

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 September 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr K Salmon – Chairman

Present: Cllr J Beesley, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr L Northover,  
Cllr T Trent, Cllr O Walters, Cllr G Wright and Cllr M Tarling (In place  
of Cllr S Mackrow)  
Present virtually: Cllr S Aitkenhead  
Also in attendance: Cllr R Herrett  
Also in attendance virtually: Cllr J Butt and Cllr K Rampton

33. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr S Mackrow and C Weight.

34. Substitute Members

Cllr M Tarling substituted for Cllr S Mackrow.

35. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

36. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2025 were approved as a core

37. Public Issues

There were no public issues submitted for this meeting

38. Commercial Operations

The Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations 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. The report was brought to the Board following a request for a report of the operating practices for the Commercial Operations Service, the report provided an overview of the service and details in response to the specific items which were outlined by the Board in Key Lines of Enquiry document which has been provided from the Board in relation to this item. A number of key points were highlighted including:

- The Commercial Services Team delivered a surplus to the Council's core budget, supporting key services and enabling investment in leisure and heritage assets.
- Financial pressures, including energy costs and inflation, were challenges to maintaining cost-neutral operations.
- The Directorate consisted of five key service areas; Seafront, Leisure and Events, Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management, Car Parking and Commercial Operations and there was a workforce of 438 permanent and fixed-term staff, supported by over 500 casual staff and volunteers.

The Board discussed the item and raised a number of points including:

- **Beach Huts and Lodges** – These were an important asset for the Council and the maintenance of beach huts was funded through core budgets and a £800,000 allocation from the LUF grant from the MHCLG. There were no plans to sell beach lodges, though marketing and occupancy improvements were being pursued.
- **Cliff Stabilisation** - £4.5 million from the LUF grant was earmarked for East Cliff stabilisation works. A Cliff Management Strategy was being developed, supported by a working group and asset database. Concerns were raised regarding long-term infrastructure maintenance and the need for regular updates to Ward Councillors.
- **Pier Infrastructure** - Structural works were planned for Bournemouth Pier, with £9.5 million allocated. The works were expected to commence in March 2026, subject to tender outcomes and weather conditions. Boscombe Pier was reported to require future interventions due to general wear. Mudeford Pontoon had undergone recent refurbishment.
- **Growth Opportunities** - Development of the Film Office was reported to be progressing, with increased enquiries and economic benefits. A joined-up wedding offer across Council venues was being developed.
- **Hengistbury Head** - A request was made for greater engagement with town and parish councils, particularly in Christchurch.
- **Commercial Operations Structure** - Clarification was provided on the new Head of Commercial Operations post, which was confirmed as a strategic role without a dedicated team at present. Leisure, sport, and arts and culture development sat within the Leisure service area. Museums were confirmed to be outside the Directorate, but collaborative work was ongoing. The Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management team was included due to the cross-cutting issues with seafront services. However, the Residents Card was due to remain under the Investment and Development team.
- **Sand Management** - Sand clearance was prioritised based on access needs and seasonal conditions. The differences in sand build-up across the seafront were explained and the impact of storm events on operational workload was noted.
- **Financial** - The Board asked if there would be a more strategic approach in terms of maximising income from the seafront services. It was noted that

there were plans to increase revenue from different projects but in terms of other similar commercial operations in the area the percentages involved were fairly similar. **The Portfolio Holder undertook to report back to the Board on this issue.**

- **Community Infrastructure Levy** – Some of the areas in which this was being used was questioned and the Chief Operations Officer undertook to recirculate CIL guidance to all Councillors.

**RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board note the detail provided within the report and add a review to the work plan for 6 months to ascertain the state of development at that point.**

Voting: Nem. Con.

- The meeting adjourned at 7:03pm and resumed at 7:10pm -

39. Resident Card

The Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations 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. The Board was advised that the Resident Card was a commitment to residents across the conurbation to support household incomes at a time when cost of living is increasing. The Council intended to introduce a scheme offering a free hour of parking in council-owned car parks, discounts at seaside kiosks and one swim per month at BCP Leisure centres, to support the wellbeing of local people. Additionally, work is underway with leisure partners and local businesses to build an offer which gives residents more for their money and supports the growth of the local economy. The scheme was intended to be accessed digitally and with a physical card and making it truly accessible for all from Spring 2026.

The report detailed the benefits to residents and the opportunity to phase in offers or services as the scheme matures. This approach also means the scheme remains flexible and adaptable in line with financial forecasts. Subject to Cabinet approval, the intention is that the offer outlined in this report will set out the requirements for a technology provider. This will form the basis of a detailed specification and contract terms to enable the Council to progress to call off a supplier by direct award. A number of issues were raised by the Board in the subsequent discussion including:

- **Equity and Accessibility** - Concerns were raised that the scheme disproportionately benefited drivers and excluded residents who did not have access to smartphones or parking apps. The lack of alternative payment methods, such as cash or card integration, was highlighted as a barrier for those with limited digital access. This was difficult to address due to the current parking infrastructure. The need for clear communication and confirmation of eligibility and usage was emphasised to avoid confusion and potential penalties.

- **Public Transport and Sustainable Travel** - Members questioned the absence of incentives for public transport users in light of the Council's commitment to reducing car dependency and promoting modal shift. The Board made suggestions to explore partnerships with bus operators and other sustainable travel providers such as Beryl Bikes in future phases of the scheme.
- **Exemptions and Affordability** - Concern was raised regarding the lack of detail regarding exemptions for low-income residents. It was proposed that families eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups be considered for free or reduced-cost access to the scheme and the Board stressed the importance of ensuring the scheme did not inadvertently exclude those most in need.
- **Geographic Coverage and Leisure Access** - It was noted that the leisure benefit was limited to BCP Leisure Centres, which were not located in Bournemouth, raising concerns about fairness and accessibility for residents in that area. The exclusion of BH Live facilities was questioned, and members requested that gym access also be given consideration.
- **Financial Transparency** - Members expressed concern over the lack of detailed financial modelling within the report. The absence of a value for money analysis and sensitivity testing was highlighted as a significant gap. It was requested that full financial details, including projected uptake scenarios and cost implications, be provided before any decision was made.
- **Political Process** – There were concerns raised that the final details and decisions were to be delegated to officers without any involvement from Councillors and it didn't feel this was a finished piece of work for Councillors to make a decision on. The Board suggested it needed further information in order to make a decision.

**RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board do not support the recommendation as outlined in the report as the Board did not feel that the Cabinet report included sufficient financial details and details of the scheme offers to enable it to make an informed decision. The Board recommend to Cabinet that the report is deferred to allow details of the financial modelling that has been done to be added, including a cost/benefit analysis and a sensitivity analysis. Once this additional information is included in the report, it should then be brought back to the O&S Board before being taken to Cabinet for decision.**

Voting: 8 in favour, 1 against, 0 abstentions

40. O&S Board Decision Tracker

The Overview and Scrutiny Specialist introduced the recommendation Tracker to the Board. This was a new tool to assist the Board in monitoring the recommendations it makes. It was welcomed by the Board and it was agreed that a programme for considering the outcome of recommendations made by the Board would be implemented.

41. Work Plan

The Chair of the O&S Board 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. The Overview and Scrutiny Board was asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.

The Board considered a recommendation from the Audit and Governance Committee to add an item to its work plan on the impact of the Carter's Quay development on local residents. Following discussions the Board agreed that it be added to the Plan and that the possibility of combining this with the expected Carter's Quay Cabinet report due in December be explored.

The Chair advised that a request had been made for a Councillor Call-for-action on the current situation in blue badge processing. Whilst all the requirements for this had not been met the Chair proposed that it should be added to the next available meeting of the Board

**RESOLVED that the work Plan be confirmed including the two additional updates outlined above.**

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

CHAIRMAN