

STOUR VALLEY AND POOLE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE



Report subject	SVPP Budget 2022/2023
Meeting date	21 March 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To agree the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) operational budget for the 2022/2023 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 2022/2023 be set at £5,058,051 (b) the income expectation for the Stour Valley Enforcement Agency (SVEA) for 2022/23 be reduced from £175,000 to £Nil with a view the service seeks to cover operational costs in its final year of operation (c) the Collaboration Agreement, Schedule 1 functions as detailed in Appendix 2 be adopted by the Partnership (d) any amendments to these budgets required to support service delivery in the final year of the partnership and to support the transfer of functions to the partner Councils be delegated to SVPP Board to agree and presented to the next meeting of Joint Committee for acknowledgement
Reason for recommendations	To set the budget for SVPP for the 2022/2023 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 2022/23 for approval and acknowledges that Dorset Council have in accordance with the Collaboration Agreement duly given notice to BCP Council and that the Partnership will end on 31 March 2023.

SVPP Collaboration Agreement

4. The Business Case for the SVPP was approved by each of the four sovereign authorities during 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;

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

6. SVPP continue to work in Partnership with BCP Council Revenues and Benefits Services) to deliver services and efficiencies as previously agreed.
7. The Scheme of Delegation and Budget are reviewed and agreed annually by Joint Committee on behalf of the Councils.
8. In accordance with the Collaboration Agreement, Dorset Council has advised BCP Council that 'formal notice' will be served prior to 31 March 2022.
9. As notice will have been given the Partnership will formally enter its last operational year and the Joint Committee will in its capacity oversee the transfer of functions undertaken by the SVPP to BCP Council and Dorset Council.

A full timetable will be presented to the next meeting of Joint Committee.

10. This budget is the last operational budget for SVPP and the SVEA. The income expectation for the SVEA has been reduced to £NIL, to allow the service to return all case files to each Council prior to end of the Partnership.
11. The Collaboration Agreement, Schedule 1 of delegated function was considered and amended by SVPP Board on 23 February 2022. The proposed delegations for 2022/23 are detailed in Appendix 2.

2022/23 Budget

12. The budget for 2021/22 was £4.951.000
13. The present Target Budget for 2022/23 is £5,058,051 for the SVPP.
14. This budget details an overall increase of £107,051 and allows for:
 - staff pay rises forecast and National Insurance contributions
 - removal of charge made to Dorset Council for provision of 'front of house' services at Norden
 - stopping of payment to Dorset Council for office accommodation for 10 SVPP staff in East Dorset offices
 - increased staffing costs of Adult Social Care staff transferring from BOP to SVPP – fully funded in budget by BCP Council as a specialist service (Centre of Excellence)
 - removal of charge for Capita software – as fully funded directly by each Council
 - continuation of payment to Dorset Council to provide local property inspectors for East & North area
 - reduction in charges to BCP Council for cashiering services as cash office closed and staff charges reduced for cashiering support for petty cash and banking.
15. The SVPP Board, at their meeting of 23 February 2022, agreed the budget (as was previously presented to them 16 December 2021) as detailed above, and agreed, that there would not be a published Business Plan for 2022/23. The intention would be that the Board would agree either an 'amicable' or 'formal' exit plan which would be the Business Plan for the Partnership in 2022/23.
16. Details of the proposed budget are contained within Appendix 1.

Stour Valley Enforcement Service (SVEA)

17. 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.
18. For the 2021/22 the SVEA, as previously agreed, undertook work for all BCP Council and the East and North areas of Dorset Council. The income expectation of £175,000 of fees above costs, will not be met due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. However, the service will cover all of it is operational

costs from fee income and payments from SVPP for administrative support on Grant processing.

19. For 2022/23, the income expectation for the service will be set at £NIL. This will mean the service will look to cover its operational costs.
20. Upon the ending of SVPP the SVEA will also close at the same point. The future of the service will not be known until a review is undertaken by BCP Council to ascertain if it will operate, post SVPP with an Internal Enforcement Team.
21. For Dorset Council their external appointed bailiffs will be used from an agreed point prior to 31 March 2023 to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the Partnership.
22. 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

23. Not applicable to this report.

Summary of human resources implications

24. Not applicable to this report

Summary of environmental impact

25. The objectives of the service in 2022/23 will be to return services to its Council partners in a safe and secure process that protects its customers.
26. The Partnership aims are to engage with taxpayers and ratepayers wherever possibly digitally and to reduce the need for customer and staff travel.
27. Agile working was embedded into service delivery in 2020 and in future all core services for SVPP will be provided from Northmead House

Summary of public health implications

28. 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

29. 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

30. Upon notice being given by Dorset Council, the Risk Register for 2022/23 will be reviewed with its priority aim being the safe return of all services to each Council on or before the agreed 'termination date'.
31. Alternatively, through an 'amicable' agreement this process may result in phased transfer of services on dates to be agreed through Joint Committee.
32. The Partnership Manager has presented Board with a paper outlining the key considerations, subject to agreement by both Councils on the 'SVPP - Options for ending Partnership' for their consideration.
33. The risks identified by Board and each Council will be considered by Working Parties. This process will be used to agree the formal process of handing back services, staff and confirm funding arrangements.

Background papers

34. Budget Reports 2021/22
35. SVPP – Options for ending Partnership – Based on 2022/23 Budget

Appendices

1. SVPP Budget 2022/2023
2. SVPP Collaboration Agreement – Schedule 1 Delegated Functions.