They should do so in ways that do not compromise their own political neutrality.
- 5.3 Colleagues, whether politically restricted or not, should follow every lawfully expressed policy of the Council and should not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

- 5.4 Political assistants appointed on fixed term contracts in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are exempt from the standards set in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.3.

6 Relationships

- 6.1 **Councillors** - Colleagues are responsible to the Council through its senior managers. For some, their role is to give advice to councillors and senior managers, and all are there to carry out the Council's work. Mutual respect between colleagues and councillors is essential to good local government. Familiarity between colleagues and individual councillors should be avoided.
- 6.2 **The Local Community and Service Users** - Colleagues should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within the community.
- 6.3 **Contractors** - All relationships whether of a business or private nature with external contractors who are, or may in the future, supply a service to the Council, should be made known to the appropriate manager. Orders and contracts should be awarded only in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and by fair competition against tenders. No special favour should be shown to businesses run by friends, partners or relatives in the tendering process.
- 6.4 No part of the local business community should be discriminated against. Colleagues who engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, should declare that relationship to the appropriate manager at the outset of a contractor being engaged by BCP Council or prior to that if a proposed engagement is known by the colleague.

7 Appointments and other Employment Matters

- 7.1 Colleagues involved in appointments should ensure that these are made based on merit and equality. It would be unlawful for a colleague to make an appointment, which was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post.
- 7.2 To avoid any possible accusation of bias, colleagues should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to or have a close personal relationship outside work with an applicant. Similarly, colleagues should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any colleague to whom they are related or have a close personal relationship outside work.
- 7.3 It is a legal requirement that Colleagues must declare to their Service Director, Corporate Director, Chief Executive or Monitoring Officer, as appropriate, details of any other employment paid or unpaid or business they are engaged in or other external interest. Such employment/ interest must not conflict with, nor have a detrimental effect on the Council's business.

- 7.4 Where other employment or business is in conflict, the employee will be notified in writing to this effect. No private work may be undertaken in the Council's time, or on the Council's premises, or on the Council's equipment, without prior written consent. A colleague may appeal against any decision made by his/her manager regarding outside commitments through the grievance procedure.
- 7.5 It is important to note that under laws of Bribery it is a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment, a fine or both to allow oneself as a colleague of BCP Council to be influenced in decision making by an offer of rewards or gifts.
- 7.6 Colleagues must comply with the Declaration of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality Policy which requires the offer of any gifts and hospitality to be declared where they estimate the value to be more than £25 in the case of a gift* and £50 in the case of hospitality. The name of person offering the gift or hospitality and, if accepted, the reason for acceptance must be recorded.
**Cash (or cash equivalent such as a voucher) of any value must be declined and the offer must be recorded.*
- 7.7 Colleagues must take into account any relevant advice provided by the Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer, when reaching decisions on any matter
- 7.8 If, in the course of work resourced by the Council, a colleague creates a copyright work, that work becomes the property of the Council. Similarly, if a colleague's work resourced by the Council creates a patentable invention, or creates a design capable of registration, this will also become the property of the Council. The colleague will be required to cooperate in the registration formalities. Where a colleague considers that he/she is working in his/her own time, using his/her own resources in an activity related to his/her employment, to create a copyright work, patentable invention or design capable of registration, he/she will notify the Head of Business Unit, Corporate Director, Chief Executive or Monitoring Officer, as appropriate, to that effect. Discussion will then take place between the parties to reach agreement as to ownership of any intellectual or other property rights.

8 Equality

- 8.1 All local government colleagues should comply with all policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the Council, in addition to the requirements of the law. The Council will provide equal opportunities to all colleagues and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, being pregnant or on maternity leave, being transgender or for trade union activity.
- 8.2 The Council also affirms its commitment to treat part-time staff as equitably as full-time staff.
- 8.3 All members of the local community, customers and other colleagues have a right to be treated with fairness and equity in line with The Equality Act 2010.
- 8.4 All members of the local community, customers and other colleagues have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work. No form of bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct or unacceptable behaviour will be tolerated. Colleagues should report any issues to their Line Manager for investigation. Appropriate disciplinary action including warnings, compulsory transfer and/or serious cases, dismissal may take place.

8.5 BCP Council is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment for all colleagues, members, partners and customers.

9 Leadership

Officers must adhere to the specific ethical standards of any professional institutions they are required to be a member of in carrying out their function for the Council. Examples of professional bodies include CIPFA, ACCA, AAT, the Institute of Internal Auditors, or the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Common ethical standards, across numerous professional bodies, include Integrity, Objectivity, Professional Competence, Confidentiality, Professional Behaviour. For the avoidance of any doubt, the Council considers that officers adhering to specific ethical and professional standards, required by professional Institution membership, compliments this Code of Conduct and is not considered a conflict in any way.

9.1 All employees involved in financial transactions on behalf of the Council should ensure adherence to the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, and CIPFA Finance Management Code of Practice (when fully implemented)

9.2 In respect of the any activity which is likely to result in the Council awarding a contract, of any value, all employees should ensure:

- a. Transparency, comparison, and accountability in decision making.
- b. Best Value and Value for Money can be demonstrated by facilitating open competition made in a proper, fair, and equitable manner.
- c. Robustness, lawfulness and probity in any contract award decision.
- d. Sufficient and transparent documentation is retained within Procurement Decision Records to justify the decision and in support of any subsequent scrutiny or audit process.
- e. A proportionate record is made of all meetings between officers and third parties associated with any current or future potential procurement. This covers any pre-market engagement activity designed to shape the procurement including the initial concept stage. All parties need be made aware at the outset that a proportionate record of the meeting will be kept and as will be subject to the scrutiny and audit processes referred to in (d) above. Such records are expected to enable the reader to understand the issues discussed and any agreed outcomes or next steps. Such records are expected to be made available upon request.
- f. Compliance with sec117 of the Local government Act 1972; criminal charges may apply if an employee fails to declare an interest in a contract or proposed contract or they or a relative have abused their position to influence Council contracts for their or their relatives gain. It is also a criminal offence for any employee to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing oneself to be influenced as a local government employee.
- g. Adhere to financial regulations which includes the engagement of the Strategic Procurement Team (SPT) as appropriate which for the avoidance of doubt

includes the involvement of SPT in the pre-planning stages prior to the start of any formal procurement process.

10 Five important points to keep in mind:

This Code of Conduct is designed to be a practical guide, with useful information and advice to help us work in the most ethical and professional way.

The Code is supported by mandatory training that everyone across the organisation must complete. Full details are in the Corporate Induction booklets. The booklet requires you to confirm that you have read and will abide by the training. In summary, here are five takeaways:

- 10.1 Be Prepared; read the Code and take responsibility to know local policies and procedures**
- 10.2 Live our values and behaviours and always act with integrity**
- 10.3 Be aware of what's happening around you**
- 10.4 Report anything that you think is unethical**
- 10.5 Know where to go for help and always seek help if you are unsure**

11 Final Comment:

The policy applies to any person engaging in work for the BCP Council including permanent staff, Interim and contract staff, external contractors and anyone attending the premises of the Council. The highest standards of conduct are expected of everyone engaged in business with the Council and to quote Graham Farrant the CEO of the BCP Council.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the Council may amend it at any time.

'This Code of Conduct explains the values and standards we expect of ourselves and those around us. It helps us to make the right decisions whether serving our customers, delivering new services, recruiting the right people or working together. It is our guide on how we are expected to behave every day, without exception. The Code of Conduct applies equally to me, our leaders, managers and colleagues'.

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL



Report subject	Members' Allowance Scheme
Meeting date	22 July 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report seeks Council's approval of the Scheme of Allowances for 2025-2026 Municipal Year and incorporates the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on their review of the Members' Scheme of Allowances for 2025/26.</p> <p>Consideration of the Scheme of Members' Allowances was deferred by Council on 10 December 2024 pending the conclusion of the Pay and Reward review which is included as a separate item on the agenda for this meeting.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Council considers the attached report and Appendix 1 and its recommendations and adopts the proposed Scheme of Members' Allowances for BCP Council as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, subject to any amendments Council may wish to agree, with a commencement date of 6 May 2025.</p>
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that BCP Council has an appropriate Scheme of Members' Allowances as required by the relevant legislation.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowance) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) require a relevant authority to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance (BA) to each member of that authority. The BA must be the same for each member of the authority.
2. The Scheme may make further provision for the payment of special responsibility allowances (SRA) for specific roles and payments to co-optees on specific committees.
3. The mechanism with which Councils consider allowances is by way of appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). This Panel considers the level of Member Allowances to be operated by a Council under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2003.
4. A panel was appointed for these purposes in order to recommend a scheme of allowances for BCP Council. The recommendations contained within this report arise from the IRP only in accordance with the regulations which helps maintain public trust and confidence in the independent remuneration process.
5. On 23 July 2024 the Council considered and approved an interim report from the Independent Remuneration Panel, as part of these recommendations, acknowledging that a full review would be required during the autumn 2024.
6. A similar report to this paper was accordingly presented to Council in December 2024 but it was determined that the review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances should be deferred pending the conclusion of pay and reward. Pay and reward is included as a separate agenda item on this agenda, and it would therefore be timely to reconsider the IRP recommendations.
7. It should be noted that since the meeting in December 2024, the annual pay award has been applied to the allowances for 2024/25 and are reflected in the base allowances within this report.

Consultation and Engagement

8. A questionnaire was sent to all Members, inviting comments in respect of the current scheme of Members allowances.
9. In addition, the Independent Remuneration Panel interviewed 14 Members of BCP Council and two Officers.
10. Full details of the consultation undertaken are contained in the report attached at Appendix 1.

Options Appraisal – Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

11. The Panel's recommendations are detailed in the attached report at Appendix 1. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the proposed recommendations and any changes to the existing Scheme of Allowances. The existing allowances are shown in *[italicised square brackets]*:
 - (a) **the basic allowance be increased to £16,000 per annum [£15,109]**
 - (b) **that the following special responsibility allowances be paid in recognition of the additional workload and levels of responsibility and accountability placed upon members appointed to these roles:**
 - i. **Leader - £40,000 [£32,730]**
 - ii. **Cabinet Members (including Deputy Leader) - £25,000 [£21,820]**

- iii. Lead Members - £12,200 [*£12,087*]
 - iv. Chair of the Council - £12,200 [*£12,087*]
 - v. Vice-Chair of the Council - £3,600 [*£6,045*]
 - vi. Chair of Audit & Governance Committee - £12,200 [*£12,087*]
 - vii. Chairs of Area Planning Committees - £9,000 [*£9,065*]
 - viii. Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Board - £9,000 [*£9,065*]
 - ix. Chair of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee - £9,000 [*£9,065*]
 - x. Chair of Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee - £9,000 [*£9,065*]
 - xi. Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee - £9,000 [*£9,065*]
 - xii. Chair of Licensing Committee - £9,000 [*£12,087*]
 - xiii. Chair of Appeals Committee - £9,000 [*£3,628*]
 - xiv. Chair of Standards Committee - £9,000 [*£3,628*]
 - xv. Group Leaders - £3,600 [*£3,628*]
- (c) No SRAs be paid to vice-chairmen of committees (with the exception of the vice-chairman of Council);
 - (d) members may not receive more than one SRA (*and may elect which SRA to receive*) with the exception that a Group Leader's SRA can be payable as a second SRA;
 - (e) with effect from 2025 the BA and the SRAs be increased in line with the Employees' National Salary Award, if such pay award is expressed as a fixed amount, the average pay award for BCP employees shall be applied for this purpose;
 - (f) the proposed increases in BA and SRAs be effective from the date of the resolution to adopt the revised scheme;
 - (g) the travel allowances continue to be paid to members and that these should reflect those allowances paid to officers and should include travelling to the BCP Councils offices for meetings and official business;
 - (h) subsistence allowances be paid to members in the event of an absence not involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence, and that these reflect those payable to officers of the council;
 - (i) carers' allowance be paid to recompense the actual cost expended as set out within paragraph 13 of the appended report (and is not payable to a member of the claimant's own household subject to the Monitoring Officer having the discretion to approve claims on a case-by-case basis); and
 - (j) an allowance of £1,200 [*£1,211*] per annum be paid to co-optees and independent members as set out in paragraph 14 of the appended report.

Summary of financial implications

12. The existing members allowances budget for 2025/26 includes a provision to increase the allowances annually in line with the Employees' National Salary Award.

Although the salary award is not yet known and will require agreement nationally with the Trade Unions, provision has been made for an increase of 3.2%.

13. If Council were to decide not to approve the allowances, this pay award would still be applied to the existing scheme and therefore, for comparative purposes, the baseline allowances shown in the table below includes this projected increase. Similarly, the same percentage increase has been applied to the proposed allowances to calculate the impact on existing budgets.

Allowance	No. entitled to Allowance	Current Allowance (incl. projected pay award)	Recommended Allowance (incl. projected pay award)
Basic Allowance	76	£15,109	£16,512
Leader	1	£32,730	£41,280
Cabinet Members (including Deputy Leader)	9	£21,820	£25,800
Lead Members	1	£12,087	£12,590
Chair of the Council	1	£12,087	£12,590
Vice-Chair of the Council	1	£6,045	£3,715
Chair of A&G	1	£12,087	£12,590
Chairs of Area Planning Committees	2	£9,065	£9,288
Chair of O&S Board	1	£9,065	£9,288
Chair of Children's Services O&S Committee	1	£9,065	£9,288
Chair of E&P O&S Committee	1	£9,065	£9,288
Chair of H&ACS O&S Committee	1	£9,065	£9,288
Chair of Licensing Committee	1	£12,087	£9,288
Vice-Chair of Licensing Committee	1	£3,023	REMOVE ALLOWANCE
Chair of Appeals Committee	1	£3,628	£9,288
Chair of Standards Committee	1	£3,628	£9,288
Group Leaders	5	£3,628	£3,715
Co-opted and Independent Members	8	£1,211	£1,238

14. The Members Allowances base budget for 2025/26 is £1,599,500. The existing scheme of allowances, including the projected pay award, can be met from the established budget provision.
15. Members are reminded that the Director of Finance's Section 25 Statement within the 2025/26 Budget report, included provision to mitigate unforeseen events by establishing an in-year base revenue budget contingency of £2.603m. The statement explicitly referenced the potential need to adjust the budget for Members allowances.
16. The recommendation of the IRP is to apply the changes from the date of resolution of Council. However, it should be noted that as these recommendations were deferred from December 2024, it may be considered appropriate to now apply any

changes from 6 May 2025, being the date of Annual Council and the start of the Municipal Year.

17. The budget impact for an implementation date of both 6 May 2025 and 22 July 2025 are illustrated in the following table.

	Current Scheme including Pay Award	Proposed Scheme (incl. pay award) from 06/05/2025	Proposed Scheme (incl. pay award) from 22/07/2025
Budget Provision 2025/26	£1,599,500	£1,599,500	£1,599,500
Projected Annual Cost	£1,573,061	£1,622,735	£1,599,763
Surplus / (Shortfall to be met by the contingency budget referred to in paragraph 15.)	£26,4390	- £23,235	- £263

18. It should be noted that there is a consequential impact on the National Insurance Contributions (NIC) costs arising from the proposed changes to Members Allowances. The NI contributions of the existing scheme with the pay award can be contained within the existing budget provision, however, there would be an additional budget pressure of £24,000 if the allowances were backdated to 6 May, and £20,500 if implemented from the date of the Council meeting. This additional pressure will also be funded from the contingency budget referred to in paragraph 15 above.
19. In summary, the budget projection for the members allowances scheme for 2025/26 includes a 3.2% projected increase and the contingency budget provision will meet the additional allowances and national insurance contributions.
20. The budget growth requirements for 2026/27 will be dealt with in the budget report to be considered in February 2026.

Summary of legal implications

21. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2003 govern the establishment of the Scheme necessary to determine the operation of Members allowances.
22. The process undertaken, and the proposed Scheme accords with the requirements of the legislation.

Summary of human resources implications

23. There are no specific Human Resources implications arising from the report.

Summary of sustainability impact

24. There are no specific issues arising in respect of this report.

Summary of public health implications

25. There are no specific issues arising in respect of this report.

Summary of equality implications

26. The needs of councillors with dependents, including those who are carers, have been considered and taken account of through the process and inclusion of specific allowances.

Summary of risk assessment

27. There are no specific risks arising from this report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Appendix 2 – Schedule of Members Allowances for 2025/26

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Scheme of members' allowances for BCP Council 2024

1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the **Panel**) for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP Council) comprising three individuals drawn from the community who have previously participated in panels across Dorset: -

- 1.1. Mr John Quinton (Chairman)
- 1.2. Mr Keith Broughton
- 1.3. Mr Martin Varley

2. Legal Basis

- 2.1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the **Regulations**) apply to local authorities including district and county councils.
- 2.2. The Regulations require a relevant authority to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance (**BA**) to each member of that authority. The BA must be the same for each member of the authority.
- 2.3. A relevant authority's scheme of allowances may also provide for the payment of special responsibility allowances (**SRA**s) to such members of the authority as have special or additional responsibilities. The specified categories of special or additional responsibilities which may be included in a scheme of allowances include: -
 - i) acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group within the authority;
 - ii) acting as a member of an executive where the authority is operating executive arrangements within the meaning of part 2 of the Local Government Act 2000;
 - iii) presiding at meetings of a committee or sub-committee of the authority;
 - iv) representing the authority at meetings of or arranged by any other body;
 - v) acting as a member of a committee or sub-committee of the authority which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods;
 - vi) acting as the spokesman of a political group on a committee or sub-committee of the authority; and
 - vii) carrying out such other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require of the member an amount of time and

effort equal to or greater than would be required of him or her by any of the above-mentioned activities.

- 2.4. SRAs need not be the same and may reflect the different expectations, time and effort involved in particular roles. The Panel take the view that this time commitment is in addition to those hours set out in paragraph 6.1.
- 2.5. Member allowance schemes may also provide for the payment of a carers' allowance and for members' travelling and subsistence whilst acting in connection with their duties as a member of the authority.
- 2.6. Before a relevant authority may make or amend a scheme of allowances it must have regard to recommendations made in relation to the scheme by an independent remuneration panel.

3. Role of the Panel

- 3.1. As set out in paragraph 2, the scheme for the payment of a BA must be adopted by the BCP Council. It may also adopt a scheme for the payment of SRAs and other allowances, having first had "regard" to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. Therefore, councillors themselves acting as a relevant authority make the final decision about what allowances are to be available.
- 3.2. Regulation 20(2) requires an independent remuneration panel shall consist of at least three members none of whom: -
 - (a) is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority; or
 - (b) is disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.
- 3.3. The three members of the Panel are individuals, none of whom are disqualified from being or becoming a member of a relevant authority.
- 3.4. The Panel met on 14, 15, 21 and 22 October and finally on 4 November 2024.

4. Context

- 4.1. The Panel had conducted an interim review of the allowances scheme earlier that year. It had been clear to the Panel at that time that there were a number of areas that required further information to enable the Panel to form a judgement on the roles and accountabilities in question. The Council had therefore agreed to accept a number of interim recommendations from the Panel on the basis that a comprehensive review would take place later that year. This would include a review of the BA which had not been considered since 2019.
- 4.2. The Panel's recommendations made in the review of the allowances scheme in 2020, were not accepted. The Council decided:

- (i) not to increase the BA;
- (ii) to reduce the Leader's SRA; and
- (iii) not to apply indexation to the allowances in 2020 and 2021 and to recommence indexation only in 2022/23.

This decision has meant that all of the allowances within the scheme ceased to be adjusted unlike similar authorities within the south west region.

- 4.3. This comprehensive review began with a meeting with the Monitoring Officer of the Council followed by a meeting with the Leader of the Council.
- 4.4. The Leader who had recently been appointed, informed the Panel that she had appointed an additional member of the Cabinet to provide extra capacity so that there were now 10 cabinet members including herself. In addition, she had retained three Lead Members for specific roles which again added capacity to the work of the cabinet.

5. Evidence

- 5.1. To inform the development of its recommendations, the Panel was provided with the following evidence: -
 - (i) the Regulations;
 - (ii) detailed benchmarking data from South West Councils and from other unitary authorities on the levels of current allowances;
 - (iii) the current members' allowance scheme for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council;
 - (iv) the Constitution and the various roles of committees and its members;
 - (v) statistics relating to the number and nature of meetings of committees.
- 5.2. The Panel also had the opportunity to interview those individuals named at paragraph 6.4 below and to consider the responses to the questionnaire referred to in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 below.

6. Methodology for the review

- 6.1. A questionnaire was sent to all BCP Councillors seeking views on the average amount of time spent on council business and the various aspects of the allowances scheme. Of the 20 responses received, over half estimated that they spent less than 100 hours a month on council business and another third estimated that the time spent was between 100 and 120 hours per month. This was a slightly lower amount of time than the results from previous surveys although this may reflect the actual roles of those that had responded.
- 6.2. In addition, the questionnaire asked councillors whether the BA and SRAs had been set at the right level. There were various responses to this question and these are dealt with under the relevant sections of this report.

6.3. The Panel interviewed the following councillors:

- (i) Councillor Millie Earle, Leader of the Council;
- (ii) Councillor Phillip Broadhead, Leader of the Conservative Group;
- (iii) Councillor Mike Cox, Deputy Leader of the Council;
- (iv) Councillor Mark Howell, Lead Member, Regeneration;
- (v) Councillor David Flagg, Chairman Licensing Committee;
- (vi) Councillor Marion LePoldevin, Chairman Area Planning Committee West;
- (vii) Councillor Paul Hillard, Chairman Area Planning Committee East;
- (viii) Councillor Sandra Moore, Cabinet Member Communities and Partnerships
- (ix) Councillor Stephen Bartlett, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board;
- (x) Councillor Christopher Rigby, Chairman Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee;
- (xi) Councillor Sharon Carr Brown, Chairman Children Services Scrutiny Committee;
- (xii) Councillor Sandra Armstrong, Member of the Green Party;
- (xiii) Councillor Lisa Northover, Member of the Independent Group;
- (xiv) Councillor Vanessa Ricketts, Chairman of the Standards Committee.

6.4. In addition, the Panel interviewed Janie Berry – Monitoring Officer and Jill Holyoake, Team Leader, Governance and Regulatory.

6.5. The Panel wish to record its thanks to those individuals who gave evidence and for all of the support that it received from officers of the Council.

7. Panel Deliberations

7.1. The Panel sought to interview councillors of all political groups with particular reference to the issues raised within the responses to the questionnaire. The Panel also interviewed officers with appropriate roles and responsibilities in an effort to gain the best possible interpretation of how the council was currently operating and functioning.

8. The Basic Allowance (BA)

8.1. The Panel carefully considered the responses given by members to the questionnaire referred to in paragraph 6.1 of this report. Approximately two thirds of respondees (13/20) felt the BA was set at the right level. Of the

respondees (3/20) who suggested an increased level, this ranged from £16,000 to £22,000 per annum.

- 8.2. The Panel received evidence from the interviews that the BA was currently set at an appropriate level which echoed the results of the questionnaire. However, the Panel also heard evidence that a number of councillors had reduced their employed working hours or had revised their employed working arrangements to enable them to fulfil their roles within the Council.
- 8.3. The Panel noted the responses within the questionnaire regarding the average amount of time spent on council duties, as set out in paragraph 6.1 of this report.
- 8.4. The Panel considered benchmarking data compiled for South West Councils and this indicated that the current BA payable within BCP Council (£14,458) was at the lower end of the range when compared with a sample of local and unitary councils. When compared to the shire county/unitaries councils in the South West it was again slightly on the low side (Dorset £14,699, Cornwall £18,368, Devon £15,000, Somerset £15,500 and Wiltshire £15,860).
- 8.5. The Panel received the views of some councillors to the effect that a higher level of BA would attract people from a broader spectrum and demographic to stand for election.
- 8.6. The Panel recognised the evidence received both from the responses to the questionnaire and in interviews, but concluded that the benchmarking data indicated that the BA required some adjustment. In addition, the Panel were aware that apart from some indexation of allowances in 2022 and 2023, the BA had not been increased since the formation of the new council in 2019.
- 8.7. The Panel received evidence of the workloads and commitment of ordinary members of various committees and concluded that the challenges and the workload of a councillor within BCP Council were significant and justify a recommendation of an increase in the BA.
- 8.8. BCP Council is the tenth largest unitary in the country and has a significantly larger population than similar urban councils in the area. Accordingly, in addition to the workloads undertaken by councillors with the formal business of the Council, there are complex issues to be dealt with at ward level.
- 8.9. ***The Panel recommends that the basic allowance paid to members be increased to £16,000 per annum.***

9. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

- 9.1. **Leader and Cabinet Members.** The Panel did not receive overwhelming evidence from the responses to the questionnaire regarding the SRAs for the Leader and Cabinet Members.

- 9.2. However benchmarking evidence considered by the Panel quite clearly indicated that the Leader's SRA (£31,320) is significantly lower than the SRAs awarded for the role in other similar councils in the region. The Leader of Dorset Council received £36,590, Cornwall Council £33,980, Devon County Council £37,700, Somerset Council £38,750, and Wiltshire Council £39,670.
- 9.3. This benchmarking data was shared with several interviewees and the consensus was that the Leader's SRA was too low. When BCP council was formed in 2019 the Panel had recommended a significant SRA for the Leader, to recognise the huge workload in leading a large and complex council, but this had not been agreed by the Council. The Panel remains of the view that this is a role that is comparable to, if not greater than, similar councils in the south west.
- 9.4. The Panel agreed that having considered both the evidence received, including the benchmarking data, and taking into account the complex nature and size of the Council, that the Leader's SRA required a significant increase.
- 9.5. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA paid to the Leader be increased to £40,000 per annum.***
- 9.6. In relation to Cabinet Members, the benchmarking data indicated that the BCP SRA (£20,880) is on the low side when compared with similar councils regionally. Currently Dorset Council Cabinet Members receive £23,000, Cornwall Council £23,780, Devon County Council £22,623, Somerset Council £20,150 and Wiltshire Council £23,800.
- 9.7. The Panel received evidence that the workloads for both the Leader and Cabinet Members were significant. As reported in paragraph 3.3 the Leader had appointed an additional Cabinet Member with the intention of easing workloads. However, the Panel received evidence that these were still full time jobs with little opportunity to have separate employment.
- 9.8. A number of similar local authorities in the south west pay a higher SRA to the Deputy Leader of the Council as compared to other members of the cabinet. The Panel did not receive evidence that the Deputy Leader had significant additional responsibilities to other cabinet members or that this was an issue within BCP Council. On this basis the Panel recommend that no additional SRA should be payable to the Deputy Leader.
- 9.9. For the same reasons set out in paragraph 9.4 above, the Panel recommends that the Cabinet Member's SRA should be increased.
- 9.10. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to Cabinet Members be increased to £25,000 per annum.***

9.11. **Lead Members**

- 9.12. During the interim review referred to in paragraph 4.1 of this report, the Panel was informed that the SRA for the Lead Member role already existed within the Allowances Scheme. The Leader at that time was clear however, that this was a new and significantly different role to the previous one. The Leader was keen to establish some flexibility within the Scheme to enable her to appoint Lead Members to a variety of roles to add to the capacity of her Cabinet. These might be ongoing in nature whereas others might fulfil ad hoc roles that would cease to exist after a period of time. The Panel agreed that this would need to be considered as part of the future review of the scheme of Allowances and as part of this consideration a role description would be required.
- 9.13. During the interview with the new Leader of the Council, she informed the Panel that she had retained three Lead Members and would adopt a similar approach to that of the previous Leader where Lead Members were appointed to undertake project based work which could be ongoing but could also be time limited and on a part time basis.
- 9.14. The Panel received conflicting evidence from the interviews concerning the role of Lead Members and their visibility within the Council. In the absence of a formal role description the Panel found it difficult to assess the role and its importance to the operation of the Council. The Panel was informed by the Monitoring Officer that it was intended to include a role profile within the Constitution when it had been agreed with the Leader.
- 9.15. The Panel recommends that the SRA for this role should be considered further when the scope and parameters of the role have been formalised. As there had been no overwhelming evidence, the SRA should remain at the same level, albeit with a small adjustment to recognise the non-indexation of allowances as referred to in paragraph 4.2.
- 9.16. In order to address the Leader's request for some flexibility in the SRA payable to Lead Members to recognise their various roles and workloads and permanent and fixed term roles, the Panel recommends that the SRA payable is flexible up to the upper limit.
- 9.17. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to Lead Members be increased to £12,200 per annum with the Leader being authorised to vary this SRA up to the maximum, to recognise various roles and workloads and permanent and fixed term appointments.***
- 9.18. **Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council.** The Chairman of the Council has an important role in managing and presiding over regular Council meetings to ensure that Councillors who are not in the Cabinet or who do not hold the chair of a main Committee, are able to hold those office holders to account and to represent the views of their constituents

- 9.19. In addition, the Chairman has an important civic and ceremonial role to perform to raise and maintain the profile of the Council and its communities. The Panel was informed that over the previous year, the Chairman had attended 90 civic events. This aspect of the role sets it apart from other Committee Chairmen.
- 9.20. Whilst the Panel is not in favour of paying SRAs to vice-chairmen in general, the Panel had previously recommended that the Vice-Chairman of the Council is an exception, as, in addition to deputising for the Chairman at meetings of the Council, he/she will also fulfil an important civic/ceremonial role.
- 9.21. The Panel was informed that the Vice-Chairman had attended 11 civic events in the previous year which was a reduction when compared to the data provided under the last comprehensive review in 2020. This in the Panel's view was sufficient to justify the continuation of the award of an SRA to the Vice-Chairman albeit at a reduced level.
- 9.22. No evidence had been presented to the Panel to suggest any significant change in the Chair's SRA was required. However as with all SRAs, the Panel agreed to recommend a small uplift in the SRA to counter the two years where no indexation had been applied, as explained in paragraph 4.2 of this report.
- 9.23. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA for the Chair of Council be increased to £12,200 per annum and that the SRA for the Vice-Chairman be reduced to £3,600 per annum.***
- 9.24. **Chairmen of Committees.** The Panel received representations concerning the levels at which the current SRAs had been set.
- 9.25. The Panel had previously accepted that there would be gradations of responsibility for committees with some meeting more often and having greater importance to the overall governance of the Council. This model of tiers of SRAs is common in most councils.
- 9.26. There were currently within the Allowances Scheme three levels of SRAs for chairmen of committees. The upper level SRA was payable to the Chairs of Council, Audit and Governance and Licensing Committees. The middle level SRA was payable to the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the two Chairs of the Area Planning Committees. The lower level SRA was payable to the Chairs of the Standards Committee and the Appeals Committee.
- 9.27. The Panel was informed that the Audit and Governance Committee was a key component in the Council's corporate governance and the reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. This, in the Panel's view, was sufficient to retain the SRA's position at the highest level, with a small adjustment to reflect the non-indexation of allowances referred to at paragraph 4.2.

- 9.28. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee be increased to £12,200 per annum.***
- 9.29. The SRA for the Chair of the Licensing Committee was also placed in the higher level of SRAs. The benchmarking data received from South West Councils highlighted that the BCP SRA of £11,566 is significantly higher than the SRA for the role in other similar authorities in the region. Currently the Dorset Council SRA was £5,227, Cornwall Council £5,097, Somerset Council £7,750 and Wiltshire Council £3,967. In addition, evidence received from both the questionnaire and from the interviews suggested that the level of the SRA was anomalous.
- 9.30. The Panel concluded that this anomaly, together with the payment of an SRA to the Vice-Chairman, was historic. Prior to December 2023 the Licensing Committee required that all sub committees were chaired by the Chair or Vice-Chair (or in their absence an experienced committee member). In the period of time from May 2023 to December 2023, there were 14 sub committee meetings, with the Chair of the Committee chairing 8, the Vice Chair 3, with 3 others being chaired by experienced members. In December 2023 the Licensing Committee agreed to extend the opportunity to chair sub committees to all committee members interested in doing so, to broaden their experience and provide more resilience. Since this date there have been 16 sub committee meetings with the Chair of the committee chairing 5 meetings, the Vice Chair 4 meetings with 7 other meetings being chaired by other members of the committee.
- 9.31. In the opinion of the Panel this reduces both the workload and the responsibility of the Chairman of the Licensing Committee to such an extent that the SRA should be reduced to the equivalent of the middle tier SRAs.
- 9.32. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to the Chair of the Licensing Committee should be reduced to £9,000 per annum.***
- 9.33. During the interim review referred to in paragraph 4.1 of this report, the Panel were informed that a revised Overview and Scrutiny model would be introduced with an over-arching Overview and Scrutiny Board. The Board would be responsible for overseeing the overall scrutiny function including oversight of work plans and use of resources. It is also responsible for considering all executive decisions that are called in. In addition, there would be three Overview and Scrutiny Committees; the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These committees would be responsible for the scrutiny function within their individual service areas as well as undertaking policy reviews.

- 9.34. At the time of the interim review there was no overall consensus about whether this would be a flat or hierarchical structure. Under the current review, the Panel again received differing evidence about the scrutiny roles and responsibilities. However, the most powerful evidence came from the individual chairs of the scrutiny bodies. In their opinions the roles were different but quite equal and the structure was considered to be a flat structure without any specific reporting requirements between the Committees and the Board.
- 9.35. On this basis the Panel recommends that all the SRAs for the chairs of the Board and the Committees, should remain equal. There is no evidence to suggest that the SRA should move to the upper level, the SRA should remain in the middle tier, with a small adjustment to reflect the non-indexation of allowances as referred to in paragraph 4.2.
- 9.36. ***The Panel recommends that the SRAs payable to the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee be increased to £9,000 per annum.***
- 9.37. As part of the interim review referred to in paragraph 4.1 of this report, the Panel was informed that an area-based planning function would be introduced with two area planning committees replacing a council wide system. Both chairs were interviewed by the Panel under the current review, who estimated that the overall workload had decreased by approximately 40% following the introduction of the area-based system. Statistics provided to the Panel indicated that the combined workload of the two area committees equated approximately to the workload of the previous council wide committee with the workloads of both area committees being very similar. On this basis the Panel recommends that both SRAs should be equal. There is no evidence to suggest that the SRA should move to the upper level. The Panel recommends that the SRA should remain in the middle tier, with a small adjustment to reflect the non-indexation of allowances as referred to in paragraph 4.2.
- 9.38. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to the Chairs of the Eastern and Western Area Planning Committees be increased to £9,000 per annum.***
- 9.39. The Panel received one response to the questionnaire which questioned the relatively low level of the SRA for the Chair of the Appeals Committee when compared to the Chair of the Licensing Committee. This not an area which the Panel had previously investigated. However, on receiving evidence from the officers of the Council it was clear that this involved a significant workload. In the previous municipal year, the committee met 16 times with the Chair chairing the vast majority of meetings.

- 9.40. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to the Chair of the Appeals Committee be increased to £9,000 per annum.***
- 9.41. The Panel interviewed the current Chair of the Standards Committee to better understand the workloads and process involved in determining complaints made against BCP councillors. The Panel received evidence from the Annual Report on Code of Conduct Complaints to the Standards Committee on 8 October 2024. This contained comparable data over a 4 year period which showed that complaints considered by the Committee rose from 21 in 20/21, to 35 in 21/22, and to 62 in 22/23. The figure for 23/24 was 13 but this represented the period from the elections in May 2023 so it was for a part year and reflected that there was a large cohort of new councillors elected at those elections. Indeed, the Panel was informed that an independent report entitled “External Assurance Review of BCP Council” from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities dated August 2023, highlighted that there had been a number of complaints about the way that Councillors had used social media and a high number of complaints made to the Standards Committee.
- 9.42. The Panel agreed that this significant workload should be recognised with a more comparable SRA and that this should be a middle tier SRA.
- 9.43. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to the Chairman of the Standards Committee be increased to £9,000 per annum.***
- 9.44. **Vice-Chairmen of Committees.** The Panel did receive a number of responses to the questionnaire that questioned why the scheme did not provide for the payment of an SRA to vice-chairs of committees.
- 9.45. The Panel is of the view that simply deputising for the Chairman in his/her absence, was not a significant additional responsibility and therefore did not justify the payment of an SRA.
- 9.46. The Panel was informed by some councillors that Vice-Chairmen were undertaking the same level of work as the Chairmen by attending briefings and on numerous occasions deputised by chairing meetings. Councillors also raised the issue of a Vice-Chairman deputising for the Chairman during a period of illness.
- 9.47. The Panel received evidence from officers that out of a total of 64 meetings of committees, there were only 3 occasions when a Vice-Chairman, in the absence of the Chairman, had chaired the meeting.
- 9.48. In terms of whether the workloads of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen were comparable, the Panel again felt that this was unproven. Undoubtedly Vice-Chairmen attended briefings and prepared for the meeting as this was good practice should they have to deputise for the Chairman at the meeting, but as pointed out in the previous paragraph, this happened very infrequently. The Panel is of the view that some of the roles that were currently performed by

Vice-Chairmen reflected the way individual councillors wished to operate but this was not a role with defined significant additional responsibility.

- 9.49. The Panel recognises there maybe occasions where the Vice-Chairman would be required to deputise for the Chairman on a long-term basis, because of ill health or other circumstances. These circumstances are already provided for within the Scheme of allowances and therefore additional provision is not required.
- 9.50. The Panel has already accepted one exception to the generic rule that SRAs are not payable to Vice-Chairmen: this is for the Vice-Chairman of Council as explained in paragraphs 9.20 and 9.21 above. In addition, the Panel received conflicting evidence as to whether the Vice-Chairman of Licensing should receive an SRA. For the reasons outlined in paragraph 9.30 above, the Panel agreed that the SRA for the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee can no longer be justified.
- 9.51. ***The Panel recommends that apart from the SRA payable to the Vice Chair of Council, no SRA be paid to the Vice Chairs of Committees including the Vice Chair of Licensing Committee whose SRA should be removed from the Scheme.***
- 9.52. **Group Leaders.** Currently an SRA is payable to all Group Leaders with a membership of no fewer than five.
- 9.53. The purpose of the Group Leaders' SRA is to reflect the importance of political groups to the political management of the council. It reflects the need for Group Leaders to communicate with their members on Council business and through this, enables the Council's officers to have a forum of Group Leaders, who can represent their Group's views on issues such as member/officer relations, code of conduct issues, training and development and the management of forthcoming meetings of Council.
- 9.54. The Panel received no evidence to suggest that this SRA required change. However, the Panel did consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce an enhanced SRA for the Leader of the main opposition group to recognise the additional work required in holding the majority group to account. During discussions with the Panel this did not receive any major support. There is no provision within the Constitution to differentiate this role from other group leaders. On this basis the Panel recommends that existing Group Leader's SRA should remain at the current level, albeit adjusted to reflect the non-application of indexation of allowances as referred to in paragraph 4.2.
- 9.55. ***The Panel recommends that the SRA payable to Group Leaders whose groups contain 5 members or more, be increased to £3,600 per annum.***
- 9.56. **Number of SRAs Payable.** The Panel received no evidence to suggest that the current limit on the number of SRAs that can be claimed, required review. On that basis the Panel agreed that the current limitation should remain but

that it should not apply to a Group Leader's SRA and that should be permitted to be paid as a second SRA.

- 9.57. **Indexation of Allowances.** The Panel received some response both during the interviews and from the questionnaire that supported the updating of allowances on an annual basis. Most local authorities do this to reflect increases in the cost of living and it is quite often linked to the pay award to officers within the relative council. This historically has been the case within BCP Council although as pointed out in paragraph 4.2 of this report, this was deferred for two years in 2020 and 2021. The Panel remains of the view that this is the best way to keep the allowances up to date and in line with the cost of living. The Panel therefore recommends that with effect from 2025 the BA and the SRAs be increased in line with the Employees' National Salary Award, if such pay award is expressed as a fixed amount, the average pay award for BCP employees shall be applied for this purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(For ease of reference all of the recommendations of the Panel in relation to the allowances are reproduced here)

- 9.58. ***The Panel recommends that the basic allowance paid to members be increased to £16,000 per annum.***
- 9.59. ***The Panel recommends that the following special responsibility allowances be paid in recognition of the additional workload and levels of responsibility and accountability placed upon members appointed to these roles:***

Leader - £40,000;

Cabinet Members (including Deputy Leader) - £25,000;

Chairman of the Council - £12,200;

Lead Members - £12,200

Vice-Chairman of the Council - £3,600;

Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee - £12,200;

Chairmen of Area Planning Committees - £9,000;

Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board - £9,000;

Chairman of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committees - £9,000;

Chairman of the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee - £9,000

Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committees - £9,000;

Chairman of Licensing Committee - £9,000;

Chairman of Appeals Committee - £9,000;

Chairman of Standards Committee - £9,000;

Group Leaders - £3,600;

(Note: Groups must have a membership of no fewer than 5 for their Leader to receive an SRA)

9.60. ***The Panel further recommends that:***

- (a) no SRAs be paid to vice-chairmen of committees (with the exception of the vice-chairman of Council); and***
- (b) members may not receive more than one SRA (and may elect which SRA to receive) with the exception that a Group Leader's SRA can be payable as a second SRA; and***
- (c) with effect from 2025 the BA and the SRAs be increased in line with the Employees' National Salary Award, if such pay award is expressed as a fixed amount, the average pay award for BCP employees shall be applied for this purpose; and***
- (d) the proposed increases in BA and SRAs be effective from the date of the resolution to adopt the revised scheme.***

10. Pensions

10.1 The Panel received some representation concerning the lack of provision within the Scheme for pensions for members. Currently the Scheme simply states that there is no provision of any pension for Members within the allowances scheme. The Panel is of the view that the scheme should clarify this by stating that the Regulations do not permit the payment of pensions to members.

11. Travel allowances

- 11.1. The Panel note that the current allowances scheme reflects the scheme for officers' travel and provides approved amounts under the HMRC approved Mileage Allowance Payments (MAPs). Anything payable above MAP approved amounts result in a taxable benefit to the claimant. The Panel further note that to introduce taxable benefits into the travel allowances scheme would be a disproportionate bureaucratic burden on the authority.
- 11.2. ***The Panel recommends the travel allowances continue to be paid to members and that these should reflect those allowances paid to officers and should include travelling to the BCP Councils offices for meetings and official business.***

12. Subsistence allowances

- 12.1. Subsistence allowances include the costs of:
- (a) accommodation (if a member needs to stay overnight); and
 - (b) meals and other 'subsistence' while travelling.
- 12.2. The Panel has not received any representations concerning the payment of subsistence and therefore intends to recommend that the rates remain continue to be paid at the rates payable to officers of the council.
- 12.3. ***The Panel recommends that subsistence allowances be paid to members in the case of an absence not involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence, and that these reflect those payable to officers of the council.***

13. Carers' allowance

- 13.1. The Panel did receive evidence that this allowance was important to certain members.
- 13.2. ***The Panel recommends that a carers' allowance be paid to recompense the actual cost expended (and is not payable to a member of the claimant's own household subject to the Monitoring Officer having the discretion to approve claims on a case-by-case basis):***
- (a) ***for care of dependants, whether children, elderly people, or people with disabilities;***
 - (b) ***for such time as a member is on BCP Council business where travelling allowances are payable;***
 - (c) ***at an hourly rate equivalent to 110% of the minimum wage, rounded up to the nearest whole pound.***

14. Co-opted and Independent Members' allowance

14.1. *The Panel recommends that this allowance be increased to £1,200 per annum to reflect the non-indexation of allowances as referred to in paragraph 4.2 of this report, and that it continue to be paid to:*

- (a) *the co-opted members of the scrutiny committee with oversight of education matters;***
- (b) *the independent persons appointed to contribute to the arrangements of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct; and***

15. Foregoing and suspension of allowances

15.1. *The Panel recommends that members may, if they wish, forego all or any part of their entitlement to BA or any SRA by giving notice in writing to the Monitoring Office of the BCP Council.*

15.2. *The Panel recommends that where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his/her duties as a councillor in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000, or regulations made under that Part:*

- (a) *the part of the basic allowance payable to him/her in respect of the period for which he/she is suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld;***
- (b) *the part of the SRA payable to him/her in respect of the period for which he/she is suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld; and***
- (c) *the part of the travelling and subsistence allowance payable to him/her in respect of the period for which he/she is suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld.***

15.3. *The Panel recommends that where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned is:*

- (a) *Suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a councillor in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part;***
- (b) *ceases to be a member of BCP Council; or***
- (c) *in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of a relevant period,***

the authority may require that such part of the allowance as relates to any such period be repaid to the authority.

PART 7

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

SCHEME

Contents

1. Basic Allowance	2
2. Special Responsibility	2
3. Travel allowances	43
4. Subsistence allowances	4
5. Carers' allowance	4
6. Co-opted and Independent Members' allowance	54
7. Foregoing and suspension of allowances	5
8. Salary Sacrifice	5
9. Part-Year Entitlements	6
10. Pension Payments	7
11. Payments	7
12. Making a Claim	7
13. List of Approved Duties	7

Scheme of Members' Allowances – 202~~45~~/202~~56~~

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities' (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following scheme:

- a. This scheme may be cited as the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect from ~~7 May 2024~~ [INSERT EFFECTIVE DATE].
- b. In this scheme "Councillor" means a member of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council who is a Councillor.

1. Basic Allowance

- 1.1. A Basic Allowance of ~~£15,109~~ £16,000 shall be paid to each Councillor.
- 1.2. The Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances shall be adjusted by an amount equivalent to any officers' pay award for 20~~25~~~~24~~/~~26~~~~25~~ in line with the Employees' National Salary Award and shall be applied retrospectively to ~~67~~ May 202~~45~~. Where the pay award is determined as a fixed amount the average pay award for BCP employees shall be applied for this purpose.
- 1.3. The Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time devoted by Councillors to their work, including their community representative role, and to cover some incidental expenses incurred by them encompassing;
 - (a) the community representative role that all Members undertake that includes
 - representing constituents' views at meetings of the Council and, as appropriate, on other organisations;
 - ensuring that individual problems which have not been dealt with by the normal procedure are dealt with satisfactorily;
 - holding community meetings and consultations;
 - dealing with correspondence and obtaining information;
 - meeting with officers to make them aware of local concerns;
 - acting as the representative on another body, requiring briefing and reporting back to Council;
 - (b) attendance at and preparation for committee meetings;
 - (c) travel time and time spent representing the Council on outside bodies;
 - (d) the use of the home as an office including internet, telephone and postage costs and the purchase of stationery and related items; and
 - (e) some subsistence costs.

2. Special Responsibility

- 2.1. A Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid to those Councillors (in addition to the Basic Allowance) who hold the special responsibilities; this is in recognition of

the additional workload and levels of responsibility and accountability placed upon members appointed to these roles:

Leader	<u>£32,730</u> <u>£40,000</u>
Cabinet Members (including Deputy Leader)	<u>£21,820</u> <u>£25,000</u>
Lead Members	<u>£12,087</u> <u>£12,200</u>
Chair of the Council	<u>£12,087</u> <u>£12,200</u>
Vice-Chair of the Council	<u>£6,045</u> <u>£3,600</u>
Chair of Audit & Governance Committee	<u>£12,087</u> <u>£12,200</u>
Chairs of Area Planning Committees	<u>£9,065</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Board	<u>£9,065</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Chair of Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee	<u>£9,065</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Chair of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	<u>£9,065</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Chair of Health & Adult Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee	<u>£9,065</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Chair of Licensing Committee	<u>£12,087</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Vice-Chair of Licensing Committee	<u>£3,023</u>
Chair of Appeals Committee	<u>£3,628</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Chair of Standards Committee	<u>£3,628</u> <u>£9,000</u>
Group Leaders*	<u>£3,628</u> <u>£3,600</u>

(***NOTE:** minority parties must have a membership of no fewer than 5 for their Leader to receive an SRA)

- 2.2. Councillors shall be restricted to claiming only one Special Responsibility Allowance (and may elect which SRA to receive) with the exception that a Group Leader's SRA can be payable as a second SRA.

2.3. Subject to paragraph 2.4 below, no Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid to vice-chair of committees (with the exception of the vice-chair of Council ~~and the Licensing Committee~~).

2.4. Where the relevant chair is permanently unavailable to perform their duties, the entitlement to a special responsibility allowance shall transfer to the elected vice-chair.

3. Travel allowances

3.1. Councillors and appointed members are entitled to claim travel allowances in line with MAP (HMRC approved Mileage Allowance Payments) for undertaking official business and travelling to the BCP Council offices for meetings and official business.

3.2. The MAP approved amounts are currently:

- (a) Car – 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter;
- (b) Passenger payments – up to 5p per mile per passenger (up to a maximum of four) to be claimed only for passengers who would otherwise be eligible for travelling allowance;
- (c) Motorcycle – 24p per mile;
- (d) Bicycle – 20p per mile;
- (e) In relation to public transport (including rail and bus) – standard fare; and
- (f) Parking fees – actual cost

4. Subsistence allowances

4.1. Subsistence allowances include the cost of:

- (a) Accommodation (if a member needs to stay overnight); and
- (b) Meals and other ‘subsistence’ while travelling.

4.2. Subsistence allowances are only claimable for undertaking official business outside of the unitary council area.

4.3. Subsistence allowances are made towards meals up to a maximum limit set out below and must be accompanied by a receipt.

- (a) In the case of an absence not involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence:-
 - (i) Breakfast (more than 4 hours away before 11am) £7.14
 - (ii) Lunch (more than 4 hours including 12 noon to 2pm) £10.72
 - (iii) Tea (more than 4 hours including 3pm to 6pm) £5.35
 - (iv) Evening Meal (more than 4 hours away ending after 7pm) £14.29

5. Carers’ allowance

5.1. Dependent carers’ allowance to be paid to recompense the actual cost expended (and is not payable to a member of the claimant’s own household subject to the Monitoring Officer having the discretion to approve claims on a case-by-case basis):

- (a) for care of dependents, whether children, elderly people or people with

disabilities;

- (b) for such time as a member is on BCP Council business where travelling allowances are payable;
- (c) at an hourly rate equivalent to 110% of the minimum wage, rounded up to the nearest whole pound, i.e. actual expenditure incurred subject to a maximum of £9* per hour.

(*As at April 2019)

6. Co-opted and Independent Members' allowance

6.1. An allowance of ~~£1,211~~ £1,200 per annum to be paid to:

- (a) the co-opted members of the scrutiny committee with oversight of education matters; and
- (b) the independent persons appointed to contribute to the arrangements of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct.

7. Foregoing and suspension of allowances

7.1. A Councillor may by notice in writing given to the Monitoring Officer elect to forego all or any part of their entitlement to an allowance.

7.2. Where a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended from his or her duties as a councillor in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000, or regulations made under Part:

- (a) the part of the basic allowance payable to them in respect of the period for which they are suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld;
- (b) the part of the SRA payable to them in respect of the period for which they are suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld; and
- (c) the part of the travelling and subsistence allowance payable to them in respect of the period for which they are suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld.

7.3. Where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned is:

- (a) suspended or partially suspended from their responsibilities or duties as a councillor in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part;
- (b) ceases to be a member of BCP Council or;
- (c) is any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of a relevant period

the authority may require that such part of the allowance as related to any such period be repaid to the authority.

8. Salary Sacrifice

8.1. HMRC's view is that the same tax rules apply to elected members who hold office as a local councillor as they do for employees. Councillors are therefore permitted

to give up part of their Basic Allowance and/or Special Responsibility Allowance in exchange for certain salary sacrifice schemes available at BCP Council.

- 8.2. Provided Councillors satisfy the various qualifying conditions, they may be entitled to access some of the various salary sacrifice schemes offered by BCP Council. Not all schemes will be available for Councillors to participate in.
- 8.3. In order to access salary sacrifice schemes, Councillors will be required to meet qualifying and affordability criteria in line with legislation and detailed by BCP Council. These criteria may be subject to change without notice.
- 8.4. Applications made by Councillors will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and BCP Council retains full authority in deciding whether to accept any requests.
- 8.5. In the event a Councillor is approved for any salary sacrifice scheme, this is strictly on condition that if they later leave their role as a Councillor, they will reimburse BCP Council any and all outstanding payments or early termination charges incurred in connection with their particular salary sacrifice scheme benefit. This includes authorising BCP Council to deduct any outstanding amounts from the Councillor's Basic and/or Special Responsibility Allowance before paying them the balance.

9. Part-Year Entitlements

- 9.1. The provisions of this paragraph shall have effect to regulate the entitlements of a Councillor to Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances where, in the course of the year, this Scheme is amended or that Councillor becomes, or ceases to be, a Councillor or accepts or relinquishes a Special Responsibility in respect of which a Special Responsibility Allowance is payable.
- 9.2. If an amendment to this Scheme changes the amount to which a Councillor is entitled by way of a Basic Allowance or a Special Responsibility Allowance, then in relation to each of the periods:-
 - (a) beginning with the year and ending with the day before that on which the first amendment takes effect; or
 - (b) beginning with the day on which an amendment takes effect and ending with the day before that on which the next amendment takes effect;

the entitlement to such an allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the amount of the allowance under this Scheme as it has effect during the relevant period as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of the days in the period bears to the number of days in the year.

- 9.3. Where the term of office of a Councillor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, the entitlement of that Councillor to a Basic Allowance shall be to the payment to such part of the Basic Allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which their term of office subsists bears to the number of days in that year.
- 9.4. Where this Scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph [9.28.2](#) above, and the term of office of a Councillor does not subsist throughout the period mentioned in sub-paragraph [9.28.2\(a\)](#) above, the entitlement of any such Councillor to a Basic Allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the Basic Allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to

the whole the same proportion as the number of days which his or her term of office as a Councillor subsists bears to the number of days in that period.

- 9.5. Where a Councillor has during part of, but not throughout, a year special responsibilities as entitle them to a Special Responsibility Allowance, that Councillor's entitlement shall be to the payment of such part of that allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which they have such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that year.
- 9.6. Where this Scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph 9.28-2 above, and a Councillor has during part, but does have throughout the whole, of any period mentioned in sub-paragraph 9.28-2(a) of that paragraph any such special responsibilities as entitle them to a Special Responsibility Allowance, that Councillor's entitlement shall be to the payment of such part of the allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days in that period during which they have such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that period.

10. Pension Payments

- 10.1. There is no provision of any pension for Members within the allowances scheme.

11. Payments

- 11.1. Payments shall be made in respect of basic, co-optees' and special responsibility allowances in instalments of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme on the 28th of each month.
- 11.2. Where a payment of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme in respect of basic allowance or special responsibility allowance would result in a Councillor receiving more than the amount to which, by virtue of paragraph 8, they are entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more than the amount to which they are entitled.

12. Making a Claim

- 12.1. Claims for the payment of childcare and dependent carers' allowance and travelling and subsistence allowances under this scheme must be made using the electronic expenses system within two months of the date on which the duty is carried out. *Claims received outside this timescale will only be paid in the case of exceptional circumstances.*
- 12.2. Claims for the payment of a childcare and dependent carers' allowance must be supported by the production of an official receipt relating to the expenditure incurred by the Councillor or appointed member for the provision of these services.

13. List of Approved Duties

- (a) Attendance at a meeting of the authority or as a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or of any other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations or any committee or sub-committee of such a body;
- (b) Attendance at any meeting in (a) above where invited to attend and speak by

the Chair of the Committee, or Sub-Committee of Body or when presenting a report to Committees as Chair of a Sub-Committee as defined in Council Procedure Rules;

- (c) A Member who is not a member of the Cabinet may attend a meeting of the Cabinet and shall be entitled to claim travelling and dependent care allowances as applicable for such attendance, which will be regarded as an approved duty;
- (d) Attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member;
- (e) Attendance at training courses;
- (f) Attendance at seminars or briefing to which all Members of the Council have been invited;
- (g) Duties undertaken in connection with the appointment of employees;
- (h) Site tours or tours to which all Members of the Council, the Cabinet, a Committee or Sub-Committee have been invited;
- (i) Any meeting involving either Chairs or Vice-Chairs called by the Chief Executive including briefings for Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees;
- (j) Attendance by any individual Members or group of Members at a meeting called or authorised by the Chief Executive or members of the Management Team to ensure that travelling and subsistence allowances are only payable for approved duties.

INDEX

B

Basic Allowance2, 6

C

Cabinet 3, 7, 8

Chair of the Council3

Committees

 Appeals 3

 Licensing..... 3

 Planning..... 3

 Standards 3

Co-opted and Independent Members' allowance 4

F

Foregoing and suspension of allowances5

L

Lead members3

List of Approved Duties7

M

Making a Claim7

Monitoring Officer5

P

Part-Year Entitlements6

Payments3, 7

Pension Payments7

S

Special Responsibility Allowance 2, 3, 6

Subsistence allowances4

T

Term of office6

Travel allowances3

This page is intentionally left blank