

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 January 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr L Dedman – Chairman

Cllr S Bull – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr S Aitkenhead, Cllr H Allen, Cllr M Andrews, Cllr S Armstrong, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr D Brown, Cllr O Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr S Carr-Brown, Cllr B Castle, Cllr J Challinor, Cllr A Chapmanlaw, Cllr B Chick, Cllr J Clements, Cllr M Cox, Cllr M Dower, Cllr M Earl, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr D Farr, Cllr D A Flagg, Cllr M Gillett, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr M Haines, 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 S McCormack, Cllr P Miles, 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 V Ricketts, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr J Salmon, Cllr P Sidaway, Cllr P Slade, Cllr V Slade, Cllr M Tarling, Cllr T Trent, Cllr O Walters, Cllr C Weight, Cllr L Williams and Cllr K Wilson

50. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Adams, J Bagwell, J Butt, P Cooper, E Connolly, D d’Orton-Gibson, B Dove, J Edwards, A Filer, R Maidment and C Matthews.

51. Declarations of Interests

Janie Berry, Monitoring Officer, declared a pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 14 and confirmed that she would leave the room for the duration of the item.

52. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

53. Announcements and Introductions from the Chairman

The Chairman updated Council on her activities since the last meeting. These included attendance at:

- remembrance Services at Purewell Cross and Christchurch Priory
- a welcoming of a delegation of Bournemouth University politics students for a tour of the chamber and presentation of regalia

- Winton Community Pantry with the Mayor of Bournemouth
- an art exhibition hosted by the Soroptimists
- the Admiralty Carol Service with other civic dignitaries and the Leader in aid of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity
- Christchurch Priory to read a lesson at the Carol Service
- the 100th Birthday celebration for Gwen Taylor at the Fairhaven Christadelphian Care Home

The Vice Chairman updated Council on his activities since the last meeting on behalf of the Chairman.

These included attendance at:

- the remembrance parade and service in Poole
- the Indian Cultural Association of Dorset's Ayyappa Swamy Padi Pooja
- Royal British Legions Service of Dedication for a new County Standard in Wimborne Minster

The Chairman invited Councillor Kieron Wilson (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services) to provide an update on the knife crime motion which was supported at the Council meeting in September 2023.

Councillor Wilson thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to update members on the progress of the Community Safety Strategy, paying particular attention to knife crime.

Council was advised that the Portfolio Holder, the chair of the Community Safety Panel (CSP) and officers attended the council's Overview and Scrutiny Board on 5 December to provide the annual report on this subject. The report contains a detailed overview of the crime disorder across the BCP area, along with details of the significant partnership work taking place. Councillors can access the annual strategic assessment and key performance indicators for the CSP along with the hotspot mapping and trend analysis.

The Portfolio Holder advised that:-

- there was no statistical significant change in public place recorded violent crime between 2021/22 and 2022/23, bucking a national trend;
- there was a 7.6% reduction between the number of recorded domestic abuse violent crime incidences in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22;
- a 5% reduction in the total number of serious sexual offences when compared over the same period, and
- a 12% decrease in the total number of all ASB reported to the police, with 10,952 incidences reported in 2022/23, as compared to 12,440 in 2021/22.

Under the serious violence duty, we are required to monitor from 31 January, 2024, data around three of the following KPIs. A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object. A reduction in knife and sharp object enabled serious violence recorded by the police, and homicides recorded by the police.

Knife crime is recorded against crime groups, such as violence against the person, possessions of a weapon, public order, etc., rather than a specific category of knife crime, depending on the incident, and therefore requires the police data to be flagged when a knife has been involved. The serious violence needs assessment identified that there were 422 flagged occurrences in BCP in 2022/23. 45% of these were classified as violence against the person; of those 194 occurrences, 34% were assault with injury, 26% were common assault, and 20% were the most serious violent crime.

Council was further advised that the Council had held a Keeping Young People Safe conference in November, coinciding with Operation Skepta, a week of intensified action against knife crime. This included speakers who spoke on the importance of being persistent with our most vulnerable young people due to their complexities, including key speakers from the Ben Kinsella Trust.

All organisations were able to provide practical tips for attendees to take away to help our young people be as safe as possible. We are holding the same conference again this year in 2024, in addition to our five weeks of action around knife crime between 15 April and 17 May, which is currently under development, focusing on education, support, prevention, and deterrence around knife crime. The Portfolio Holder reminded members that this area is the seventh safest policing area across the country when compared across all policing crime recorded rates.

Councillor T Trent paid tribute to former Poole Councillor Randolph Meech who had passed away in December. Mr Meech had represented the Hamworthy ward from 1976 to 1996, served as Sheriff and subsequently Mayor in 1987/88. Council passed its best wishes to Mr Meech's family.

Member's stood in silent tribute.

54. Public Issues

(a) Public Questions

Public Question from Adam Osman

We know that we need to act radically to combat the effects of climate change, I'd also like to highlight the 100 cyclists killed per year in the UK. We know we need to halve the number of miles driven in order to meet climate change goals, even if we switch all cars to EVs. In order to combat this in the most cost-efficient way possible, a 20mph speed limit would encourage more cycle journeys and pay dividends in public health through air quality and fewer fatalities. You have a 1 in 10 chance of dying at 20mph, 1 in 4 at 30mph. How can we justify 4 times more deaths, especially when a lower speed limit has been empirically proven to reduce average journey times.

Will BCP implement a 20mph default speed limit? Further to this, will you listen to the recommendations of the upcoming community assembly on 20mph?

Response by Councillor Millie Earl, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Connected Communities

Adam, thanks for your summary of the benefits of 20MPH as a default speed limit, and your questions.

20mph by default in our built up urban area would be beneficial to people walking, wheeling and cycling, and as you highlight also benefit public health and air quality.

I represent Newtown & Heatherlands ward in Poole and we have seen the benefits of a large scale 20mph speed limit which was introduced in 2010 and extended in subsequent years to cover almost the whole ward. I would like to see other communities able to benefit from a safer and healthier environment, like we have.

Parties forming the Three Towns Alliance highlighted an intention to improve road safety by implementing 20mph speed limits in more areas or as the default speed limit, in our election material. Many other urban areas across the country are ahead of us in making progress. It is important that we have collaboration from Dorset Police in enforcing speed limits, and we are working with them on means to improve that for 20mph zones.

So will BCP implement a 20mph default speed limit? Yes, that is our intention. There will be some roads that are exempt, on the basis of need and capacity. It is also likely that rollout will take some time, working alongside communities and finding a means to funding such a widespread change.

Will we listen to the recommendations of the upcoming community assembly on 20mph? We are keen to hear views from the whole community on proposed changes, but we will be pleased to receive the output from your assembly deliberations, and I'm grateful for the efforts of volunteers to engage in the debate.

I would also add that we have a meeting later this week with representatives of the '20's Plenty for Us' organisation so we can learn from the experience of other places who have implemented change.

Public Question from Ralph Doe

In March 2023 there was an oil spill in Poole Harbour resulting in temporary restrictions on fishing and the consumption of fish and shellfish from the harbour, and leisure activities in the harbour.

No official report has yet been made available to the general public in spite of early promises to the contrary. Nine months have now passed.

In view of BCP council's and businesses' reliance on revenues from tourism I would like to know what measures BCP council has taken to:

- 1) Ensure that oil spills will not impact leisure activities and tourism in the area
- 2) Monitor oil production and exploration in Poole Harbour and Bournemouth Bay
- 3) Engage with relevant authorities, the Environment Agency, the Poole Harbour Commissioners and Dorset County Council to ensure they carry out their tasks with due diligence and communicate their findings to the general public.

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

Ralph, thank you for your question. BCP Council were a supporting agency in the multi-agency response to the oil-spill, and we were able to render particular experience and assistance in the use of our flood and coastal erosion team's drones to help assess the spread and in loaning a press officer to Poole Harbour Commissioner's as the organisation with the lead responsibility in the incident response.

You asked what measures BCP Council has taken to ensure the oil-spills will not impact leisure activities and tourism in the area. Dorset Council leads on licensing the Wytch Farm works since it sits within their planning area. The Environment Agency and Health and Safety Executive have continued to investigate the circumstances of the leak and we will continue to raise relevant questions on behalf of residents and tourists to the area.

As part of the local resilience forum, BCP Council has played a significant role in the multi-agency incident management and recovery groups. The containment of the spill was in no small part aided by prior planning from all those partners involved.

The second part of your question was how will we monitor oil production and exploration in Poole Harbour and Poole Bay. BCP Council are involved directly in the monitoring of shellfish in the harbour and we will work with other agencies, particularly through Dorset Council as the lead authority on monitoring the operation of the Perenco Wytch Farm works around the harbour. Offshore exploration in Poole Bay is separately overseen by the Marine Management organisation.

BCP Council, myself and officers work closely with our colleagues at Dorset Council to ensure on-going monitoring of the operation as part of licensing conditions of their operation.

The third part of your question was how we engage with relevant authorities to ensure they carry out their tasks and communicate their findings to the general public. Communications have been key throughout the incident response. Our officers continue to be involved with the local resilience forum response to the oil-spill with a multi-agency recovery co-ordination group which has been meeting since the incident happened in March 2023 and sub-groups focusing on health and community, environment, business and economy. These have overseen the recovery through joint working with the agencies mentioned ensuring they carry out their tasks and where appropriate communicate findings to the public. We will continue to be engaged with planning for any future perceived risks to the delicate eco-systems around the harbour and with on-going remediation work which is helping to inform the Environment Agency's investigations into the cause of the spill and their determination on whether any enforcement actions will follow. When relevant, this will revert to usual business for both councils and the recovery coordination group will be stood down.

We have been invited to join the Wytch Farm Well-sites Local Liaison Groups and coincidentally I attended the first one of those this morning since 2019. That group has met and intends to meet every six months. I have been asking for any updates and outcomes from the Environment

Agency's findings to be communicated to the public as and when they become available. Because there is still possible enforcement or legal action this has not been possible to date.

Public Question from Susan Chapman

BCP's local plan does its best with the disgraceful, hopelessly inadequate policies of our climate-illiterate, genocidally-denying government.

Our biosphere is in deep trouble. Our youngsters will have an unbelievably difficult future as systems fail, ecosystems fail, migration and resource wars accelerate and the natural world collapses.

All hands on deck are overdue. We must all help to Salvage and Survive, what we can, while we can.

Please can BCP without further delay share the Mauna Loa data and explain its accelerating significance, as well as the need to collectively find better support systems than fossil fuels and other dangerous practices, in a leaflet to go to all council tax payers, to all Heads and Leaders and to be shared sensitively with all pupils and their parents?

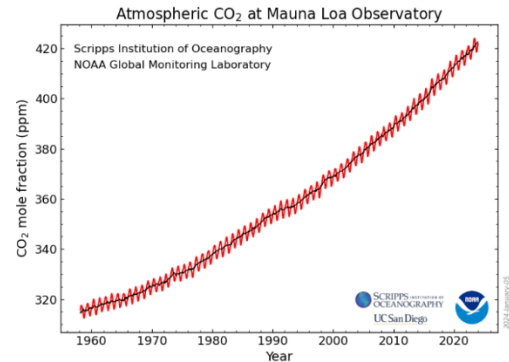
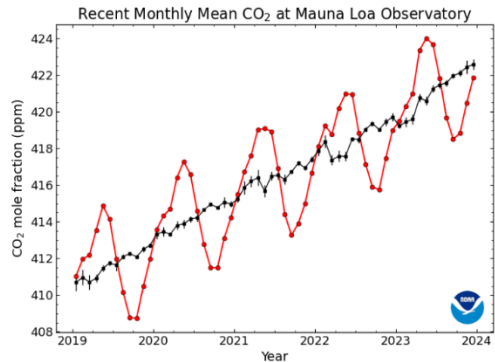
Response by Councillor Andy Hadley, Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy

Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Sue, for your question and request. And thank you for acknowledging the progress of our local plan work, especially the debate at the recent Overview and Scrutiny Board last month highlighting the challenges in attempting to raise the standards of construction whilst we face a crisis in particular to get developers responding to the needs for young people to find secure and affordable homes. There is a small cost premium to ensuring that at least our new housing stock is better equipped for energy efficiency and resilience to more extreme climate events. And we should be trying to achieve that. As you rightly point out, the present government are undermining progress on climate mitigation.

The Mauna Loa data that you highlight is taken at an observatory in Hawaii that has plotted the global Atmospheric CO₂ levels continuously since 1957. It shows the continuing climb in CO₂ over the last 75 years, well past the ambitions to limit global warming, and it corroborates other research.

[Global Monitoring Laboratory - Carbon Cycle Greenhouse Gases \(noaa.gov\)](https://gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/trends/)

<https://gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/trends/>



Despite all the meetings and promises for global action since the concerns were first raised in the 1991 Rio Earth summit and the alarms raised by you and others locally, this inexorable rise is a huge concern. And it manifests locally in warmer weather with more extreme rainfall events, as we've seen very recently over Christmas. In engaging on the issue with families and children in particular, another concerned local grandmother has been working tirelessly to share information in an accessible format with schools and via our library service. Her book and teaching guide is called "Planet Earth Needs Our Help."

The updated annual climate plan will be coming to the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the spring, which will include our role in informing and educating the public, and we are also reviewing measures relating to our carbon emissions through our corporate performance reports as they are refreshed for 2024/25. We do need to improve our public engagement with the climate and ecological crisis via a variety of means, and we do take that challenge seriously. The threat should be a core concern for everyone living in the BCP area to take personal action. We are beyond avoiding climate change, and indeed, salvage and survive sums up the task for us all. Thank you.

Public Question from Daniel Parkin

Following BCP local plan working party meeting, 5th October, travellers site was allocated at Branksome Triangle within Talbot and Branksome Wood ward.

Please confirm which other sites were previously in this plan and removed? Why were these sites considered unsuitable and replaced by Branksome Triangle, where concerns such as site entrance isn't suitable, and a fence will not protect the SNCI.

Why was this site suddenly considered more suitable when previous planning applications have been declined?

Why was this area included at such short notice when the LP commenced in 2019? Were minutes taken in that meeting, as I understand an officer stated 'well it has to go somewhere'.

Please confirm whether 'gagging' orders were given to the working party, and why?

Response by Councillor Vikki Slade, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places

Thank you for your question.

The new BCP Local Plan is required to provide for our local population and this includes our Gypsy and Traveller population. The council has an existing site for those members of this community who live in specialist accommodation rather than traditional homes and like all populations their future generations are entitled to homes. A local plan that does not include provision for them would be thrown out by the Inspector as it would not be 'sound'.

I should stress that these homes are quite different from the need for a transit site or temporary stopping place which are not required under the local plan but their provision does enable the police to do their work in responding to unauthorised encampments.

We never had any sites previously. No sites were promoted to us by private landowners and there were no planning applications for permanent gypsy and traveller sites which were declined. There was a planning application for a transit site in the Green Belt but this was refused and we have chosen a strategy whereby we do not release Green Belt. So, in summer 2023 we turned to our Council landholding for potential sites. We assessed several sites and the preferred site was the Branksome Triangle. The site meets all the relevant criteria with its own access, with limited impact on neighbouring homes and without other restrictions.

The site was in use during the early discussions but was handed back with vacant possession.

The Local Plan Working Group was set up to enable Councillors from across the political spectrum to guide the preparation of the local plan. There are no gagging orders but it would be inappropriate for a Councillor to share a privileged information with the public whilst a strategy is being prepared.

Public Question from Alexia Parkin – asked by Daniel Parkin

This is in relation to allocation of employment land at Talbot Heath.

It is my understanding that there may be a common consensus from cross party councillors to the left of me, that employment land should be removed completely, from this site, and hope those in favour of protecting the environment and the many species involved, may support my concerns tonight.

Why does the Council feel the need to completely encircle one of BCP Council's flagship SSSI nature reserves, with the very real potential of net losses in biodiversity with no real accountability. Do you believe you can redesign nature by deliberately ignoring the significance of how the established habitats of that whole area are interdependent and the reason why wildlife is thriving. The reduction in the land allocation does not protect the heath at all, so the compromise is worthless.

Also, where have the employment numbers come from and why allow planning permission to convert other commercial units into residential units

if employment needs are to be met in the region. This is an SSSI area - not an industrial park.

Response by Vikki Slade, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places

The BCP Local Plan is required to meet development needs for employment land and providing employment land helps support local businesses and gives local people job opportunities.

The amount of employment land required is calculated through an established methodology considering housing requirements and economic forecasts that has to be robust and defensible at the Local Plan examination.

We have got policies within the Local Plan to protect existing employment sites but some existing commercial units have been lost to residential uses through the government's permitted development legislation which allows for these changes of use without the need for full planning permission. This has largely impacted dated office stock.

The land at Talbot Village will help us meet our employment needs, ensure a choice of employment sites exists across the area (rather than over reliance on the airport business parks) and supports our universities and the potential for graduates to set up businesses in the local area.

We have worked closely with Natural England to ensure that there will be no harm to Talbot Heath. The biodiversity impacts have been carefully considered and that the proposals can achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity. To resolve concerns raised by the public and councillors we have halved the land area from 9.8 to 4.7 hectares to create larger buffer to the heathland.

Public Question from Harriet Stewart-Jones – read by the Chief Executive

Will the Council please remove the final 4.7 hectares of employment allocation from Highmoor Farm, Talbot Village in the draft BCP Local Plan? These fields have been shown to be functionally linked to the internationally important and irreplaceable Talbot Heath and are essential to protect this area - the precious green heart of our town. There is no proven need for this extra new employment space.

Many thousands of local residents, including cross-party councillors, are dismayed to see that this ill-considered allocation has been carried forward into the new Local Plan.

Response by Councillor Vikki Slade, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places

Thank you for your question the answer to which is broadly the same as the previous question. This site has already been allocated and agreed through a Government Inspection process through the Poole Local Plan.

It is crucial that land for employment is spread across the three towns to ensure that it is accessible and offers land for a range of employment types. This is a very important part of BCP's available overall employment land.

Previously the allocation was just under 10ha.

We have listened to the concerns raised by some local residents and in trying to reach a compromise have now reduced it to 4.7ha retaining for employment land the part which is furthest from the heathland.

It should also be noted that the whole area was allocated for employment land under the Poole Local Plan and as such a planning application was submitted to develop the whole site. This is now the subject of an Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

A further update on the situation relating to this site will be provided at the planning committee next week.

The appeal will be considered against the current 2018 Poole Local Plan. It is highly unlikely that the new BCP Local Plan will be given much consideration because there are objections to the allocation and the plan won't be adopted before the planning appeal is determined.

Public Question from Andrew Jolley – read by the Chief Executive

Has the council done any impact assessment or consultation on reducing the schools block funding transfer by 11%, because such a cut will likely bankrupt most schools in the area?

How can the council be certain there will be new SEND provision built locally and in a reasonable timeframe, given Free schools need sponsors, take years to process and are beholden to DfE granting permission and providing funds?

How are the public supposed to have faith in a Children's services department who produce and publish a plan where the number one risk is that it can't all be delivered legally?

Response by Councillor Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Childrens Services

Thank you, Mr Jolley, for your question. I am grateful for giving me the opportunity to highlight the issues that we have with the High Needs block deficit and its implications.

Although you haven't mentioned this in your question, I am assuming that your questions have reference to the Safety Valve invite from the DfE.

There is no impact assessment on reducing the schools block funding transfer by 11% as such a transfer is not an option that the Council can impose. Any transfer greater than 0.5% requires both the agreement of the Schools Forum and the Secretary of State, although the Secretary of State does have a power to override the schools forum.

This was discussed at the last Schools forum as we need to demonstrate, to the DfE, that all avenues to reduce the growing High Needs Block deficit have been explored. The Schools Forum on 13 December 2023 agreed that only surplus schools block funding could be transferred to support the high needs budget and all schools should receive their national funding formula allocations in full.

A further meeting with school's forum is to take place 15 January where we are looking at all of the options. The Council cannot take 11% from the

Schools block, but the Sec of State could make that decision, and he will be aware that is an option. We have illustrated the impact of that in our modelling which we have shared with the DfE and their advisors.

The maximum 0.5% transfer has been happening regularly over the preceding years and is very likely to continue.

As a result of the debate at Schools Forum, there are now schools that are looking at other ways that they can help ease the financial pressure on the deficit separately from any transfer.

The Council has already started work on putting in bids for new Free Schools. A very good bid was put in last year, which was liked by the DfE, however they went with a private sector bid. Another bid will be submitted later this week. You are quite right in saying that we are beholden to DfE vagaries, as we are with the inadequate funding that we receive for the High Needs Block from central government. However, the only way to provide good opportunities for pupils who need specialist provision is to expand places in the maintained sector and we have no alternative but to follow the correct procedures to achieve this.

BCP Children's Services department have not published a plan as described above. What I believe that you are referring to is "Scenario 1 – DSG management plan with rapid balancing" again from the Schools Forum 13 December 2023. This scenario is included to demonstrate why a five-year plan isn't achievable. It says it "is very unlikely to meet the second requirement of the mission statement, namely, to provide a good service" This scenario is not acceptable.

Later in the same document there is "Scenario 2: DSG management plan - potentially deliverable but very challenging assumptions" This is a fifteen-year plan which might be workable and doesn't have the same level of risk.

Much of the changes proposed in scenario 2 are changes to day to day working within the department who are working primarily to facilitate better outcomes for our children and young people with SEND and at the same time delivering better value for our residents. Any capital investment into the Council, or capital expenditure by the council will, as always, be a decision made by either Cabinet or Council, depending on the amounts. There will be full opportunity for member engagement with this process and for the public to ask questions in the normal way.

(b) Public Statements

Public Statement from Joanne Keeling

Graffiti in Talbot Village underpass was reported in October. Two further reports and social media contact followed, yet lack of action prompted phone calls to BCP. After an unsatisfactory response, assistance was requested from ward councillors and MP Conor Burns. The graffiti was cleaned the next day.

This incident should be the last of its kind. We shouldn't live in a community where it's acceptable for young impressionable children to walk past such abusive language and anti-semitic phrases. It's our duty to shield vulnerable children from this. To prevent this happening again, please ask yourselves, how long is it considered acceptable between a report and any

action? The failings of cleaning vehicles or lack of training doesn't justify a delay of 3 months. What faith can the general public have in their council if they are ignored and have to enlist the help of their councillor and MP.

Public Statement from Andrew Jolley

This safety valve scheme simply kicks the deficit can down the road until after the general election.

It's being imposed by the same Tory ministers who oversaw austerity and offers no guarantee accepting councils will avoid bankruptcy.

Safety-Valve is little more than a transfer of historic levels of debt away from Central Government, placing it squarely on our most vulnerable children and their educators for decades to come.

No one properly considered the viability or societal impact of the plan with many assumptions outside council control.

The suggestion of an eleven percent cut to school funding is particularly devastating. Be in no doubt, this will bankrupt local schools.

Decisions so damaging to future generations should not be left to unelected officials.

This lack of oversight is scandalous and deliberate.

Councillors must be able to scrutinise the proposals before it's agreed.

Voters are entitled to know who supported and enacted this plan.

Statement from Sheila Warner

Since its establishment in 2019 BCP Council has had one Planning Committee.

The Echo quotes the Leader of the Council saying "The creation of a western BCP and an eastern BCP Planning Committee would allow for a more localised decision making process ...".

Talbot and Branksome Woods Residents Association observes that this is a transparent carving up of Bournemouth into a Poole Planning Committee and a Christchurch Committee.

If the Council considers that one Planning Committee is inadequate to serve the whole area then surely the 3 Towns Alliance, which is not a one and one third and one and two thirds Towns Alliance should be proposing 3 Planning Committees, one for each of the 3 towns.

On attending the Council's Corporate Strategy meeting I stressed the need for unity. A Christchurch attendee aptly summed this up with "United we stand, divided we fall".

55. Cabinet 13 December 2023 - Minute No. 66 - Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Mike Cox presented the report on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (d) Further to Councils decision on 12 July 2022 to apply a council tax premium to second homes and an empty homes premium, to approve the formal determination as required by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.**

Note – resolutions (a) – (c) were resolved matters by the Cabinet.

Voting: 59:3 (3 abstentions)

Councillor Tony Trent left the meeting at 20:04

56. Cabinet 13 December 2023 - Minute No. 67 - Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2027 – High level summary

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places, Councillor Vikki Slade presented the report on the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 – High Level Summary and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

Comprehensive discussion took place on the item with Members raising the importance of oversight and scrutiny. In addition, Members raised the matter of the closure of the Kings Park Nursery which had been recently publicised.

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) the consultation report, summarising feedback from residents and stakeholders, be noted;**
- (b) the revised Corporate Strategy High level Summary be adopted;**
- (c) the Corporate Strategy and supporting Performance Management Framework continues to be aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Purpose Goals.**

Vote: Nem.Con (12 abstentions)

57. Cabinet 13 December 2023 - Minute No. 68 - Consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan and the Draft BCP CIL Charging Schedule

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Place, Councillor Vikki Slade presented the report on the Consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan and the Draft BCP CIL Charging Schedule and outlined the recommendations set out on the agenda.

Councillor Philip Broadhead tabled an amendment which was detailed in length and required consideration by officer. The meeting adjourned at 20:41 and reconvened at 21:08.

(Councillor Jo Clements left the meeting at 20:41)

Following the reconvening of the meeting, Councillor Broadhead withdrew the initial amendment.

Councillor Broadhead proposed an alternative amendment to the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Rampton that an additional recommendation be included at (f) to read:

- (f) That the Director of Planning and Destination, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places to consider the Conservative Groups amendments to the draft Local Plan as part of the process set out in recommendation (b)***

Comprehensive discussion took place on the amendment where concerns were expressed with regards to Talbot Heath and in particular Highmoor Farm.

Following comprehensive discussion a proposal was made that the motion now be put, this was put to the vote and carried with voting: 55:8.

Following the proposal the proposed amendment as set out above was put to the vote and fell with voting: 9:52 (1 Abstention)

Members then proceeded to debate the original recommendation as set out on the agenda where discussion focused on the provision of affordable homes.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Draft BCP Local Plan and Draft CIL Charging Schedule are approved for public consultation for a period of six weeks from January 2024;**
- (b) any minor changes following Council on 9 January to the Draft BCP Local Plan and Draft CIL Charging Schedule are delegated to the Director of Planning and Destination in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places for inclusion in the consultation versions;**
- (c) the Draft BCP Local Plan is updated to reflect any changes to the corporate strategy resulting from the outcome of Council on 9 January 2024;**
- (d) subject to no major amendments being required following consultation, the decision to submit the Draft BCP Local Plan and the Draft CIL Charging Schedule to the Secretary of State for examination is delegated to the Director of Planning and Destination in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places; and**
- (e) the Local Development Scheme is approved to reflect the amended timetable.**

Voting: 55:5 (3 Abstentions)

Councillor Michael Tarling left the meeting at 22:03

58. Cabinet 13 December 2023 - Minute No. 70 - Council Newbuild Housing & Acquisition Strategy (CNHAS) 2023-2028

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services Councillor Kieron Wilson presented the report on the Council Newbuild Housing & Acquisition

Strategy (CNHAS) 2023-2028 and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

In presenting the report the Portfolio Holder expressed thanks to Nigel Ingram the Head of Housing Delivery who had recently left the Council.

Members spoke in support of the report and recommendations.

RESOLVED that Council approved:-

- (a) A revised capital budget (Total scheme Cost) of £33,360,000 for the Hillbourne Housing project, previously approved in 2018 and in April 2022, for 110 homes;**
 - i. Awarding the build works for the 110 home Hillbourne housing project and satisfying outstanding planning conditions etc, to Wates Residential in the sum provided in the confidential section of this report.**
 - ii. The delegation to the relevant Service Director, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer of the authority to enter into the Contracts for build works with Wates Residential, provided that all key parameters (including delivery within the approve capital budget) are met.**
 - iii. Resolves that the Council as local housing authority appropriates the land shown edged red on the plan annexed at Appendix 7 for housing purposes pursuant to section 19 of the Housing Act 1985. The transfer of land shown edged red on the plan annexed at Appendix 7 from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to enable the development of the affordable housing.**
- (b) BCP Council execute the Deed of Variation to the Homes England Agreement entitled Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (5069) - AHP 21- 26 Grant Agreement (LA), previously approved at September 2022 Cabinet & Council meetings; and**
- (c) BCP Council execute the Grant Agreement (Local Authority) in relation to the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme 2023 – 2028.**

Voting: Nem.Con

59. Cabinet 13 December 2023 - Minute No. 72 - Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) Strategy and Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Grant

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley presented the report on the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) Strategy and Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Grant and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

An amendment to the recommendations was proposed by Councillor Sharon Carr-Brown and seconded by Councillor Patrick Canavan that an additional recommendation be included at (d) to read:

- (d) continues to investigate a range of technologies and solutions, such as gullies, pop-up and lamp post chargers, to facilitate and establish comprehensive on-street electric vehicle charging on residential roads to help residents without access to driveways to transition conveniently and affordably to electric vehicles which is a crucial part of our ambitions to address climate change.**

The proposer of the original recommendations supported the amendment which was carried with voting: Unanimous

Members spoke in support of the recommendations and the additional amendment.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (a) adopts the BCP Public Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (PEVIS) Strategy to 2030;**
- (b) accepts the £1.447m Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) capital funding from the Department for Transport Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (subject to confirmation of award);**
- (c) delegates delivery of the LEVI programme to the Service Director for Infrastructure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy; and**
- (d) continues to investigate a range of technologies and solutions, such as gullies, pop-up and lamp post chargers, to facilitate and establish comprehensive on-street electric vehicle charging on residential roads to help residents without access to driveways to transition conveniently and affordably to electric vehicles which is a crucial part of our ambitions to address climate change.**

Voting: Nem.Con

Meeting adjourned at 22:16

Meeting reconvened at 22:25

Councillors Hazel Allen, Brian Hitchcock, Pete Miles, Felicity Rice and Vanessa Ricketts left the meeting at 22:18

60. Audit and Governance Committee 30 November 2023 - Minute No. 46 - Review of the Council's Constitution - Recommendations of the Constitution Review Working Group

The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee. Councillor Marcus Andrews presented the report on the Review of the Council's Constitution – Recommendation of the Constitution Review Working Group and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

Comprehensive discussion took place primarily around the formation of the two Planning Committees and the requirements of political balance.

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) in relation to Issue 1 (Planning Committee Structure and Arrangements) the proposed amendments to Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and**

7, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be approved with an implementation date of 7 May 2024;

(b) in relation to Issue 2 (Establishment of Transportation Advisory Group) the proposed amendments to Parts 2, 3 and 4 as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, be approved with an implementation date of 7 May 2024;

(c) any necessary and consequential technical and formatting related updates and revisions to the Constitution be made by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the powers delegated.

Voting: (a) 42:8 (5 abstentions); (b) 48:4 (3 abstentions) and (c) Nem.Con (1 Abstention)

Councillors John Challinor and May Haines left the meeting at 23:04

61. Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 and 2025/26

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vikki Slade 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 asked to consider and approve the schedule of meetings for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 municipal years and any associated issues.

RESOLVED that: -

(a) The schedule of meetings for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 municipal years as attached at Appendix 1 and 2 to the report be approved; and

(b) Following Council approval of the recommendations from the Audit and Governance Committee 30 November 2023 the Planning Committee scheduled meetings (A & B) be renamed accordingly.

Voting: Nem.Con.

62. BCP FuturePlaces Limited - Appointment of Director and Changes to Articles of Association

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places 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 Cabinet decided on 27 September 2023 to close BCP FuturePlaces Limited, the council's arm's length regeneration company, and bring in-house the development and investment activities of the company.

In relation to this Council was advised that the work and staff have since transferred to the council and that this report requests Council to make changes to the company governance arrangements to align them with the requirements of the final closedown phase.

It is **RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) **Council appoints Chris Shephard, Head of Operations Strategy, as a director of BCP FuturePlaces Limited**
- (b) **Council delegates to the Chief Executive, the appointment of any future directors of BCP FuturePlaces Limited**
- (c) **Council approves the amendments to the Articles of Association, Shareholder Agreement, and Terms of Reference as set out in paragraphs 10 - 12.**

Voting: Nem.Con

63. Appointment of the Director of Law and Governance as the Council's Monitoring Officer

Council were advised that the Chief Executive had taken an urgent decision on 1 December 2023 to appoint Janie Berry to the position of Director of Law and Governance, (and the Council's Monitoring Officer), in accordance with the Council's Constitution and statutory requirements.

RESOLVED that Janie Berry (Director of Law and Governance) is appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Voting: Nem.Con

(Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) declared an interest in this item and left the room for the discussion and voting thereon.)

64. Notices of Motion in accordance with Procedure Rule 10

The following motion was submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules and was moved by Councillor M Gillett and seconded by Councillor C Rigby: -

BCP council notes that:

- i. in BCP, there are over 500 people seeking asylum in receipt of Section 95 support (*Immigration Compliance Network (ICN) December 2023*);
- ii. since 2002, people seeking asylum have only able to apply for the right to work after they have been waiting for a decision on their asylum claim for over a year, and only if they can be employed into one of the professions included on the Government's Shortage Occupation List;
- iii. people seeking asylum are left to live on £6.77 per day (or £9.58 per week if in a contingency hotel), struggling to support themselves and their families, and left vulnerable to destitution, isolation, and exploitation;
- iv. allowing people seeking asylum the right to work would increase tax revenue by £1.3 billion, reduce Government expenditure by £6.7

billion, increase GDP by £1.6 billion, and improve the wellbeing of those individuals (*National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NISR) June 2023*);

- v. 81% of people polled by Lift The Ban agreed with the statement: *“when people come to the UK seeking asylum it is important they integrate, learn English and get to know people. It would help integration if asylum-seekers were allowed to work if their claim takes more than six months to process”*;

BCP Council believes that:

- vi. people seeking asylum want to be able to work so that they can use their skills and make the most of their potential, integrate into their communities, and provide for themselves and their families;
- vii. enabling those seeking asylum to work would allow them to prove their ability to pay rent and therefore reduce the risk of them requiring council support for housing once they are granted leave to remain;
- viii. restrictions on right to work can lead to extremely poor mental health outcomes, and a waste of potentially invaluable talents and skills both for the economy of BCP and the UK;
- ix. allowing people seeking asylum the right to work would therefore lead to positive outcomes for those seeking asylum in BCP and for the local and national economy;

BCP Council resolves to:

- x. join the Lift the Ban Coalition, which is campaigning to restore the right to work for everyone waiting for more than 6 months for a decision on their asylum claim;
- xi. asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary seeking an urgent change to legislation to give people seeking asylum the right to work unconstrained by the shortage occupation list after they have waited six months for a decision on their initial asylum claim or further submission.

Comprehensive discussion took place on the motion before Council moved to the vote.

RESOLVED: -

BCP council notes that:

- i. **in BCP, there are over 500 people seeking asylum in receipt of Section 95 support (*Immigration Compliance Network (ICN) December 2023*);**
- ii. **since 2002, people seeking asylum have only able to apply for the right to work after they have been waiting for a decision on their asylum claim for over a year, and only if they can be employed into one of the professions included on the Government’s Shortage Occupation List;**
- iii. **people seeking asylum are left to live on £6.77 per day (or £9.58 per week if in a contingency hotel), struggling to support**

themselves and their families, and left vulnerable to destitution, isolation, and exploitation;

- iv. allowing people seeking asylum the right to work would increase tax revenue by £1.3 billion, reduce Government expenditure by £6.7 billion, increase GDP by £1.6 billion, and improve the wellbeing of those individuals (*National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NISR) June 2023*);
- v. 81% of people polled by Lift The Ban agreed with the statement: *“when people come to the UK seeking asylum it is important they integrate, learn English and get to know people. It would help integration if asylum-seekers were allowed to work if their claim takes more than six months to process”*;

BCP Council believes that:

- vi. people seeking asylum want to be able to work so that they can use their skills and make the most of their potential, integrate into their communities, and provide for themselves and their families;
- vii. enabling those seeking asylum to work would allow them to prove their ability to pay rent and therefore reduce the risk of them requiring council support for housing once they are granted leave to remain;
- viii. restrictions on right to work can lead to extremely poor mental health outcomes, and a waste of potentially invaluable talents and skills both for the economy of BCP and the UK;
- ix. allowing people seeking asylum the right to work would therefore lead to positive outcomes for those seeking asylum in BCP and for the local and national economy;

BCP Council resolves to:

- x. join the Lift the Ban Coalition, which is campaigning to restore the right to work for everyone waiting for more than 6 months for a decision on their asylum claim;
- xi. asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary seeking an urgent change to legislation to give people seeking asylum the right to work unconstrained by the shortage occupation list after they have waited six months for a decision on their initial asylum claim or further submission.

Voting: 43:7 (3 abstentions)

65. Questions from Councillors

Question by Councillor Duane Farr

Last summer Councillor Adams and I supported a funding bid via the Community Infrastructure Neighbourhood Portion for Fernheath Community Sports Association to match fund a much needed upgrade for their multi-use games area. This was duly submitted on time, however since then

there has been no communication back confirming whether the bid was successful or not, because the assessment panel has been repeatedly delayed in making the decisions. This means the local charity is left in limbo regarding the availability of funding, not knowing if they should seek funding elsewhere so the facilities are left unusable, and leaving them in a position whereby other funders towards the upgrades may not continue to be so patient.

At time of writing on 15 December 2023 it currently states the following on the council website:

“Round 5 will open in June 2023 with bids accepted to 31 July 2023. We will announce successful grant awards in September 2023.”

Further down the page it goes on to state:

“Round 5 - closed 31 July 2023, successful bids will be announced in November 2023”

It is now January 2024 – 5 months later.

Please can the Cabinet Member confirm the date when successful grants will be announced so that Fernheath Community Sports Association and other local charities will have an idea when funding will be granted?

Response by Councillor Millie Earl, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Connected Communities

Thank you Cllr Farr. Applicants were notified of the decisions regarding their applications on 22 December. I'm delighted that Fernheath Community Sports Association were successful in their bid along with 27 other community projects across 16 wards.

It is regrettable that the decision period took so long – this was down to trying to find a suitable date for the CIL panel to meet due to the availability of councillors and officers, and also the capacity in the Planning Team who were working hard to finalise the Local Plan.

Supplementary Question by Councillor Duane Farr

I'm pleased to hear funds have since been awarded despite the unfortunate delay. What does the cabinet member intend to do to improve communication with funding applicants to avoid them being left in limbo in future?

Response by Councillor Millie Earl, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Connected Communities

When we are looking at the next rounds, we need to make sure that they are aligned with the timetables of other activities that are going on within planning.

This got left behind because of that timetable alongside a huge amount of work in the local plan. Hopefully, now that we have passed the local plan through Council, the next round should be a lot smoother, and we'll have a bit more of an opportunity to get a bit more pace around it rather than it being sporadically rounds here and there. It will be smoother from here on in.

Question by Councillor P Canavan

Can I thank the Leader for her email to Councillors dated 22 December 2023 and the information regarding Devolution. The Leader will recall that I raised with her an article in the Press indicating that the Leader of Dorset Council would be presenting a paper to their Cabinet outlining a Wessex model that included Somerset and Wiltshire and Swindon. Could the Leader indicate what further discussions are planned, whether a joint strategy has yet been agreed, if any work has yet been done on a possible financial model and at what point a paper is likely to come forward to BCP Cabinet on this?

Response by Councillor Vikki Slade, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places

Thank you, Councillor Canavan, for the question and the opportunity to clarify the current position. The previous administration took a paper through the previous Cabinet in December, 2022, setting out a number of options to explore around devolution. This gave authority to the cabinet to continue to explore options. At the time, there were four options, Pan-Hampshire, a partnership with Dorset, Great Southwest, and Central South. At that time and now, there was a view that we would not be interested in a mayoral model. Just stress that is still the case. The papers at the time looked at the pros and cons of each option, and we continue to look at them when we came into council in summer.

There have been meetings with members across the various options, but during one of those meetings, I raised the opportunity to look at a Wessex deal, bringing in unitary councils from across the region that covered both rural and urban areas. We have now met with the leaders and chief executives of the six councils and have a further meeting planned next week. At this time, officers have been asked simply to create a working document that looks at where we might be aligned. No further details have been agreed. We are also aware that both options, the current government has on the table, will not work for us, and we will not be able to move much further forward than a decision in principle.

The leader of Dorset has chosen to share this update with his council as he has elections in May and is keen to make progress during this term as it formed part of his own earlier commitments. The other leaders have made it clear alongside me that this is not a key priority for their local authorities at this time, but that we would want to be in a position to be ready should the circumstances change, either under the current government or the next government. I would expect to bring forward a paper to cabinet in the early summer with an update on the options that remain open to us as councils, and no decisions or significant spend will be taken without the full democratic process being followed.

Supplementary Question by Councillor Patrick Canavan

My supplementary question is then when?

Because at the meeting of the O&S Southwest meeting this morning, a report was given by both Devon and Cornwall about substantial progress which they have made on a devolution model, which does not include a

directly elected mayor. So they're well underway in those authorities and devolution is coming. So when, through you, Chair, are we as a council going to be able to take a view on this, look at the risk, look at the options, look at what the potential situation is in terms of funding from government?

Response by Councillor Vikki Slade, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places

Thank you. As I say, there were four options that were being considered by the previous administration.

It was fairly clear that there was not an appetite to simply have a Dorset and BCP deal. Otherwise people would say, what was the point of LGR? You might as well just have one council.

The Pan Dorset deal, you can read about it. It's been falling apart because of difficulties between the Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth. So that deal is no longer practical. Great Southwest would not be a deal because Devon and Cornwall are doing their own devolution deals. And in fact, Plymouth have refused to work with the Devon deal. So that's not practical. And Central South, which would be something which would be the Central South urban areas that we all thought was a great idea, is not practical because Hampshire won't allow there to be a contiguous area.

So those deals that were on the table at the early stages when we came in are really not practical. This idea about going with Wessex has only come forward within the last three months. Those deals with Cornwall and Devon have been on the table for a lot longer. Government has to actually progress those deals with us. We are not yet in that position.

I fully expect to bring forward a paper to Cabinet in the early summer with an update on the options. So your timetable of when? Early summer. Of course, it is worth saying that those deals that Devon and Cornwall have announced have the approval of government. And the two different tiers, neither of them are offering what we would want. What we do has to be right for our residents. And if it's not right for our residents, we won't do it.

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

The Chief Executive confirmed the urgent decisions taken as follows:

1. Appointment of the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer on an interim basis, and;
2. Approval of the submission of the LEP integration template in order to meet the government's timescale to submit it by 30 November 2023.

The meeting ended at 11.41 pm

CHAIRMAN