

Report subject	<b>Levelling Up - progress report</b>
Meeting date	14 December 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This is a progress report on the Council's work on Levelling Up across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP). This follows an initial Cabinet report in January 2022 which set out a preliminary response to the Levelling Up agenda, in advance of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper being released and committed to bringing a more detailed report to Cabinet once the recommended work had been progressed.</p> <p>This report provides an update on progress to date since January 2022, as well as further information on what the data is telling us, including the commissioned Impact Report from This Is Purpose (appendix 1), and also sets out the next steps.</p> <p>It is recommended that work continues to progress Levelling Up across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole as it remains a key national policy. Our overarching local objective for Levelling Up is to use the frameworks of the Levelling Up White Paper and Levelling Up Goals to support the delivery and ambitions of our Corporate Strategy and Big Plan.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) Note the excellent work of officers to positively take forward the Levelling Up agenda</b></li> <li><b>b) Acknowledge the information and recommendations in the Impact Report from This is Purpose and consider which of these if any could be taken forward subject to there being available budgets</b></li> <li><b>c) Agree work should continue across the Council with a focus on the agreed priorities to level up the BCP Council area</b></li> </ul>
Reason for recommendations	The values of Levelling Up intrinsically align with the priorities and commitments made in the Council's Big Plan and Corporate Strategy. Committing to level up Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole enables the Council and its residents to benefit from this key political agenda and opportunities for investment.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Toby Johnson – Lead Member for Levelling Up and Skills
Corporate Director	<p>Adam Richens – Chief Finance Officer and Director of Finance (Corporate Sponsor for Levelling Up BCP)</p> <p>Chris Shephard – Director for Economic Development (Senior Responsible Officer for Levelling Up)</p>
Report Authors	Sophie Bradfield – Principal Policy Officer

Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Update

## Background

1. A [Cabinet report](#) in January 2022 set out the Council's preliminary response to Levelling Up in advance of the Government's delayed Levelling Up White Paper (LUWP) being released. Our plans included commissioning an Impact Report with [This is Purpose](#), and further information is detailed on this in the 'Progress to date' section of this report.
2. This paper asks Cabinet to note the excellent work of officers to positively take forward the Levelling Up agenda as detailed in this progress report. To acknowledge the information and recommendations in the Impact Report in appendix 1 and analysed in this report in the 'What the data tells us' section and consider which of the recommendations could be taken forward subject to available budgets. Lastly to agree that work should continue across the Council with a focus on the agreed priorities noted at point 13 of this report and to commit to continue to level up the BCP Council area.
3. A lot has happened since the initial Cabinet report in January 2022. The Levelling Up White Paper was released on Wednesday 02 February outlining four overarching objectives and a set of twelve missions to be achieved by 2030. These were underpinned by a series of suggested metrics.
4. Upon release of the white paper, Council officers mapped our Corporate Strategy and Big Plan priorities to the Levelling Up objectives and missions as well as the Purpose Coalition's Levelling Up Goals and set about establishing a set of local priorities. Drawing on local data and insights and discussions at a Members Briefing on Tuesday 08 February 2022, chaired by Councillor Toby Johnson, Lead Member for Levelling Up and Skills, a set of Levelling Up priorities for BCP Council were agreed (detailed at point 13 of this report).
5. The national direction for Levelling Up and capacity of Government to support Levelling Up has been somewhat impacted by political and economic events. Since the release of the White Paper in February 2022 the UK has had 3 Prime Ministers and 2 changes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
6. The current Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has reaffirmed his commitment to delivering Levelling Up as a key 2019 manifesto commitment. So far, Sunak has stated the importance of investing in education and skills to improve people's lives and already has radical education reforms planned. In Prime Ministers Question's on 26 October Sunak noted the importance of Levelling Up across the country, not forgetting deprived areas in rural, coastal and southern communities.
7. With the growing issues around cost of living and rising inflation putting unprecedented pressure on the public purse, Levelling Up is more important than ever and remains a key policy agenda across parties. Reappointing Michael Gove as Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities also reaffirms Sunak's commitment to Levelling Up and the content of the LUWP originally released under Gove.
8. Despite national uncertainty around the direction of Levelling Up, many organisations including local authorities have continued with implementing Levelling Up plans and initiatives. BCP Council has been busy establishing a direction of travel and governance for Levelling Up that supports the delivery and ambitions of our Corporate Strategy and Big Plan.

## Progress to date

9. The initial Cabinet paper in January 2022 speculated what might be included in the Government's Levelling Up White Paper (LUWP) and analysed data to see what Levelling Up would mean for us locally. We committed to forming an officer working group to develop a work plan and progress, working closely with the Lead Member. There was a commitment to review the white paper when published and consider how existing, planned and future work could contribute to Levelling Up. Commitments were also made to commission a Levelling Up Goals Impact Report, to continue work on the skills agenda, to hold a Member's Seminar to discuss and agree areas of focus and, to present a more detailed report on Levelling Up to a future Cabinet meeting once the aforementioned work had been progressed.
  10. At the end of 2021 BCP Council became a leading member of the [Levelling Up Councils Coalition](#), part of the wider [Purpose Coalition](#), organisations who have adopted the Levelling Up Goals and are actively working towards Levelling Up their communities. This was prior to the release of the Government's LUWP.
  11. When the LUWP was first released in February 2022, it was noted as *the* flagship Government policy and a mapping exercise was undertaken to see how the Levelling Up White Paper objectives and missions aligned with the Council's Big Plan and Corporate Strategy priorities, as well as the Levelling Up Goals that the Council had adopted from the Purpose Coalition. The outcome of this is attached in appendix 1 on page 8.
  12. It showed that BCP Council has a series of priorities and commitments made in the Big Plan and Corporate Strategy which intrinsically align with the values of the Government's Levelling Up agenda. This isn't surprising as Levelling Up is in essence a framework for social mobility and social impact focusing on different social, economic and environmental factors that impact the quality of life that people have and the opportunities that are available to them to improve their lives. As the lead member for Levelling Up and Skills, Cllr Toby Johnson, noted, "the Levelling Up agenda's biggest effect has been giving these long-established issues political visibility and the further motivation to tackle them; it requires the strength and bravery to grab the opportunity."
  13. On Tuesday 8 February 2022 the Council held a Members Briefing, chaired by Cllr Toby Johnson to discuss Levelling Up and what it meant locally for BCP Council. The meeting began with an introduction from Justine Greening, Founder of the Levelling Up Goals and former Education Secretary, explaining the purpose of the goals and the work the Council had begun with the Council Coalition. From these discussions and drawing on local data and insights as well as the gained knowledge from the Government's LUWP, the following Levelling Up priorities were established for BCP Council:
    - a. Increase support and development opportunities for children and young people
    - b. Address cost of living issues including affordable housing
    - c. Address skill shortages and low skill attainment
    - d. Reduce health inequalities and disparities between wards
    - e. Improve transport links including cycling infrastructure
- By focusing on these priorities, it will also help improve the area's productivity rate which is below the national average.
14. Three of the Levelling Up Goals were also identified as priority goals based on these established Levelling Up priorities. These are: goal 2 'Successful school years', goal 8 'Good health and wellbeing' and goal 14 'achieve equality through diversity and inclusion'.
  15. Having agreed a clear sense of direction for Levelling Up locally, a Levelling Up Programme Board for BCP Council was created in June 2022, to oversee and monitor workstreams for

the delivery of Levelling Up and also consider future plans. The updates below are based on these workstreams. Further information on the Levelling Up Programme Board is set out in appendix 2.

16. **Funding:** Knowing that the Council's Big Plan and Corporate Strategy priorities and commitments align so closely with the values of Levelling Up, the opportunity presented by Levelling Up to fund and enhance existing commitments was explored in detail. In February 2022 the Council took part in research for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities into the assessment criteria used for Levelling Up funding, having been unsuccessful in the first round. In July 2022 we submitted three Levelling Up fund bids for Levelling Up Fund 2 as agreed through the Big Plan Steering Group. Government has suggested it will inform applicants of the outcome before the end of the financial year.
17. The Council was also allocated £4.2m for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), a Government fund which replaces EU 'structural funds'; and £1.9m for Multiply, Government funding to improve adult numeracy skills. Government set out that the UKSPF will fund initiatives across three Investment Priorities namely: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People & Skills. Local Authorities were to choose from 42 "interventions" to align their Investment Plans to. Initially, Economic Development Officers led an internal collaborative exercise with colleagues to help identify and select the most relevant interventions from the 42, that could most effectively help deliver on key strategies related to the three Investment Priorities. This approach was then tested with key stakeholders including the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP), Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the Community Action Network and colleagues from adult learning and skills and communities, before refining based on this feedback and sharing with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Lead Member. The timeframe was extremely short, and the Investment Plan high level at this stage. Due to this short time frame, Members were updated on these points through the sharing of a Powerpoint presentation and were also advised that there will be further engagement and discussion on how these interventions will be delivered will be provided once Government approval is given. The completed plan was submitted to Government in July. Given the original expectation was that projects would begin in 22/23, officers expect to hear from Government by the end of the year.
18. There have been positive communications with Dorset Council on the UKSPF and Multiply plans which creates opportunities for joint working and economies of scale where appropriate. The Council also submitted an expression of interest for the Government's plans for Investment Zones despite a very short application period, ensuring the potential opportunities were explored. However, in the recent Autumn Statement, the Government said it will refocus the Investment Zones programme to catalyse a limited number of high potential clusters. It stated that the existing expressions of interest will therefore not be taken forward. It should be noted that this was a useful exercise in understanding our local opportunities and presenting these to Government, again raising the case for Levelling Up investment in BCP.
19. The Council has also been successful with its award of funding from the Towns Fund, a funding scheme launched by the Government for towns to improve their economy. Bournemouth secured almost £22million as part of the 'Town Deal' to turbo charge ambitious regeneration plans for Boscombe, creating opportunities for residents and businesses alike, whilst protecting the town's unique heritage and character.
20. This work is being facilitated by the Council, with overall direction provided by the Strategic Towns Fund Board, a cross section of private and public sector partners as well as community representatives who are keen to see Boscombe grow and thrive. This is regeneration led by the community, for the community, and is another great example of how the Council is working to Level Up the area.

21. **Partnership working, Lobbying and Thought Leadership:** In January 2022 officers began working with [ADEPT](#) (Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport) who have been bringing local authority's together to share learning and best practice on the response to Levelling Up. BCP Council officers presented their work on how Levelling Up could be measured from a local authority perspective which has shaped ADEPT's lobbying work on this and we are also inputting into a toolkit for local authorities on the opportunities and challenges presented by Levelling Up.
22. In November 2021, thanks to an introduction by the Leader, officers began conversations with [This Is Purpose](#) about their work on Levelling Up prior to the release of the Government's LUWP and the Council officially signed up to the Levelling Up Goals after the recommendations in the January Cabinet paper were approved. BCP Council quickly became a leading council of the Levelling Up Councils Coalition, adopting the Levelling Up Goals framework and helping to shape how these work for local authorities. Officers commissioned an Impact Report with This is Purpose, using the framework of [the Levelling Up Goals](#) advocated by the Purpose Coalition. The aim was to have an independent view on the Council's activities and provide recommendations to focus its Levelling Up aspirations on. Officers also made contact with Bournemouth University, who are also commissioning a report on the Levelling Up Goals.
23. A copy of the completed Impact Report is included in appendix 1 and further analysis of this is explored in the 'What the data tells us' section of this report. Justine Greening has provided a foreword to the Impact Report and fed into the recommendations providing a future focus for the Council's Levelling Up aspirations, and work with the Council's Coalition continues.
24. As a leading member of the Council's Coalition officers have been proactive in getting in touch with other member local authorities, to share best practise and see how the coalition can start to influence this agenda with Government.
25. BCP Council's Lead Member for Levelling Up and Skills, Cllr Johnson, has also been engaging with local MPs, establishing a connection with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on this work.
26. **Data, insights and Performance monitoring:** A core part of responding to the Levelling Up agenda is about horizon scanning; utilising connections with organisations such as Key Cities, Centre for Cities, ADEPT and the Local Government Association; attending webinars and being a thought leader, to keep up to date with the latest developments and thinking from a local authority perspective and beyond. Through this, for example, it has been recognised that there are strong connections between tackling health inequalities and enabling better participation in the labour market which in turn improves productivity. As part of the Integrated Care Partnership, BCP Council has acknowledged the importance of partnership in tackling the wider determinants of health inequalities and as noted in the Government's LUWP, this is a key mission of Levelling Up.
27. In February 2022 Cabinet agreed the Corporate Strategy and supporting Performance Management Framework would align to the Levelling Up Goals, embedding them into annual Performance reporting and into the Corporate Strategy delivery plans. In July 2022 we produced an End of Year 2021-22 Progress Report on the Levelling Up Goals compared with progress with activities in the Corporate Strategy. This went to Cabinet as part of the Corporate Performance report.
28. We've also led work on measuring Levelling Up and what it means for us at a local level, feeding this insight into the Council Coalition and ADEPT. The Council's work on this has been commended by This Is Purpose and more can be seen in the Impact Report in appendix 1.

29. **Council activities and service integration:** In February 2022 a corporate sponsor, Adam Richens, was nominated from the Corporate Management Board to further the Council's commitment to the Levelling Up agenda, helping to embed Levelling Up in Council activities. Further work on embedding Levelling Up into decision-making is being pursued and includes integrating the Levelling Up Goals into the Decision Impact Assessment tool.
30. In March 2022 a workshop was held with Directors across the Council to map current, planned and future Council activities to the LUWP objectives. This was a very helpful exercise to see once again how the values of Levelling Up align with the activities in each of directorate, offering opportunities and helping to embed Levelling Up in all the Council does.
31. The first meeting of the Levelling Up Programme Board was held in June 2022 adding governance to the established Levelling Up priorities with an objective to: Use the frameworks of the Levelling Up White Paper and Levelling Up Goals to support the delivery and ambitions of our Corporate Strategy and Big Plan.
32. In order to produce the Impact Report from This Is Purpose, a Levelling Up audit was required which involved mapping the Council's current and planned work with the Levelling Up Goals. This involved officers from areas across the Council including those from skills and learning adult community education, economic development, SEND, early years, sustainability, HR, equality and diversity, corporate policy and communities. This was captured in a pro forma and this information was analysed as part of the Impact Report in appendix 1.
33. Contributions to the LUWP missions and Levelling Up Goals have also been assessed as part of the Smart Place Strategy, Skills Plan and Levelling Up is a focus in the Council's Economic Development Strategy.
34. **Devolution:** The LUWP sets out a devolution framework looking to empower local leaders "to develop local solutions to local problems". Exploratory work continues on opportunities for BCP Council which is set out in a separate Cabinet paper.

## What the data tells us

35. **The Place:** Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) has a combined population of 400,300 and a £10bn economy supported by the tenth largest urban local authority in England. It's a region that promotes and enables wellbeing in all its forms with 15 miles of south-facing sandy beaches and 19 Sites of Special Scientific Interest making up nearly a fifth of the area, as well as being home to the 2nd largest natural harbour in the world. This promotes a healthy work life balance, shaping people's everyday lives. The outstanding natural environment is something residents cherish about living in BCP with a strong sense of belonging to the local area. Yet, like many places BCP has areas of contrast, including some of the most affluent and most deprived areas in England.
36. There are three world-class universities with about 22,000 students; a multiple site college catering for 11,000 students and collaborating with over 2,000 businesses delivering one of the most successful apprenticeship programmes in the country; and 20 schools as well as a long-established language school sector.
37. **The People:** The local population is ageing, with predictions that by 2028, 24% will be aged 65+. BCP Council is a member of the Dorset Armed Forces Covenant given the proportion of local residents identifying as current personnel or veterans. BCP also has a high proportion of unpaid carers. In the 2011 census, 11% of the local population identified as unpaid carers with the majority providing up to 19 hours of care per week and it's suspected this number will have risen since then. Life expectancy and healthy






life expectancy is better in BCP than it is nationally, and this has generally been improving. However, there are some areas where our populations health could be better. Deprivation is strongly linked with many health outcomes, with clear inequalities in life expectancy across the BCP area.

38. The relationship between unemployment and health status is clear at ward level for BCP. Wards where levels of unemployment are significantly above the BCP average also have the lowest life expectancy. Areas with the highest unemployment rates are significantly more likely to include residents that have no or few qualifications, people with disabilities and mental ill-health, those with caring responsibilities, lone parents, some ethnic minorities, older workers and particularly young people. These data insights have really strengthened the case for Levelling Up the BCP area with a focus on our local Levelling Up priorities set out at point 13 of this report.
39. **The Economy:** Around 61% of the total resident population are of working age with higher concentrations of employment in financial services (with the largest financial sector outside London), real estate, tourism & hospitality, arts, entertainment and creative industries, and healthcare. There is also a rich engineering and advanced manufacturing sector. The proportions of workforce educated to higher levels have fallen behind the national, while a fifth of working age people have no Level 2 qualification, regarded a basic standard for numeracy, literacy, and employability.
40. The pandemic had more profound effects on the BCP labour market than seen nationally particularly impacting businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector. Despite this, rapid adaptation and digital adoption allowed large parts of the economy to bounce back. BCP was among the top business survival rate nationally. With up to a third of the workforce expected to move into retirement, the area needs to invest in young people and create opportunities locally for them to enter the workforce.
41. **Cost of living:** Wages are 8% lower than the average earnings in England. This is most notable for women who earn 16% less in BCP compared to the England average. Average house prices and rental costs are significantly higher than average wages and this has only been exacerbated by rising inflation, making housing affordability a key issue for the area.
42. **Measuring progress with Levelling Up:** Using metrics and data is an important part of Levelling Up to understand where strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities lie locally with the Levelling Up agenda, however it's not easy to get right. The Government published a technical annex as part of the Levelling Up White Paper outlining a series of suggested metrics to measure progress with the Levelling Up missions. As part of this, the ONS has been developing a tool where people can explore and compare how local authorities sit with some of these metrics where available: [Subnational indicators explorer - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/subnational-indicators-explorer).
43. The Impact Report from This Is Purpose provides a complimentary framework in the Levelling Up Goals and underlying metrics by which to measure ourselves on progress with Levelling Up. The Council has been commended by This Is Purpose as a leading example of an organisation on the ground that is using its own expertise to measure its Levelling Up impact. Officers within the Council's Policy and Research team undertook a comparison exercise of metrics including those in the Levelling Up White Paper and Levelling Up Goals framework and insights from this have fed into the development of the Purpose Coalition's measurement of the Levelling Up Goals as shown in the Impact Report at appendix 1.
44. Using the measurement piece from the Impact Report, a visual representation of the Council's performance for each of the Levelling Up Goals can be seen in figures 1 and 2 on the following page. The analysis gives a helpful snapshot however limitations with data availability mean this doesn't detail the whole picture.

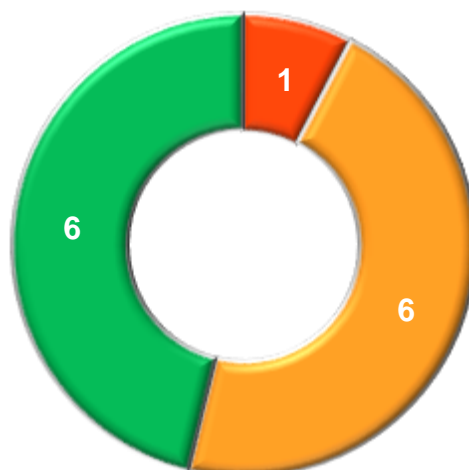
**Figure 1:** BCP Council current performance on the goals

**Key**

-  Performing above national average
-  Some aspects above and some below national average
-  Significant aspects below national average



**Figure 2:** BCP Council overall performance on the goals





45. Looking at figure 1 and 2 above, BCP Council can demonstrate many areas where it is above the national average and also where further work is needed. This provides a useful benchmarking exercise and further work on this is important to ascertain local ambitions and targets for priority areas.
46. There is one goal to draw out in particular where the Council is overall performing below the national average. This is goal 7 'Widening access to responsible credit and closing the savings gap'. This goal looks at personal finances and debt and the impact that affordability of day-to-day essentials can have on accessing opportunities such as advice and skills to realise potential. As noted previously, wages in BCP on average are below the national average and it's important to continue addressing this as part of local Levelling Up plans. The Council's Economic Development Strategy and Skills Plan set out what needs to be done to improve local productivity and ultimately, increase wages where needed.

## Next Steps

47. Levelling Up the BCP area has progressed since the initial Cabinet paper in January 2022, as set out in this report. The Impact Report in appendix 1 gives a clear direction of next steps and opportunities for working with partners, especially those in skill development, education and health. It is recommended that the programme of work continues, particularly where the data and Impact Report has identified gaps to enhance what the Council already does in these areas.
48. The Impact Report has been very helpful in identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for Levelling Up Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The Council's strong corporate vision and strategy are noted as helping it to deliver the Levelling Up Goals. Notably the Council is commended on extensive examples towards achieving the first three goals, which look at the way young people, their parents, carers and teachers are assisted in achieving their potential, as well as goal 14 'Achieving equality through diversity & inclusion'. The analysis also demonstrates areas for improvement such as where we have metrics below the national average. A series of recommendations have been made by This Is Purpose to further the work of the Council towards achieving the Levelling Up Goals. These recommendations are made under each of our Corporate Strategy Priorities and include:
  - Sustainable Environment - embed sustainability education into children and adult education
  - Dynamic Places - work with local partners on a place-based approach to Levelling Up
  - Connected Communities - continue to use data to identify emerging trends and support disadvantaged groups such as helping more people with disabilities into employment
  - Brighter Futures - look at an apprenticeship levy transfer scheme for the whole area
  - Fulfilled Lives - work closely with the Purpose Coalition network on addressing support for cost of living

Further detail can be found in the Impact Report in appendix 1. The Council can continue conversations with This Is Purpose on these recommendations and explore how they may build on existing work on Levelling Up.

49. The Council, through the Levelling Up Programme Board, will continue to horizon scan and be responsive to political, social and economic challenges and explore emerging opportunities as they arise. Efforts will be focused on making improvements in the priority areas that matter to the Council and use the frameworks

of the Levelling Up White Paper and Levelling Up Goals to support the delivery and ambitions of our Corporate Strategy and Big Plan. Work will also continue on measuring the impact of Levelling Up locally.

50. With support from the Lead Member, officers will continue integrating Levelling Up into Council activities and decision-making and will review how local success with Levelling Up is measured.
51. Working with partners such as ADEPT and the Councils Coalition will continue, supporting campaigning and lobbying work to ensure the voices of local authorities are heard in the Levelling Up agenda. This is amplified through the Purpose Coalition led by Justine Greening who campaign to ensure Levelling Up remains a Government priority focused on social value and social impact.
52. As an integral part of the Integrated Care Partnership, work will continue to tackle health inequalities and the wider determinants, helping to shape the Integrated Care Partnership Strategy.
53. Lastly, there is a requirement to enhance communications on the importance of Levelling Up the BCP area to staff, residents and stakeholders. Work continues with the Council's Communications team to create an external-facing website as well as an intranet page for staff to boost knowledge and embed the values of Levelling Up in their work.

### **Options Appraisal**

54. To either:

- support the recommendations and continue to level up the BCP Council area which will enable the Council and its residents to benefit from this key political agenda and opportunities for investment
- Not support the recommendations, and potentially miss out on future Government investment to support our vision, and key policies and strategies

### **Summary of financial implications**

55. Should any funding be required for this work an existing budget or budgets would need to be identified before any commitments are made. There is therefore no expectation that this would have any impact on the MTFP.

### **Summary of legal implications**

56. There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

57. As noted previously, there are no additional direct human resource implications from this work. It is likely that, to help achieve the proposed approach, appropriately skilled Council officers who have this work as part of their usual business will be required to contribute some time and expertise. It will be in the interest of all services to collaborate as this could result in attracting Government funding for their projects.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

58. This report has no direct carbon reduction impact however a key aspect of the Council's work on Levelling Up has been around adopting the Levelling Up Goals which are a national subset of the international Sustainable Development Goals and therefore there is a positive sustainability impact through embracing the Levelling Up agenda. As this is a progress report a Decision Impact Assessment (DIA) is not needed however corresponding projects should have their own DIA.

### **Summary of public health implications**

59. Two of the twelve missions of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper are around health and wellbeing and addressing health inequalities. Reducing health inequalities has also been identified as a Council priority for the Levelling Up agenda supported through the work of the Integrated Care Partnership, System and Board.

### **Summary of equality implications**

60. Levelling Up at its core is about reducing inequalities and increasing equality of opportunity so there are many positive equality impacts from the Council embracing this agenda. As this is a progress report an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required. Corresponding projects should have their own EIAs.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

61. There are no identified risks associated with accepting the recommendations from this report

### **Background papers**

Levelling Up - Cabinet Paper January 2022 – Published work

Skills Plan 2022-2026 – Due to be published

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Levelling Up Impact Report

Appendix 2: Levelling Up BCP Council, strategic direction and implementation