

STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE



Report subject	Proposed Budget 2021/2022
Meeting date	8 February 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To agree the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) operational budget for the 2021/2022 financial year
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the draft budget for Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) for 2021/2022 be set at £4,951,000 (b) the income expectation for the Stour Valley Enforcement Agency (SVEA) for 2021/22 be set at £175,000 (c) any amendments to these budgets that may be required be delegated to SVPP Board and presented to the next meeting of Joint Committee for acknowledgement
Reason for recommendations	To set the budget for SVPP and SVEA for the 2021/2022 financial year in accordance with the Collaboration Agreement.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable - SVPP
Corporate Director	Not applicable - SVPP
Contributors	Emma Richens, Project Accountant. BCP Council. Paul Hudson, Head of SVPP
Wards	All
Classification	Decision

Background

1. The Joint Committee is required to consider and approve the budget for the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP).
2. The Scrutiny Panel are required to monitor the SVPP and its budget and performance for Joint Committee. Any variances of greater than 5% in budget to be fully reviewed by Scrutiny Panel and presented to Joint Committee.
3. This report presents the draft budget for 2021/22 for approval.

SVPP Collaboration Agreement

4. The Business Case for the SVPP was approved by each of the four sovereign authorities during the course of 2013. The Collaboration Agreement was signed on 1 April 2014 by the preceding Councils and a Deed of Variation agreed between BCP Council and Dorset Council effective from 1 April 2019.
5. Phase 1 was a shared management structure which applied for the 2014/15 financial year. Phase 2 saw the full integration of staff which applied for the 2015/16 financial year onwards. The cost sharing agreement within the business case and therefore within the joint agreement by the preceding Councils includes the following principles;

For the second phase the cost sharing will be based on the current costs of the full service and therefore the share of costs will be based on the following split.

Phase 2	Cost Share	Cost Share break down Preceding Councils	Cost share as from 1 April 2019	
Poole	49%	49%	49% + 16.32% 65.32%	BCP Council
SVP	51%	CBC 16.32% NDDC 16.32% EDDC 18.36%	16.32% + 18.36% 34.68%	Dorset Council
SVPP	100%	100%	100%	SVPP

6. In order to deliver efficiencies it was acknowledged that SVPP would continue to work in Partnership with BCP Council (Bournemouth Revenues and Benefits

Services) to deliver operational efficiencies as were detailed in the proposed Bournemouth/SVPP and Dorset Business Case.

2020/2021 BUDGET

7. The budget for the SVPP for 2020/21 is £5,093,000. This budget recognised that £275,000 of efficiencies would be delivered in 2020/21 through Joint working with Bournemouth Revenues and Benefits Service as detailed below:

BBC & SVPP	Comment	Estimate 2018/19	Estimated 2019/20	Estimated 2020/21	Estimated 2021/22	Total
Staffing	1 Service Head Reduction staff	75,000 250,000	0 175,000	0 175,000	0 100,000	75,000 700,000
ICT Software	Move to 1 ICT provider	0	0	75,000	25,000	100,000
Printing and Postage	External Contract	25,000	25,000	25,000	0	75,000
Enforcement Service	SVPP & BBC Service	75,000	25,000	0	0	100,000
Total		425,000	225,000	275,000	125,000	1,050,000

8. The savings of £275,000 and all associated costs were agreed to be split as 60% SVPP and 40% Bournemouth.
9. As at November the Partnership is predicted to achieve an underspend.

2021/22 Budget

10. The present Target Budget for 2021/22 is £4,951,000 for the SVPP.
11. This budget allows for:
- a pay award of 1% (to cover the recommended £250 award to lower paid staff) being a budget pressure of £76,000 for partners, the cost of incremental drift is met by additional savings made by the service.
 - A reduction in ICT software costs of £183,000, this cost is now charged directly to the sovereign authorities by the supplier.
 - Delivering a saving of £75,000 of budget being SVPP's 60% share of £125,000 as shown in item 7 above.
 - The provision by Dorset Council of property inspection services on behalf of SVPP at a cost of £48,000.
12. If approved the budget will have reduced year on year since the commencement of the Partnership having absorbed all on-going costs pressures through annual operational savings. The original 2013/14 budget was £5,931,000.
- This represents an actual budget reduction of over £1million through the period of the Partnership.*
13. The Partnership has not set future budget savings or a Business Plan at this point due to the impact on services by Covid19 and to allow for the partner Councils to review service delivery options for 1 April
14. Details of the proposed budget are contained within Appendix 1.

Stour Valley Enforcement Service (SVEA)

15. The approved principle of the Enforcement Service is that the relevant costs are apportioned to each sovereign authority in proportion to the actual fee income collected on their behalf.
16. For the 2021/22 financial year the SVEA, as previously agreed, will undertake work for all of BCP Council and the East and North areas of Dorset Council.
17. For 2021/22 (if notice is not given to the Partnership to end for 31 March 2022) the income expectation will remain at £175,000. This will mean the service will look to collect over £600,000 in fees to be paid.
18. It is noted that in 2020/21 the SVEA was not able to deliver services as a result of COVID19 measures and there being no Magistrate Court Hearings.
19. If Dorset Council issue notice to SVPP it is recommended that the SVEA will process accounts for BCP Council. For Dorset Council their external appointed bailiffs will be used from an agreed point prior to 1 April 2022 to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the Partnership.
20. Fees are charged at a prescribed rate and the service objective for those who engage is to agree payment plans which will eventually lead to customer maintaining future liabilities without falling into further debt.

Summary of legal implications

21. The Partnership operates to a Collaboration Agreement agreed by BCP Council and Dorset Council by way of a Deed of Variation from the preceding Councils of Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset and Poole.
22. The Scheme of Delegation and Budget are reviewed and agreed annually by Joint Committee on behalf of the Councils.

Summary of human resources implications

23. Not applicable to this report

Summary of environmental impact

24. The objectives of the service in 2021/22 are to engage with taxpayers and ratepayers wherever possibly digitally and to reduce the need for customer and staff travel.
25. Agile working was embedded into service delivery in 2020 and in future all core services for SVPP will be provided from Northmead House
26. Occupancy of office accommodation at Bournemouth, Christchurch and Wimborne will be reduced to a minimum

Summary of public health implications

27. Agile working and digital services have been deployed for the 2021/22 period to protect public health in accordance with government guidance on COVID19

Summary of equality implications

28. Members have a legal duty to pay 'due regard' to equality implications in their decision-making and reports must ensure they have the appropriate information to be able to do this. The approach remains to be proportionate in undertaking Equality Impact Assessments. The fact that this report contains no policy or service change means that there is no requirement for any further equalities impact assessments to be undertaken.

Summary of risk assessment

29. The Risk Register for 2020/21 is being reviewed to acknowledge the impact on service delivery of COVID19 and to detail the risks associated with ending the Partnership on 31 March 2022.

Background papers

30. Full Budget details for 2021/22 presented to SVPP Board on 12 January 2021

Appendices

1. SVPP Budget 2021/2022