

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 May 2024 at 10.15 am

Present:-

Cllr M Earl – Vice-Chairman (In the Chair)

Present: Cllr R Burton, Cllr M Cox, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr J Hanna, Cllr A Martin and Cllr K Wilson

Present
Virtually: Cllr D Brown

Also in attendance: Cllr P Canavan (Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Cllr C Goodall, Cllr E Harman and Cllr C Rigby (Chair of the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Also in attendance
virtually: Cllr S Bartlett (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board), Cllr J Butt, Cllr S Carr-Brown and Cllr S Moore

Apologies: Cllr V Slade (Chairman)

140. Declarations of Interests

Councillors Richard Burton and Millie Earl declared non-pecuniary interests for the purposes of transparency in relation to Minute No. 149 (Simpler Recycling Waste Reforms) and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

141. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

142. Public Issues

The Deputy Leader advised that two questions and 48 statements had been received, and that all public questions and statements would be taken in the order in which they were received.

In relation to this the Deputy Leader advised that owing to the significant number of statements which had been received all relating to Agenda Item 10 (Improvement of the environment in Poole Park through a trial closure of a park entrance to motor traffic) the period allowed for public issues would be extended to 30 minutes, and that further to this the two questions received would be read and answered first, and that the 30-minute time limit would commence once the meeting moved onto the statements received.

Further to this the Deputy Leader advised that any statements remaining at the end of the extended 30-minute time limit would be included in the minutes of the meeting, and that all questions and statements submitted had been circulated the previous day to members of the Cabinet for them to read in advance of the meeting.

Public question relating to Agenda Item 10 – Improvement of the environment in Poole Park through a trial closure of a park entrance to motor traffic

Public Questions received from S Baker

As Poole Park was gifted to the people by Lord Wimborne in the late 1800s;

1. Is there a legality issue over BCPs approach to closing vehicular access before any *consultation* even took place?

Poole Park was gifted to the people for the people and when eventually the results of the consultation became available I understand that **63%** of the very high number of participants, desired the vehicular entrance to remain open.

2. What authority does BCP have to ignore the result of their own consultation in pursuing this **undemocratic** approach? The people have spoken!

Furthermore, I might add that as a daily user of the park - as a pedestrian and cyclist - I have never seen a single survey being conducted on the number of cars using the car parks, or the number of cars travelling through, effectively using the park as a cut through.

This should have been carried out before any consultation!

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

On the legality issue the original conveyance in March 1886 of the land which would become Poole Park was to the corporation of Poole, this was and I quote *“for the land to be laid out and used as a public park and pleasure gardens for the benefit of the Borough of Poole and the inhabitants thereof”* the management of the park from its inception has therefore been a matter for the authority to decide.

Repeated surveys have highlighted that the significant flows of traffic on the carriageways through the park detract from the environment for leisure, the principal purpose of the park. There are five car parking areas with dedicated parking for those with disability and the ability to still use two vehicular entrances to drive into the park at East Gate and Seldown entrance.

In determining the best way to manage the park for the future Cabinet needs to consider the results of the consultation alongside the other factors as outlined in the paper. It was made clear from the beginning of the process that the consultation was not a referendum, representative democracy does not work that way. Indeed, the previous decision to reopen Keyhole Bridge was made against the weight of representations.

On travel surveys, over the recent years a number of surveys have been conducted in the park, including those referenced in Appendix 11 to the

report which were at the Seldown entrance, an all-day survey of vehicles on the 17 May 2016 from 7am to 7pm on both Wednesday 6 September 2023 before the closure and Wednesday 7 February 2024 during the trial there were council vehicles, pedestrians and cycle movements over the same 12 hour period 7am to 7pm, the later two surveys were conducted by video recording that was then reviewed and classified. The results show a significant reduction in motor traffic eastbound especially between 4.30 and 6pm.

Public questions relating to Agenda Item 13 – SEND Progress Update

Public Questions received from Adam Sofianos and read out by Alex McKinstry

Q1

The publication of performance data for SEND services is most welcome. As the Council begins a new improvement plan, it's essential that progress is visible to the most important stakeholders of all: the families.

The Scorecard contains data for March. Can the Council commit to publishing an update, within the papers for June's Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting, showing full data for April and May?

Can the Council further commit to publishing a similar update for the Committee's September meeting, showing data for June, July and August?

Can these include the following key EHC data:

number and percentage of Plans refused/declined,

number and percentage of Needs Assessments refused/declined;

number of assessments delayed over 30 weeks,

number of assessments delayed over 50 weeks.

And finally, can the Council confirm the relevant numbers for the above data during March?

Q2

At February's Full Council, members passed a motion in relation to Safety Valve. This compelled the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, to the Secretary of State for Education, and to the Chair or Chief Executive of the Local Government Association, variously seeking an extension to the statutory override, additional financial assistance, and a collaborative approach to these issues across local government.

Have these letters been sent, what responses has the Council received, and how and when will the Council publish these documents?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, Councillor Richard Burton

I will start off with question about the percentage of plans refused/declined, now the actual numbers on this can be actually quite complicated in that

several of them are not refused or declined but they are changed by negotiation with the parents and the carers so an actual number there would need a bit of detail behind it. A refusal does not automatically mean they would not get the service and a decline can be with agreement with the parents/ carers, so those numbers are available and I will get them but it needs the story with it.

The number of assessments delayed over 30 weeks; we now have 70 families over 30 weeks compared with 186 in September this will all be completed by the end of this school term.

The number of assessments delayed over 50 weeks, well we don't do 50 week data we do 52 week data so of the 52 weeks in April it was 12 and we will be working through to complete these by the end of July.

There were no delays this academic year.

The Council are looking at the relevant numbers of the above data in March 100% in six weeks timelines for April, this has been in the 90% since September and 84% timeless for 20 weeks excluding a backlog. 61% at 20 weeks including the backlog.

The question about continuing with this data, I totally agree that getting the data out in a way that can be understandable to people is really important. At the moment it is available through the parent carers forum but I think it needs to be able to be shared more widely and we are looking at the best way of sharing that now we asked about updating for Childrens O&S and there will be some updates available for the next O&S meeting. Looking at the Autumn meeting, what goes to Children's O&S is actually up to the Chairman and the Committee and so I can't say you need to have this data at the Committee, but I will commit to getting that data available so people can access it without it having to go through Childrens O&S.

So the letters, I can confirm that the letters were sent by the Leader of the Council and to date we have received a response from the Chair of the LGA, at this time no other replies have been received. The letter will be published as part of the Leaders report in the June Council meeting on Tuesday 4 June by which time we hope to have a response from all three letters.

Public statements relating to Agenda Item 10 – Improvement of the environment in Poole Park through a trial closure of a park entrance to motor traffic

1. Statement received from a resident of BCP (read out by Democratic Services)

I watched the debate around Poole Park at Scrutiny group and would like to suggest a compromise for consideration.

Some councillors are concerned about making a decision contrary to the public consultation. With legal threats and public feeling high this is understandable. Concerns about interference and misinformation during the consultation are also valid.

My proposal is twofold:

1. Reopen the gate to one way (leaving) traffic between the hours of 10am and 2pm in a second trial. This should include logging of traffic and any conflict between park staff and drivers.
2. Set up a citizens assembly to review the impact, cost and benefits of different options to report back to the council with a recommendation.

This will delay a final decision further but this could be a long term solution that improves the park for all people and protects the council from costly legal action and rebuilds public trust.

2. Statement received from Lucie Allen (read out by Democratic Services)

It is hugely disappointing, that following the O&S meeting, which was flooded with statements from the public, ward members and officers, in favour of making the Whitecliff Park Gate closure permanent, that the committee recommended the decision be passed to full council.

It is absurd, that a non-key decision, one which could have been officer-made, would even be considered by full council.

The level of scrutiny at O&S was minimal with most ward members giving opinions, rather than looking at the recommendation based on BCP's adopted policies.

Preserving a 'scenic drive', increasing traffic in a park, or being concerned about the optics of a flawed consultation result is not in any of BCP's policy documents.

Creating cleaner, greener and more pleasant green spaces is.

Please make this decision at Cabinet, in line with the officer's recommendation and report.

3. Statement received from Tess Baker (read out by Democratic Services)

Given that Poole Park was donated to the people in the late 1800s by Lord Wimborne I would question whether BCP council had any legal right to close the gate to vehicular access before public consultation. As a daily user of the park, both pedestrian and cyclist, firstly I have never encountered a speeding vehicle (drivers stop for geese and ducks) and I have never noted any traffic surveys being carried out. What surveys have taken place to bring the Council to decide immediate closure of the entrance without any public consultation? When the results of the public consultation came in, I understand 63% of people desired the vehicular access to remain open yet the entrance remains closed. This is not democracy and is not acceptable.

4. Statement received from Kaye Chambers (read out by Democratic Services)

I write in support of the closure of Poole Park to through traffic. It is such a delight to have the space free from the noise, fumes, pollution and risk of vehicular movements. It was originally gifted for peoples' leisure, enjoyment and relaxation and the change that has been made supports this.

Please retain Poole Park as it is now for people, plants and wildlife: not cars.

5. Statement received from David Colpman (read out by Democratic Services)

As a Parkstone resident, in the 2023 election I actively voted for candidates who put the environment first and was delighted to see Emily Harman and Crispin Goodall elected. The councillor most associated with supporting the re-opening of Key Hole Bridge and others standing on anti LTN/Pro car manifestos saw their vote collapse. Electors knew what they doing.

The mandate of the cabinet to keep the gate closed, without reference to Council is clear and is supported by significant majorities of residents actively engaged over the gate closure by Emily and Crispin. I have similar findings from interacting with people in the park. The evidence is clear, returning the park to a Parkstone/Sandbanks Road bypass would be against the wishes of your voters, park users and local residents.

6. Statement received from Sue Smith

The closure is in line with local and national policy and the Council's own LCWIP. An independent disability audit found no disadvantage to people with disabilities, and fears over traffic congestion have proved unfounded. A consultation has been run and the pros and cons of the closure have been analysed. The consultation report recognises the concerns of residents, and the Council has the ability to address these in final planning.

Some opposition councillors have chosen to turn this policy and evidence led decision into an emotive issue, hence the recommendation that the decision be referred to full Council. The recommendation was made on the basis of the number of responses for and against the closure, but as both councillors and residents are aware this is a consultation not a referendum.

Residents on both sides have been calling for a prompt decision and will be disappointed by any further delay.

7. Statement received from John Carter (read out by Democratic Services)

I was surprised to hear the matter of the Poole Park gate closure may be referred to full council. The closure is supported by numerous local and national policies and I can find nothing in the way of policy that suggests we should have traffic driving through the park.

It would appear to be a clear cut choice between doing something that aligns with the Council's long term aims, or doing something that is contrary to those aims.

In a survey on the Council's vision, priorities and key objectives 78% of residents agreed that Place and Environment should be one of the Council's priorities. The decision to keep the gate closed to protect the environment in Poole Park is very clear and referring it to full council merely delays that decision.

8. Statement received from Judy Windwood (read out by Democratic Services)

Members are elected to make decisions, based on approved policy, for the good of the area. The report states the benefits of closing the gate. This was generally ignored. Members must not be distracted by the insecure “consultation” which did not require names and addresses. It was not a referendum.

Around 1980, we lived near the park, in a terraced house with a small garden and two young children. The park was my walking route to town and our playground. It was a different place then. Fewer vehicles. The closure returns part of the park to this state.

I remind members it's a park, not a highway. If people want a pleasant journey from work, I suggest they enjoy a walk in the park or try walking, cycling or taking a bus to work.

9. Statement received from Ross Hodder (read out by Democratic Services)

I listened with interest to the O&S meeting regarding the Whitecliff Gate trial. Despite some concern expressed around disabled access and possible increase in traffic on surrounding roads, it was reassuring to hear that vehicular access to the car parks is unchanged and there has been virtually no impact to traffic outside the park.

The remaining argument therefore is focussed around whether access to a “scenic drive” outweighs the improvements to environment and safety. To me, there is no comparison between the use of a valuable public green space as a convenient shortcut with views and the safety and well-being of all other park users.

Last year I stopped cycling through the park with my son to the Dolphin swimming pool because of the high level of through traffic but now, following the Whitecliff closure, it is safe for families to use. I support accepting the officer report recommendation.

10. Statement received from Russell Trent (read out by Democratic Services)

I am writing in support of the permanent closure of Poole Park's 'Whitecliff' Gate to motorised traffic and to also call for Cabinet to make the decision either way on this matter. I do not agree that it should go to full council, this is a minor change to the operation of a park and a decision that could have been taken by an officer. We elect members to shape and determine policy and if BCP Council is committed to protecting green spaces and encouraging active travel it should agree with me that this closure is aligned to BCP Policy. I visit the park regularly with my children, sometimes in car, mostly on the bus, but we visit the park as a destination, not as a means to get elsewhere in the borough, parks should not be used to alleviate motorised traffic elsewhere.

11. Statement received from Gary Livemore (read out by Democratic Services)

I am writing in my support for the permanent closure of the Whitecliff Poole Park gate. Closure of the gate aligns with BCP council policies to reduce traffic, especially so in Poole Park. The park is much more pleasant without the constant stream of through traffic. One of my older family members who has mobility issues can still access all areas of the park as she did with her late husband, but in more peaceful surroundings, remembering the walks they had together. A park is a place to enjoy the tranquility and should not be used as a relief road for traffic elsewhere. I find the park environment is much more pleasant to walk around now through traffic has been stopped. Our green spaces should be protected for future generations.

Our elected members need to ensure their decision aligns with BCP council policies.

12. Statement received from David Foote (read out by Democratic Services)

I find it ridiculous that you're still perusing the closing off the road in Poole Park! I live and work in Poole, you are adding 20min onto my motorcycle ride home with the increased traffic and danger to cyclists and motorcyclists, creeping along the inside and outside of traffic let alone the fuel used in your stupidity attempt making a difference I can only presume members of the council live on or around this route very much like Canford Cliffs that I understand more speed cameras are to be installed! I requested speed humps and/or cameras down Princess Road that's a fast rat run and was told until a fatality happens nothing will be done I have saved that email and will send to the Bournemouth Echo and the family of who this may effect shame on you for not listening to your constituents.

13. Statement received from Eleanor Pomagalski (read out by Democratic Services)

I am writing to say that I am appalled that the wishes of the majority of people, 63%, who took the time to answer (with well-thought out, researched answers) the Consultation survey, requesting that the Park remain open, are not being listened to.

This makes a mockery of any future Consultation/survey.

We were originally told, months ago, that the closure would be for a month, as the Consultation took place.

That was not true.

It is now obvious that the reopening of the Park was never an option.

This must not be allowed to happen.

The Park must be reopened, in accordance with the Consultation results.

14. Statement received from a resident of BCP (read out by Democratic Services)

I'm a full-time, Poole-born, wheelchair user, spent lots of time in Poole Park. I don't drive and avoid car use but understand a car is sometimes necessary. I don't understand the anger about this. The arguments against the closure are nonsensical. Turning a car or pulling out of a gate isn't a problem for anyone safe to drive.

I suffer with fatigue, but would never want to be driven through a park without stopping. The whole point of a park is that it's somewhere to spend time - not a drive through, it isn't McDonalds! Driving out the gate you entered is normal when visiting somewhere by car.

Visiting is now a delight. There's bird song not the rumble of cars. I've been visiting more since the gate closed.

It's back to being a People's Park!

15. Statement received from Susan Stockwell

Yesterday, I visited Poole Park at dusk, on foot, via Whitecliff Road gate. The first sight which greeted me was a group of young women, relaxed, happy and laughing, enjoying travelling along the car free stretch road towards the gate on hire scooters. A stark contrast indeed to the dire warnings of women, including myself, being too frightened to visit Poole Park without the guardianship of passing motor vehicles.

Improved natural surveillance reducing crime when cycling/walking increases and vehicle use decrease is so well proved by LTN Low Traffic Neighbourhood data that police elsewhere have supported keeping them. My own criminology training was that a statement from a cyclist or pedestrian is needed to secure a conviction eg for street crime or burglary, as the view from a car is simply not good enough to stand up in court. Dashcams tend to be trained on other motorists, not pedestrians.

16. Statement received from Malcolm Bebb (read out by Democratic Services)

I am a Poole householder since 1985. I welcome the restriction of through traffic in Poole Park, having found the environment more pleasant in recent visits especially in the southern parts.

I firmly believe that the Park should be a peaceful destination, where traffic disturbance should be minimal, to maximise enjoyment and safety for park users.

I further believe that using the Park as a relief from traffic congestion around the Civic Centre area is the wrong approach. Traffic congestion should be addressed at its source, and using a public leisure park as a relief road is neither a sustainable nor a credible solution. Instead it draws attention away from the need to resolve congestion issues while doing little to reduce them.

17. Statement received from the Thomson Family (read out by Democratic Services)

Please reopen the Gate with immediate effect, as per the majority consultation response.

My 93yr old relative, Parkstone Road, enjoys the park. Not registered disabled, we drive through, stopping when possible, sometimes walking. Sometimes, simply the drive is soothing.

Our inability to take scenic drives we used to is affecting wellbeing.

Since the closure:

1. More traffic caught in/ turning in the park/ more fumes
2. Significant queues
3. Conflict by disabled spaces
4. Increased traffic/ difficulty getting to nursery/ leisure centre
5. Significant traffic: Parkstone Road
6. Queues towards Lilliput
7. Fast cyclists, scooters, motorbikes in/ through park.
8. Increase in youths loitering/ smashing glass

The closure makes no logical sense and is not backed by need (or data!).

This issue is making the council unpopular when voter support is essential. The Council can recover this by applying common sense; reverse the decision.

18. Statement received from Sophie Clegg (read out by Democratic Services)

Since the closure I cycle with my kids through the park to after-school lessons at the pool and Dolphin centre. Once we're over Sandbanks Road we're passed by a handful of cars all the way to town, cycling down Orchard Ave and through the park. It's so easy that we consistently choose to cycle. Previously, we would be passed by a steady stream of vehicles all along this route. Cycling with kids in traffic is stressful and with bad weather, or kids mood or behaviour, it often didn't feel safe enough, and we'd normally hop in car. Closing the gate has not prevented people from driving into park, but reopening the gate would remove this safe route, denying us this choice and putting journeys like ours back into the car. Please keep the gate closure and keep the park safe and accessible to all modes of travel for everyone.

19. Statement received from Jane Foot (read out by Democratic Services)

My family have lived by the Whitecliff Gate entrance for a great many years. Driving through the Park back to our house has been convenient, pleasant and quicker for us when returning from the West. We were therefore sceptical about the gate closure and were initially against it.

However, we are now enjoying the benefits of less traffic, not only outside our house, but also whilst walking our dog and sitting in our garden. We

now fully appreciate the reasons behind the gate closure and totally support it.

While our drive home is now a little longer, we believe that residents deserve a more peaceful and pleasant experience when using the park. The gate closure has made walking in the park feel safer. I now even cycle into Poole town centre, which I never used to do.

I hope that Cabinet makes the right decision to close the gate permanently.

20. Statement received from Simon Dunsby (read out by Democratic Services)

I should like to say that Poole Park is a park, not a rat run. My parents took me there in the 80s and now take my children there. The grandparents (in their late 70s) and children feel safer without cars using the park as a road.

21. Statement received from Brian Bowman (read out by Democratic Services)

In addition to this being a waste of tax payers money, I take great offence at a public space being shut off to anybody who has the great misfortune to no longer have easy mobility or ability to get in and out of a car easily: my late father was immobile and one of the few pleasures he had in life was being able to drive through Poole Park through to Whitecliff and have a scenic tour without the stress of having to get his wheelchair out of the car.

22. Statement received from Ian Lawrence

3,388/63% majority want Twemlow gate reopened as it adds mileage, delay, congestion pollution while hitting car-dependent old, frail, young, families, would-be tourists and park livelihoods.

Proving closure's environmental "improvement" required before and after evidence but lacked water purity, noise, air quality, business takings, RTAs or impact on wildlife measurements, invalidating continued closure.

DOTS investigated only 6 disabled ignoring thousands. Findings were statistically irrelevant, unrepresentative, invalidating closure conclusions.

Traffic census, once in Sept and February couldn't identify trends as data was sparse.

Hadley incorrectly asserted the majority wanted the gate closed, despite 2/3 consultees who didn't and that 600 who omitted postcodes voted multiple times for reopening. He told the assumed wealthy old and disabled who supported car access, to go to Hengistbury. He rejected afternoon closure as "Extra staffing costs", while favouring new roundabout and parking.

Conclusion: Closure's Environmental Improvement Unproved. So listen to the majority and open the gate.

23. Statement received from Lee Atkins (read out by Democratic Services)

I am emailing you in regards to the above and to state my utter disgust in what has been happening in and around Poole with all of these roads being narrowed for cycle lanes, roads closed for ltns, etc but more importantly the closing of the park for vehicles driving through.

BCP had had a consultation, which shows the residents wanting it open but no, councillor Hadley wants his way and will ignore what residents want and just do it..

I'm emailing democratic services, we'll be democratic about Poole Park and adhere to what residents want, the park open for all.

24. Statement received from Ann Jacobs (read out by Democratic Services)

The closure of this gate is unnecessary and detrimental to the mental health and well-being of both of my elderly and disabled parents.

Trying to drive through now is dangerous as the exit is obstructed, sometimes gridlocked. Causing a safety access issue in an emergency.

I am physically unable to push Mum or Mother-in-law in a wheelchair and as an unpaid carer taking them out for a drive is one of the few small treats I can provide. The Park is unique in this area for this purpose.

Just close the gate to traffic at around 4pm as you do until 10am to stop the rat run.

As a Council your duty is to serve the taxpayer and the results of your own consultation has clearly given you your directive. Please reopen this gate.

25. Statement received from Daniel Glennon (read out by Democratic Services)

Poole Park is, as its name suggests, a public park. Public parks should be a place for urban residents to spend time in nature (which studies have shown is beneficial for mental health), for children to play, for people to exercise and for encouraging nature. They should not be through routes for traffic - it's ludicrous that this closure didn't happen much sooner.

BCP has awful congestion and very poor air quality, for far too long the needs of car drivers have been placed first in our urban planning. It is time to redesign our towns for people, not cars. The closure of the gate in Poole Park should be the first measure of many to reduce car dependency in BCP, to benefit the physical and mental health of all residents, not just the vocal motorists. We need to encourage cycling, walking and wider use of public transport."

26. Statement received from Gerald Andrews (read out by Democratic Services)

I have lived here for over 62 years and have loved being able to drive through Poole Park via keyhole bridge, the model yacht lake, past the miniature train waving to passengers, and on through. This enabled me to relax mentally. I do not have time to stop. You have now prohibited me from doing this.

The park was designed so people could drive through, in fact in the 1930.s, Motor speed trials were held in the park.

There have never been any accidents, car drivers I've seen are always courteous and adhere to the speed limit.

There is chaos at the only exit, with regular 'Mexican standoffs'.

Despite 63% of residents supporting reopening the gate, it seems the council has predetermined the closure, undermining public trust.

The council must serve the community interests not its own, so respect the majority and reopen the gate.

27. Statement received from Carole Norman-Andrews (read out by Democratic Services)

I am writing to express my support for reopening the Whitecliff Gate at Poole Park. Maintaining vehicle access is crucial.

The park provides essential green space that is particularly beneficial for the mental health of residents, especially the elderly and disabled. Continuous access through the park ensures they can easily reach different areas without undue physical strain. For those experiencing a meltdown, the ability to drive directly through the park offers a safety valve, providing a calming environment without unnecessary detours.

The closure has led to increased traffic and emissions on surrounding roads as vehicles are forced to navigate around the park, contradicting environmental goals. The 63% of residents who favour reopening the gates highlight the community's preference for accessible, inclusive, and environmentally conscious use of the park.

I urge the council to respect the consultation results and reopen the gates for the benefit of all.

28. Statement received from Mary Scott (read out by Democratic Services)

I urge you to reconsider the closure of Whitecliff Gate in Poole Park. The recent consultation clearly shows that 63% of residents want the gates to remain open. Ignoring this majority opinion would undermine the democratic process and trust in local governance.

The closure has created daily chaos, with buses getting stuck and causing significant disruption at the only exit.

While cyclists benefit, they often travel at speeds greater than cars, posing hazards to pedestrians. (See Regent's Park accident.)

Addressing the climate emergency requires more strategic investments. Enhancing public transport facilities and creating better connectivity for all forms of transport would be far more effective. Closing a gate is not a productive solution.

The Council should serve the community's interests, not its own. For the benefit of the community, please listen to the majority and reopen Whitecliff Gate to vehicles.

29. Statement received from Sebastian Norman-Andrews (read out by Democratic Services)

I am writing to you because I want to tell you why Poole Park should stay open to cars.

I like the drive through Poole Park because it makes for a nicer journey. This is really important to me because I have severe anxiety and driving

through the park helps me feel calm and safe. I really like the views in the park. They are pretty and make me feel happy.

It is also a safe and familiar journey for me and my family. We have always driven through the park, and it is part of our routine. I hope you will listen to us and keep the gates open so everyone can enjoy the park, especially people like me who feel better when we can drive through it.

Thank you for reading my letter.

30. Statement received from Eunice Marsden (read out by Democratic Services)

The BCP consultation is very widely believed to contain bias towards the outcome desired by those in control of it.

Despite this, the outcome clearly showed the will of the people to reopen the gate.

The officer report does its best to conceal this clear fact by suggesting that some age groups should have less weight put to their views than others and using differing graph techniques to play down the clear but unwanted result.

Poole Park is the Town Park and is also named "The Peoples Park" when given to the people by Lord Wimborne. The people have spoken about their park and want the gate fully reopened.

The choice is :

Support the Portfolio Holder and BCP Officer.

Or

Support the will of the people you represent by sending this decision to Full Council for decision "

31. Statement received from Kare Leahy (read out by Democratic Services)

I appreciate the consultation was not a vote, but I feel it is undemocratic if the council ignore the views of a consultation and keep the Whitecliff gate closed. It will undermine faith in councillors who were elected to serve the people of BCP.

Whilst blue badge holders still have full access, you have currently removed the prettiest part of the park from people needing to enjoy it by car, such as the ill or frail.

The portfolio holder appears unwilling to consider compromise including the gate closing early, which would be cost-minimal and also negate the alleged rat-run rush hour.

Closure will bring little benefit in reducing pollution due to heavy traffic already nearby. It is not to stop car/pedestrian accidents, there have been none, and appears simply a vindictive act forced on people due to disgruntlement over the Keyhole Bridge debacle.

32. Statement received from Sarah Morgan (read out by Democratic Services)

Please respect the numbers as responded by residents in your survey. They have provided lived experiences through this process and by direct letters, not perceptions.

The Survey clearly identifies protected minority groups by age and ability as protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010 - please do not exclude them.

Please do not base decisions on perceptions, absent data and inappropriate comparisons.

Please do not decide because of approval of other internal infrastructure items irrelevant to the gate access.

Please listen to your electorate.

33. Statement received from Julia Wilde (read out by Democratic Services)

There are no problems specific to the gate in Poole Park that have or will be solved by its closure. Indeed, closing it has actually created problems. Making people double back and go the long way round the park has increased fuel usage. It also increases fumes, causes stress and anxiety for drivers and passengers and takes away the sheer pleasure of our beautiful park for far too many people, especially the disabled. The sea air blows fumes away. Moving traffic to Parkstone Road simply concentrates fumes in other areas. And as for safety, drivers routinely slow down for ducks, swans and geese. What an ideal environment in which to teach youngsters how to cross the road safely. Cyclists who don't ring their bells, ride too fast and on the pavements are a far greater threat. The people have voted via the consultation. Is anyone listening?

34. Statement received from Ian Clarke (read out by Democratic Services)

In documents regarding the trial gate closure, and Heritage Fund Grant expenditure, the Council stated aims to 'improve safety' within the park, yet the following failings are evident:

- speed limit signage is inadequate, with only one circular sign on a lamp post at the Kingland Road entrance, none at the Civic Centre entrance, and no road markings between them. Any signage at the closed Whitecliff gate is ineffectual.
- following resurfacing, the new speed humps are not as effective as the previous ones,
- to leave the disabled parking areas inside the Whitecliff gate, cars need to execute a multi-point turn, and care home & disabled minibuses no longer use that section,
- anti-social behaviour could rise with no passing cars,
- with only one car exit into Kingland Road there could be serious congestion.

Drivers may be completely unaware of any speed limit, so safety aspects have NOT been adequately considered.

35. Statement received from Anthony Winter (read out by Democratic Services)

I do not consent to this closure due to the impact this could have on many peoples wellbeing, especially my own.

I used to drive to Poole Park to meet friends and walk my dog then proceeding down to the beach for a walk. This was a route I would take with my late wife when she was in the later stages of her care and I am no longer able to relive these memories which I find extremely upsetting. As such I no longer visit Poole Park.

This closure will have had a similar impact to many of us elderly and disabled residents of BCP and we feel completely discriminated against by BCP Council."

36. Statement received from Sharon Hunt (read out b Democratic Services)

In recent years Poole Park speed restrictions were increased and effective traffic calming reduced.

Had the opposite action been taken, traffic flow, by those wishing to save time, would have reduced. Those who historically used the park as a pleasant driving route would have been the only users.

My late father-in-law in his last, frail, weeks of life, as the founder of North Haven YC, would enjoy us driving him around Sandbanks. On the way back his request would be 'Drive me through the park'.

Many have similar stories.

The gate closure leaves people unable to use the park for this type of purpose, which is, incredibly important to them.

Some have requested that, when their time comes, they would like the park to be part of their final journey.

Denying people this right is unfair and bordering on cruelty.

The public participation ended at this point during the meeting as the 30-minute extended time allowed had been reached.

As agreed by the Deputy Leader other statements which had been submitted for this meeting (all of which had been circulated to members of the Cabinet prior to the meeting) are set out below for information.

37. Statement received from Jacquetta Morris, Pamela Gitterman and Justin Morris

We strongly oppose the closing of the Twemlow Avenue entrance to Poole Park:

1. Park opened in 1890 by the Prince of Wales as 'the People's Park', for everyone. Cannot access the road between the lakes to view the Turkey duck etc. - very difficult to turn in the road - taking pleasure away from son - encouraged by his Educational Psychologist to go out.

2. Health & Safety - only one exit in case of emergency - road has been substantially narrowed!
3. Increased pollution (bottleneck), cars queuing to leave the Park especially in the season.
4. The Equality Act 2010 - no discrimination against the disabled accessing amenities (also problem at Evening Hill).
5. Suggest enforceable speed cameras/road humps to slow traffic.

38. Statement received from Karin Stringer

I am utterly amazed that when you have carried out a consultation and the people overwhelmingly vote to reopen the 'trial' closure, you seem to be against it. This is not democracy at all.

If your decision is permanent closure, how does this look for the validity of future consultations and confidence in local government? Answer: zero confidence.

I understand that if you carry out this closure, you will have a legal battle on your hands, wasting more taxpayer's money in the process. Be careful what you wish for please.

The park worked perfectly well in the past as it will in the future with through route to all. In fact, the ridiculous decision of one exit, in my opinion, has caused more gridlock and danger.

39. Statement received from Teena Hemming

Am writing to you with regards to the recent council meeting on the closure of the gate at white cliff , I don't agree with the closure, there is a car free walking /cycling area called baiter/white cliff right next to Poole park , people can use this as their "garden" with clean fresh air ! the closure excludes elderly and disabled that rely on vehicles to improve their mental health and wellbeing due to immobility , the cost of a turning circle will be high but needed if you keep the gate closed , not everyone is able to walk , the closure of the gate is discriminatory, the consultation garnered 63 percent in favour of opening the gate , please listen to the people of Poole.

40. Statement received from Julie Caines

The LPPA group would like to make the following statement.

Our objection to the closure of the gate is not about the able bodied wanting a quick way to drive home.

It is not about providing extra Disabled Parking Bays

It is not about being told the disabled, elderly and sick can go somewhere else – like along the Cliffs to Hengistbury Head.

This is about inclusivity of the less able, the vulnerable, the sick and disabled who are unable to walk or cycle through the gate. They have the right to be able to do the same as you or I, even if that means by car or by mini bus.

Poole Park is, and should always be, for everyone. No one should be discriminated against and excluded from using that gate.

We ask you now, to reopen the gate so that everyone can use it.

41. Statement received from Derek Laycock

Leave Poole Park as it was open. Let people enjoy the location. I notice that they have not closed green park and Hyde Park in London yet. What is the difference.

Leave Poole Park open.

42. Statement received from Susan Lennon

In light of the data released 7th May concerning Whitecliff gate closure consultation. The reopening of Whitecliff gate should be reconsidered by full council as the public voted for it to stay open by 63%. Also disabled people must have a voice in the community.

The facts

Wheelchair access is dangerous from extra traffic using turning space.

There is no emergency access from the east and as highlighted recently the extra traffic is causing chaos already in the park. There are safety concerns if a disabled person has an emergency incident near the closed Whitecliff gate.

It will cost nothing to reopen the gate.

43. Statement received from Mark Davison

63% supported it being reopened. If the council ignores the views of the consultation then these processes will lose any value, why bother giving my opinion if it is ignored.

Only one exit, which is at an acute angle and close to a roundabout leading to the bus station and its congestion.

Vehicles from Sandbanks side has to make a long detour to the Park and a longer one to return towards Sandbanks. More traffic converges Poole bus station area.

I am unconvinced that it is used as a rat run, for my journey from Sandbanks to Poole it doesn't work, so I never use it. Whitecliff road has many parked cars, keyhole bridge, vehicles stop to ensure it is clear. Park has, speed bumps, chicanes and a roundabout.

It appears to me that the Council have 'done a deal' with a cycling group following the keyhole bridge closure challenge.

44. Statement received from P Clark

Having watched 90 minutes of overwhelming support in the O&S meeting to keep Poole Park for users not a drive through, I was astonished to hear that one person derailed it to full Council and many abstained.

Only drivers think that cars and people can 'share' space, noise, fumes, particulates, menace, everyone else confined to narrow pathways, unable to walk side by side.

LPPA's campaign of deliberate misinformation re closure, no parking and vitriol towards key figures is disgraceful.

The less mobile can still access every part as before and park up for views; they simply can't drive over the rights of other vulnerable groups.

It was gifted for peoples' leisure, enjoyment and relaxation. There is nothing relaxing about sharing such space with a stream of cars with their inherent noise, bulk, fumes and danger. Please retain Poole Park as it is now for people, flora and fauna: not cars.

45. Statement received from K E Norman

Reverse Whitecliffe Gate closure to prevent unnecessary congestion, not just exiting the park but by forcing traffic onto one route regardless of which direction 'visitors' are travelling after 'visiting' the park.

The 'coastal' journey between Poole and Bournemouth is a well-worn, popular route and tourists (and locals) will not tolerate these queues to travel to the already doomed Town Centres if they know that this gate closure is permanent.

Opening these gates will permit that natural flow of traffic and prevent the queue to the Civic Centre and the queue to pass, single file, under Sandbanks Road Railway Bridge.

The opening of Whitecliffe Gate will allow everyone to drive to the park, and through the park for leisure, to exit without being forced to join these polluting queues.

I trust that BCP Council will act on the fact that most Poole residents wish Whitecliffe Gate to remain open.

46. Statement received from Glynins Northwood-Long

The closure of the Whitecliff Gate prevents anyone enjoying a pleasant slow drive through the Park, whilst increasing traffic congestion out of the park and the surrounding area.

I object to councillors saying:

'There is a perfectly good scenic drive along the cliffs to Hengistbury Head'.

'People can walk and cycle to the park' ignoring those who need to be driven to the Park.

The costly consultation was biased toward closure, wasting questions on demographics. The 200 page report revealed that 63% wanted the closure revoked and failed to establish a cogent case for continued closure or provide any evidence about cars causing accidents or increasing noise or pollution levels before the closure.

I used to take my elderly, infirm mother to the park by car for a pleasant drive through but we haven't been since.

Open the gates again, please.

47. Statement received from Bob Lister

Legal challenges concerning consultation processes can centre on:

- Consulting after a decision has already been made.
- Failing to provide sufficient information for consultees to make informed responses.

- Failing to allow adequate time for people to respond and for responses to be considered.
- Failing to take responses into account.

48. Statement received from Ian Beeching

Unwittingly, BCP has the unenviable task of trying to find a lasting solution to the furore over closure of Whitecliff Gate.

It may not chime with the objectives of certain minority groups, but unless Council wants adverse publicity in both public and social media to continue, I respectfully suggest all parties put aside any prejudice. Accept the majority of people want the gate to remain open.

At 7:30am tomorrow remove from view all signs mentioning closure of the gate. At 10:00am quietly open Whitecliff Gate to traffic so vehicles can drive through all three entrances, and both exits, exactly as they could before 17th January.

Importantly, make sure there is no publicity whatsoever about the re-opening. When the public find they can again drive through all entrances the adverse publicity will quickly disappear altogether. Just as important BCP needs to learn from this debacle and leave Poole Park alone.

143. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet was advised that there were no additional recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on items not otherwise indicated on the Cabinet agenda on this occasion.

The Deputy Leader advised that in view of the public interest the order of the agenda would be rejigged and that Agenda Item 10 (Improvement of the environment in Poole Park through a trial closure of a park entrance to motor traffic) would be dealt with first.

144. Improvement of the environment in Poole Park through a trial closure of a park entrance to motor traffic

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy 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 Cabinet were advised that from 17 January 2024, BCP Council had begun a trial 24-hour daily closure to motor vehicles of one entrance / exit point in Poole Park, and that on the same day the trial began, BCP Council launched a four-week consultation with the public, to understand the impact of reducing vehicles movements in Poole Park. In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the consultation results are considered in this report alongside other evidence, the strategic management of the park and the wider impact of a closure.

In addition Cabinet was advised that an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) on the closure confirmed that on balance there are no significant impacts on protected characteristic groups, including older people and those with disabilities but that the public consultation did show that older

people and those with a disability were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Cabinet was advised that the purpose of this report is to assess the strategic management of the environment within Poole Park and to seek a decision as to whether the trial arrangement and road closure shall be adjusted or made permanent.

The Chair of the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Chris Rigby addressed the Cabinet advising that the Committee at their recent meeting had scrutinised this report in detail having received representations from a number of members of the public and highlighted the significant amount of public engagement in this item. Further to this the Chair advised that following comprehensive discussion the Committee had resolved to make the following recommendation to the Cabinet for consideration urging that the decision be referred to Full Council for consideration: -

1. That Cabinet refer the matter to full council for decision.

Voting: For:6, Against:1, Abstentions: 2)

Ward Members addressed the Cabinet advising that there had been a balanced view of local residents both for and against the proposal.

Members addressed the Cabinet raising the following points of discussion: -

- urging that the recommendation from the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee be supported and that the decision be referred to full council.
- A request that the practices and processes for consultation be reviewed.
- A request to consider the options for timed closures

Members of the Cabinet spoke in support of the proposal and the recommendation highlighting that the park is still accessible for everyone to enjoy, and that the proposal has a positive benefit for the park user. Further to this it was raised that that there is a route still in existence for those who wish to drive through it.

During the discussion Councillor Cox read out Mr Ian Beechings submitted statement (as set out within the public issues) in order to clarify an extract of this statement within earlier discussions.

Cabinet members questioned the benefit of taking the report to full council for further debate and felt that the decision should be made.

In summing up the Portfolio Holder advised that the practices and processes for consultation should come back to the Cabinet at a future meeting for discussion.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) Agrees that the current trial closure, of the Whitecliff entrance and exit point to motor vehicles, is made permanent in Poole Park.**
- (b) Agrees that current arrangements are retained, and motor vehicles can still access Poole Park and its facilities.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Environment and Energy

Reasons

- Supports the BCP Council Corporate Strategy priorities of Sustainable Environment, preserving our natural environment for generations to come, an eco-friendly and active transport network, tackling the climate and ecological emergency, maximising access to our high-quality parks and open spaces.
- Supports the BCP Green Infrastructure Strategy that seeks to help increase health and well-being outcomes for our communities and visitors, thereby reducing pressures on health and social services; reverse biodiversity loss and nature recovery; strengthen the resilience of people, places and nature to a changing climate and support high quality placemaking.
- Public Health Dorset supports the proposed change as it enhances Park users' health and well-being by being in an improved space with reduced vehicle movements, improved feeling of safety in accessing the park and its facilities.
- This is a strategic improvement of a key destination green space, supporting users from multiple wards, including some in more deprived areas. Follows similar precedent in Bournemouth parks, builds on previous trials and proposals to improve the park's environment and the work of the 2017-21 Poole Park Life Heritage Fund project.
- It is recognised that 63% of consultation responses were against the proposal and of those many responses perceived that there are negative effects on older people and those with a disability. The Equalities impact Assessment and independent report by DOTS disability suggest there is no significant impact on any groups with protected characteristics.
- There has been an extensive review and understanding of the trial closure, the consultation response and supporting information. This report assesses the responses to the survey, their stated impacts against the long-term improvement for the environment of Poole Park and its users.
- With regards to 'Active Travel', a reduction of motor traffic through the park will improve comfort, safety and perception of safety for users of the park who are walking, wheeling, running or cycling for either pleasure or utility.
- Routes through the park have previously been identified as Key Walking Routes and/or Primary Cycle Routes within the LCWIP, adopted by full Council in 2022 in accordance with central Government policy.

The meeting adjourned at 11.48am

The meeting reconvened at 12.05pm

145. A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28 Strategy and Delivery Plan

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Connected Communities 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.

Cabinet was advised that BCP Council's high-level vision, priorities and ambitions were adopted by Council in January 2024, and that 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' is a corporate strategy which sets out the council's vision, priorities and ambitions as well as the principles which underpin the way the council will work as it develops and delivers its services.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that a delivery plan had been incorporated into the strategy, prepared in consultation with Cabinet, directors and council officers, to provide focus areas and measures of progress for achieving the vision, priorities and ambitions, and that performance will be monitored and reported in a new dashboard.

Cabinet was advised that this strategy was a key component of a whole council approach to performance management.

In presenting the report the Portfolio Holder advised that the updated Appendix 1 which had been published as a supplementary pack picked up the amendments which had been raised at the recent Overview and Scrutiny Board where the report had been discussed.

Comprehensive discussion took place on the item with Cabinet highlighting the importance of delivering this.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) Approve the delivery plan**
- (b) Agree the measures for monitoring progress and ensuring accountability for delivery**
- (c) Agree to establishing new governance arrangements for reporting and tracking progress.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Dynamic Places

Reason

A corporate strategy is vital for identifying and gaining visibility of the council's key priorities. These represent the objectives and outcomes that the council's performance will be judged against.

The strategy's objectives are the beginning of a golden thread that links personal, team and service performance to the things that matter most to the organisation and as such will be a vital component of the council's performance management framework.

The strategy will influence the allocation and distribution of resources ensuring that the organisation commits its limited resources in accordance with its stated priorities.

146. BCP Alcohol Public Spaces Protection Order Review

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that following a public consultation and Cabinet approval, a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was introduced on 01 July 2021 to deal with alcohol related anti-social behaviour. Cabinet was informed that the order expires on 30 June 2024.

Cabinet was advised that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 sets out requirements that at any point before expiry, the Council can extend a PSPO by up to three years if it considers it is necessary to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or recurring, and that a review of evidence had been undertaken which had identified the need to consider extending the PSPO for a further 3 years.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that a public consultation had been undertaken which had identified that the majority of respondents said they agreed with the proposal to extend the Alcohol PSPO for a further 3 years.

Cabinet was further advised that extending the Order gives authorised officers the ability to deal with those who are having or likely to have a detrimental impact on those in the locality due to alcohol consumption.

Cabinet members spoke in support of the recommendation and of the importance in dealing with anti-social behaviour.

RESOLVED that the BCP Alcohol Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is extended for 3 years from 01 July 2024 with its current prescribed area and conditions remaining the same.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

Following a review of evidence and public consultation it has identified the need to extend the PSPO to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or recurring.

It is proposed that the area and prohibitions remain the same, following review of the evidence base and consultation responses.

147. Council Newbuild Housing & Acquisition Strategy (CNHAS) 2023-2028. Reallocations of funds and Individual Site Approvals.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that £7.555 million of grant had been allocated to BCP from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to obtain accommodation for families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK via Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes, and that this is within the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Funding Round 1 to 3, and part of the CNHAS Temporary Accommodation programme.

Cabinet was informed that to enable the increase of Temporary Accommodation within the CNHAS programme, additional capital is required, and that it is proposed to move budget with this CNHAS programme from the provision of Private rent homes (PRS) to temporary accommodation. In relation to this Cabinet was advised that this will reduce the reliance on Bed and Breakfast requirement within BCP, and in turn this will reduce the growing financial revenue pressure.

Cabinet was advised that the 3 housing development schemes included within this report were also for provision of additional homes within the Temporary Accommodation programme.

Councillor Bartlett addressed the Cabinet highlighting the complexity of the paper encompassing a number of different aspects of housing provision. Further to this Councillor Bartlett raised questions on the following areas: -

- Which schemes would be affected by the transfer of the budget?
- Would this effect the Princess Road Scheme
- Cost of the build for three developments seems very expensive.
- Land cost £25k?

In relation to this the Portfolio Holder advised that in terms of transfer of the budget that it made sense to transfer the budget as we are currently not building private rented sector homes as we are needing to get people out of bed and breakfast and into more settled forms of temporary accommodation that will help their wellbeing. Further to this the portfolio holder advised that the build costs were due in part to quality, market, and the local authority regulations.

Officers addressed the Cabinet to add that the land value is based on an affordable product land value and not a market value providing market homes, in effect a discounted land value which is an accepted modelling method and valuation method. Further to this Officers advised that with regards to the Princess Road site that is a named scheme which is outside of the PRS budget and is outside of this discussion and so that scheme is in addition and so this won't affect the delivery of Princess Road when this can be progressed.

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (a) Approve the transfer of the existing Council New Homes Acquisitions Strategy (CNHAS) Private Rental Scheme (PRS) budget of £36.3m including delegated powers to the temporary accommodation budget (still within Programme 4a of CNHAS) to provide additional affordable homes;**

- (b) **Approve the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Round 1, 2 and 3 funding with the relevant grant funding agreements (Annexe 1, 2 and 6);**
- (c) **Approve of the Surrey Road Development as per Annexe 3. (specifically, the recommendations of that report);**
- (d) **Approve of the Crescent Road Development as per Annexe 4. (specifically, the recommendations of that report); and**
- (e) **Approve of the Darracott Road Development as per Annexe 5. (specifically, the recommendations of that report)**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holders: Dynamic Places

Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

Approval is required to allow the continuation of the acquisition programme; to reduce reliance on Bed and Breakfast use (and revenue spend by the Council) as well as scheme approvals at Crescent Road, Darracott Road and Surrey Road for associated Temporary accommodation programmes and allow approvals to lead to building works commencement of new homes.

148. Sandbanks Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communications and Culture presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'E' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that neighbourhood planning gives local people the opportunity to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area, and that BCP Council as the Local Planning Authority has a legal duty to support and advise town/parish councils and neighbourhood forums through the process to prepare neighbourhood plans, following statutory legislation, regulations and procedure.

Cabinet was informed that the Sandbanks Neighbourhood Forum is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, which is at an advanced stage having been through independent examination, and that the examiner's report (dated 15 December 2023) has concluded that subject to modifications, it meets basic conditions and legal requirements, and can now proceed to referendum.

With regards to this Cabinet was asked to accept the findings of the examiner including his recommended modifications; approve the Local Planning Authority's decision statement; and approve the modified Neighbourhood Plan for referendum on 18 July 2024.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that if at referendum there is a majority vote (50% plus 1) in favour of the neighbourhood plan, then the neighbourhood plan will come back to Council to become a 'Made' plan for the Sandbanks Peninsula Neighbourhood area and form part of the

statutory development plan, and that it will be used alongside the Poole Local Plan to determine planning applications.

When presenting the report, the Portfolio Holder highlighted an email received from the Neighbourhood Forum advising that they would be withdrawing the reference made to the Secretary of State concerning the deferral of the Cabinet's consideration of the plan in April. In addition, the Portfolio Holder advised that the Sandbanks Neighbourhood Forum had expressed thanks to officers for their assistance and further to this highlighted that the Neighbourhood Plan had been finalised at the end of January 2024.

Cabinet spoke in support of the report and highlighted the amount of work which goes into the formation of a neighbourhood plan, and of the considerable benefit a neighbourhood plan can have on an area.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) Considered each of the recommendations of the examiner which relate to:**
 - i. a number of modifications to the Submission Version Plan (Appendix 1)**
 - ii. that the referendum area should not be extended beyond the designated Neighbourhood Area (Appendix 2)**
- (b) Agree with the recommendations by the examiner that the Sandbanks Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan (2023-2033) be modified as defined by the examiner (Appendix 3)**
- (c) Agree that the modified Sandbanks Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to referendum on 18 July 2024; and**
- (d) Approve the Local Planning Authority's Decision Statement and list of modifications as tabled (Appendix 4).**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Dynamic Places

Reason

To meet the statutory obligations including provisions set out in the from the Localism Act 2011, the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended).

149. Simpler Recycling Waste Reforms

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'F' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that The Environment Act 2021 required councils in England to offer every household (including flats) three waste containers for dry recycling, food waste and residual (non-recyclable) waste by 31 March 2026.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that Non-municipal properties (i.e. businesses, schools, hospitals) will also be required to make arrangements for separate collections for dry recycling, food waste and residual waste by 31 March 2025.

Further to this Cabinet was advised that the recommendations contained within the report will enable BCP Council to comply with its new legal obligation in the required timescales by:

- a. enhancing our commercial waste offer to include food waste collections and accommodate extra demand for commercial recycling collections by 31 March 2025.
- b. arrange separate collections for recycling and food waste, where needed from BCP Council's own buildings and commercial premises.
- c. implementing food waste collections for all households, including flats, from 31 March 2026.
- d. offering recycling collections to all properties, including all flats and town centre properties, by 31 March 2026.
- e. introducing plastic film (plastic bags, wrapping, pouches) for recycling in our kerbside recycling service by 31 March 2027.

Cabinet members spoke in support of the item highlighting the importance of having a consistent approach across the whole of the BCP area.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve: -

- (a) the introduction of a BCP-wide commercial food waste collection service, utilising current household collections rounds and vehicles from 31 March 2025;**
- (b) the introduction of a fortnightly bagged recycling service, as set out in this report, to all households who cannot accommodate the standard recycling bin service; and**
- (c) By 31 March 2027, plastic film (plastic bags, pouches, wrapping) will be recycled in our kerbside recycling service.**

It is further recommended that Cabinet recommends to Council: -

- (d) the purchase of six food waste collection vehicles and required food waste containers and bins using £1.53M new burdens funding to support the introduction of food waste collections to Poole and all flats by 31 March 2026 as set out in this report.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder

Reasons

- To comply with the council's legal obligations under the Environment Act 2021 to offer every household (including flats) in England three waste containers for dry recycling, food waste and residual (non-recyclable) waste by 31 March 2026.

- To assist local businesses in complying with their obligation under the Environment Act 2021 by 31 March 2025, and enhance the council's commercial waste offer and potential income generation, whilst fulfilling BCP Council's legal obligation to supply this service if requested.
- To offer flexible, comprehensive and efficient waste collections that engage residents and commercial customers to effectively manage their waste.
- To offer service parity by introducing food waste collections in Poole and to all flats.

Councillor Richard Burton declared an interest in this item as a Trustee of Win on Waste and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor Millie Earl declared an interest in this item as the recycling ambassador of Win on Waste and as a volunteer for the Branksome and Rossmore Community Fridges and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

150. Tricuro Local Authority Trading Company Business Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Resources presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'G' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that Tricuro is a Local Authority Trading Company, wholly owned by the Council delivering adult social care services on its behalf, and that the report summarises the 5-year strategic business plan for the company, aligned to the Council's corporate vision and priorities. and the new shareholder governance arrangements.

The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet in relation to this item advising that it hadn't yet come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but that it would be coming to the Committee in due course. In addition Councillor Canavan highlighted the importance of working in a collaborative way.

Councillor Stephen Bartlett addressed the Cabinet questioning the governance arrangements with Tricuro.

In relation to this the Portfolio Holder advised that these governance arrangements were being reviewed as part of a larger review of arrangements with other bodies like this and that this report would be coming to Cabinet at the July meeting.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approved the Tricuro Strategic Business Plan, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Health and Wellbeing

Reason

The Tricuro Strategic Business Plan sets out the direction of Tricuro over the next five years, The Council has reserved the right for Cabinet to approve the business plan.

Councillor Kieron Wilson left the meeting at 12.49pm

151. SEND Progress Update re SEND Improvement Plan and Safety Valve

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'H' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report provided an overview of the work to date within the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) system, through the newly developed SEND Improvement plan, and further to this provided a narrative to the improvement work to date within the BCP Council SEND service, the wider SEND system and points towards the significant progress that has been made over the last 6 months.

Cabinet was informed that it is recognised though, that much more needs to be done and that a continued effort is needed across the partnership to address the further areas of improvement.

Cabinet was further advised that alongside the operational and strategic improvement work within the SEND system the report also provided information and a short narrative on the progress of the Safety Valve programme and resultant next steps, and that discussions were still ongoing with the Department for Education (DfE) and Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and as such a revised Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) plan has not yet commenced.

Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet expressing thanks to the Portfolio Holder for the reassurance that it can come back to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and further to this requested an update on the Safety Valve.

Cabinet members discussed the report and highlighted the financial implications within it.

The Director for Finance addressed the Cabinet highlighting further the concerns around the financial implications and advising that following the meeting he would be writing to the Director of Finance at DLUHC to seek advice on how we can resolve the issue of the difference between what we are currently spending on SEND services and the government grant available.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) Noted the positive progress against the SEND Improvement Plan in the Local Authority's key statutory processes in particular, our children in BCP Children's Services this academic year are no longer experiencing delays to the initial assessment and creation of their EHCPs;**

- (b) **Acknowledges that the new SEND Improvement Board governance structure provides the rigour and transparency required to maintain progress in the SEND system;**
- (c) **Noted the assumptions within the Safety Valve plan and associated DSG plan are understood and that the Committee notes that BCP are currently in discussions with DfE and DLUHC regarding the financial implications of the High Needs Block budget; and**
- (d) **Acknowledge that the progression of improvements in SEND is reliant on Health, Education and the Council working together.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Children and Young People

Reason

To ensure that all stakeholders within and across the SEND system are aware of the positive improvements in the SEND system and the future work required regarding the Safety Valve programme and supporting DSG plan.

152. Cabinet Forward Plan

The Leader advised that the latest Cabinet Forward Plan had been published on the Council's website.

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

Cabinet was advised that no urgent decisions had been taken in accordance with the Constitution since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

The Deputy Leader advised that the following urgent item had been brought to Cabinet in accordance with the Constitution and pursuant to Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 ('the Regulations').

154. Our Place and Environment: Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant (TSOG) & Green Light Fund (GLF)

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'I' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that in November 2023 the council was informed by the Department for Transport (DfT) it had been allocated £119k of Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant (TSOG) and that it could apply for a further £500k from the Green Light Fund (GLF) by 18 December 2023.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the council submitted an application to the GLF by the December deadline and in March 2024 the

DfT wrote to confirm success and payment of £619k (=£119k TSOG + £500k GLF), and that the report informed Cabinet of the success and seeks delegation to formally accept and invest the awarded grant in line with the application.

Cabinet members spoke in support of the report and praised officers for their successful bid.

RECOMMENDED that: -

- a) Accept the £619,283.37 from the Department for Transport funded Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant & Green Light Fund; and**
- b) Delegate investment of the Traffic Signal Obsolescence & Green Light Fund grants to the Director for Planning & Transport in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holders: Dynamic Places

Climate Emergency

Reason

Financial Regulations require the acceptance of external funding of between £100,000 and £1.0m to be approved by Cabinet in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer.

The grant shall be used to upgrade identified (prioritised) signal assets (crossings and junctions) that are at end of life ensuring that they continue to operate. The upgrades shall result in reduced energy consumption.

The meeting ended at 1.13 pm

CHAIRMAN