



Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

Date: 15 December 2017 at 10 am

Venue: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Christchurch

Membership:

Councillor Janet Walton	Borough of Poole – Chair
Councillor John Beesley	Bournemouth Borough Council – Vice-Chair
Councillor David Flagg	Christchurch Borough Council – Vice-Chair
Councillor Philip Broadhead	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor David Brown	Borough of Poole
Councillor Blair Crawford	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Deborah Croney	Dorset County Council
Councillor Beverley Dunlop	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Mike Greene	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Nicola Greene	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor May Haines	Borough of Poole
Councillor Trish Jamieson	Christchurch Borough Council
Councillor David Jones	Dorset County Council
Councillor Jane Kelly	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Robert Lawton	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Drew Mellor	Borough of Poole
Councillor Karen Rampton	Borough of Poole
Councillor Mike White	Borough of Poole

Contact: Karen Tompkins: Tel: 01202 451255 – Email – karen.tompkins@bournemouth.gov.uk

The agenda and reports are available at <https://bcjointcommittee.wordpress.com/meetings/>

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of any substitute Members.

2. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 regarding disclosable pecuniary interests.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

The Joint Committee is asked to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2017 circulated at **3**.

4. Public Issues – deputation/questions/petitions

A request to speak as a deputation, ask a question or present a petition must be sent in writing or email to Karen Tompkins at the address above by no later than 10.00 am on Thursday 14 December 2017.

5. Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Panels/Committees

To consider any recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Panels/Committees.

6. Programme Update

See report circulated at **6**.

7. Consolidated Medium Term Financial Plans (MTFPs)

See report circulated at **7**.

8. Disaggregation

See report circulated at **8**.

9. Council Tax Harmonisation

See report circulated at **9**.

10. The Structural Change Order – Report of the Task and Finish Group

See report circulated at **10**.

11. Electoral Arrangements

See report circulated at **11**.

12. Forward Plan for the Joint Committee

See plan circulated at **12**.

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE JOINT COMMITTEE
21 November 2017**

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Walton	Borough of Poole - Chair
Councillor John Beesley	Bournemouth Borough Council - Vice-Chair
Councillor David Flagg	Christchurch Borough Council - Vice-Chair
Councillor Philip Broadhead	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor David Brown	Borough of Poole
Councillor John Challinor	Borough of Poole
Councillor Deborah Croney	Dorset County Council
Councillor Beverley Dunlop	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Mike Greene	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Nicola Greene	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor May Haines	Borough of Poole
Councillor Trish Jamieson	Christchurch Borough Council
Councillor David Jones	Dorset County Council
Councillor Jane Kelly	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Robert Lawton	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Drew Mellor	Borough of Poole
Councillor Pat Oakley	Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Karen Rampton	Borough of Poole

OFFICERS:

Andrew Flockhart, Chief Executive, Borough of Poole
 David McIntosh, Chief Executive, Christchurch and East Dorset Councils
 Jane Portman, Managing Director, Bournemouth Borough Council
 Richard Bates, Chief Financial Officer, Dorset County Council
 Ian Milner, Strategic Director, Christchurch Borough Council
 Julian Osgathorpe, Joint Executive Director, Corporate Services
 Adam Richens, Service Director, Strategic Finance
 Tanya Coulter, Service Director, Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer
 Sarah Longdon, LGR Programme Manager
 Georgia Turner, Head of Communications and Marketing

The meeting commenced at 10.03 am

Note: To see a copy of the public reports that were considered by the Committee at this meeting please visit:

<https://bcjointcommittee.wordpress.com/meetings/>

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14. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Blair Crawford, Bournemouth Borough Council. Councillor Pat Oakley would act as his substitute for this meeting.

An apology for absence was also received from Debbie Ward - Chief Executive, Dorset County Council. Richard Bates - Chief Financial Officer, Dorset County Council was in attendance.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests by Joint Committee Members.

It was noted that the four Chief Officers would leave the room for item 9 on the agenda, at clause 22 below.

16. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

One Member requested a minor amendment to page 11 of the minutes to clarify that the appropriate representation from Dorset County Council was two Cabinet Members, one of which was a named substitute for the Joint Committee.

DECISION MADE:

That, subject to the agreed amendment above, the minutes of the meeting on 30 October 2017, be confirmed.

17. PUBLIC ISSUES

The Joint Committee were informed that the following public questions had been received:-

- a. David Higgins
- b. Susan Chapman

A copy of the questions and answers can be viewed at the following link:-

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/CouncilMeetings/Previousquestionsdocs/Public-Questions-21-November-2017.pdf>

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18. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW - HIGH LEVEL PLAN AND INITIAL RESOURCE ESTIMATE FOR PHASE 1

The Service Director, Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer clarified that all reports considered by the Joint Committee now included additional information in the classification section, to aid with clarification on which Members could speak and vote on each item. 'All Members' of the Joint Committee denoted all 18 Members, including the Dorset County Council Members. 'Full Members' of the Joint Committee denoted the 16 full Members from Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council and the Borough of Poole Council.

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Joint Executive Director, circulated at '5'. The report provided the Joint Committee with an overview of the high level programme plan for the delivery of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the initial resource estimates required to start key workstreams within the programme, including those on the identified critical path for the programme. The Joint Executive Director introduced the report and highlighted the following three core phases, alongside the methodology around cost, resources and risk categories:-

- Creating the new unitary authority.
- Delivering senior staffing structures and business functionality for April 2019.
- Designing and building the new local authority.

In response to One Member's question relating to scrutiny resource and expenditure, Officers confirmed that a regular feature of the Programme Overview would be accounts and allocation of resources. Once this suite of information was in place, each partner authority had their own arrangements for the scrutiny of LGR progress. Following this theme, the Chairman highlighted that the Joint Committee needed to consider how to facilitate the engagement of Overview and Scrutiny and this discussion would be held at item 10 on the agenda.

DECISION MADE:

That the Joint Committee:-

- a. Note the high level programme plan and the workstreams outlined.
- b. approve the principles for the apportionment of programme costs across all appropriate preceding authorities.
- c. Note the initial resource estimates for the commencement of key workstreams contained within the high level programme plan.
- d. Delegate authority to the Programme Board to:-
 - i. Identify appropriate resources from within each authority.

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- ii. Reprioritise or estimate the required backfill those resources in order to allow their secondment to the programme team(s) as required.
- iii. In consultation with their colleagues on the Programme Board, agree the backfill arrangements required to release resources to the programme.
- iv. Commission and oversee the progression of the workstreams outlined on the high level programme plan.
- v. Report back to the Joint Committee on the performance of the programme plan, budget and team as required or agreed.

19. STRUCTURAL CHANGE ORDER

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Service Director, Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer, circulated at '6'. The report set out some of the key areas covered by a Structural Change Order (SCO), including the name of the new Council; the establishment of a Shadow Authority; the effective date on which existing councils are dissolved; and the new authority created in law. The Joint Committee was asked to consider whether to establish a Task and Finish Group to engage in the preparation of the Order in view of the tight timescales. It was likely that the Order would need to be laid before Parliament towards the end of January 2018, for approval by April 2018.

The Chairman took the opportunity on behalf of the Joint Committee to formally acknowledge that, since the last meeting of the Joint Committee, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had confirmed the 'minded to' decision to approve LGR in Dorset.

A Dorset County Council (DCC) Member welcomed the opportunity to be involved in any Task and Finish Group in a non-voting capacity, to keep a watching brief for DCC in relation to political oversight and staffing process.

In response to One Member's question in relation to the Constitution of the Shadow Authority, standing orders and the associated civic functions within the current three local authorities, the Service Director, Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer confirmed that the civic functions of the three local authorities would continue until vesting day in April 2019. However, the Order could contain provisions relating to the ongoing civic functions and identities of the three towns beyond April 2019. In addition, a separate Order could be set up to address these functions. Following this clarification, the Member suggested in considering the recommendations, the Joint Committee considered a separate Task and Finish Group to consider these specific issues in relation to the civic functions.

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A number of Members endorsed the proposal for a separate Task and Finish Group to look at the civic functions within each of the three local authorities beyond 2019. Furthermore, a number of comments were made in support of the continued existence of these respective functions and mayoralty to ensure the identities of the three towns were retained.

The Joint Committee considered public and stakeholder engagement in the development of the SCO. The Chairman highlighted the opportunity for public engagement in the work of the Joint Committee, and again thanked the individuals involved in asking public questions at the meeting as an example of engagement. Furthermore, each authority's scrutiny function for LGR enabled the public to engage and feed into the work of the Joint Committee.

One Member spoke briefly on the work undertaken on an informal basis by the Joint Committee with Medway Council. Concerns had been raised that by not bringing forward proposals at an early stage through the SCO in relation to civic functions, the opportunity could be lost as the SCO was agreed in April 2018. Therefore, a separate Task and Finish Group to address these issues was again endorsed.

DECISION MADE:

That the Joint Committee:-

- a. Note the contents of the report and implications.
- b. Establish a Task and Finish Group to work with the Monitoring Officers to inform the Councils' input into the Order and report back to the Joint Committee at its December meeting.
- c. Extend an invitation to a Dorset County Council representative to be involved in the work of this Task and Finish Group in a non-voting capacity.
- c. Establish a separate Task and Finish Group to work with the Monitoring Officers to inform the Councils' input into the Order on the specific matter of civic arrangements beyond April 2019.

20. COUNCIL TAX HARMONISATION - PRINCIPLES

The Joint Committee received a verbal update from the Chairman of the Council Tax Harmonisation Task and Finish Group on the work of the Group to date. The first meeting of the Group took place on 6 November 2017 and a further meeting was planned after this Joint Committee meeting. The Chairman thanked the Strategic Director - Christchurch Borough Council and the Service Director, Strategic Finance for their significant work and contribution to a fast paced workstream.

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In identifying the principles of the Group, the Chairman highlighted that LGR required that the level of Council Tax in a new authority did not place residents in a worse position than 'no change.' In referencing the Government referendum cap, the Group were working on options that made the reasonable assumption that this cap would remain in place. With regard to the options, 18 different models that had been analysed over a period of 10 years were currently under consideration. Feedback from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had resulted in a shift from 20 year modelling, to the current 10 years. As the Group worked through the options, recommendations would need to be brought back to the Joint Committee in the interest of all Council Tax payers. It was noted that it was eminently possible for Council Tax in Christchurch to be frozen or decreased through the models under consideration. Representations would need to be made to DCLG following the work of the Task and Finish Group and formal consideration by the Joint Committee.

One Member welcomed the update from the Task and Finish Group Chairman and highlighted recent comments in the press and by some Elected Members not on the Joint Committee, on Council Tax implications that were far removed from the options being considered. In light of this, making the intentions of the Joint Committee very clear was considered crucial. In achieving this, the Member sought the Joint Committee's approval of a motion that directed the Task and Finish Group to prioritise options that would ensure no Borough's Council Tax would rise above the Government Referendum Levels, and that freezes and reductions would apply in Christchurch.

In explaining the rationale for making this move, the Member emphasised the importance of being transparent with all residents as they participate in any consultations. It was the Member's view that Christchurch residents would be far better off through LGR than the status quo.

In response to one Member's comments that it was role of the Task and Finish Group to look at all of the options, the Member who made the move agreed with this, however, some options should not be acceptable to the Joint Committee in view of the current levels of Council Tax across all three local authorities.

A number of Members spoke in support of the move, before the Chairman summarised in highlighting that it was imperative to give an accurate reflection and idea to residents of the implications of LGR.

DECISION MADE:

That while recognising that the Task and Finish Group on Council Tax Harmonisation needs to look at all available options, this Joint Committee urges the Task and Finish Group to prioritise options which:-

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- a. ensure that no Borough's Council Tax levels will rise at a rate exceeding the Government's referendum limits; and
- b. include freezes and/or reductions to the absolute level of Council Tax paid by Christchurch residents.

21. PRINCIPLES FOR DISAGGREGATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IN DORSET

The Joint Committee considered a report by the LGR Programme Manager, circulated at '7'. The report outlined a set of principles for the scope and approach to carrying out the disaggregation and an equitable split, through ground rules, appropriate data collection and efficient analysis. The report sought the Joint Committee's agreement to create a Task and Finish Group to oversee this work.

One Member spoke briefly on pilot work ongoing with the Dorset Finance Officers Group and highlighted the timing of the Task and Finish Group in being a priority workstream. The Chairman supported this workstream as a priority.

Several Members commended the paper and in doing so, drew particular attention to the principle that the transfer of services from one authority to another would not disadvantage individual people receiving services and care. As the overriding principle, this would be a key determinant on how disaggregation would be applied. One Member outlined their concerns around budgetary pressures and the future impact on the feasibility of services to protect the most vulnerable. In response, some Members highlighted that the budget process was entirely separate to the disaggregation of services.

In response to one Member's questions on the role of staff Trade Unions in this process, the Chief Executive, Christchurch and East Dorset Councils, reported that following the SCO, there would be a Staffing Order that would determine a number of staffing principles. There would be a key opportunity to protect staff terms and conditions through the development of this Order.

The Chairman summarised by highlighting the ambition to make the transfer of services to a new unitary authority as seamless as possible for residents of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

DECISION MADE:

That the Joint Committee:-

- a. Agree the disaggregation principles detailed in the report.

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- b. Agree the creation of a Task and Finish Group of Joint Committee Members to oversee the disaggregation.
- c. Agree that a further report be brought to the Joint Committee when the budgetary implications of the disaggregation process have been estimated.

22. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OFFICER/HEAD OF PAID SERVICE - PROCESS AND SUPPORT FOR COMMITTEE

The Chief Officers of each of the four local authorities left the room for this item of business.

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Service Director, Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer, circulated at '9'. The report dealt with the process for the appointment of a Head of Paid Service for a new Unitary Council. Once a Shadow Authority was established, it would be necessary to appoint a Head of Paid Service to lead the creation of the new organisation from an Officer perspective. Therefore, the Joint Committee was encouraged through the report to begin this process by working with the Local Government Association at an early stage, in view of the timescales involved. A number of strategic and HR related questions would need to be considered in identifying the agreed process for an appointment.

In response to one Member's question, the Service Director, Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer confirmed that it was the Shadow Authority's responsibility to make the formal appointment of a Head of Paid Service.

DECISION MADE:

That the report be noted and the Joint Committee agree to receive a presentation from a team from the Local Government Association on the approach to be taken to recruit a Chief Executive for a new Unitary Council.

23. FORWARD PLAN FOR THE JOINT COMMITTEE

The Joint Committee considered the Forward Plan, circulated at '10'.

The Chairman invited Members to consider how Overview and Scrutiny could engage in the work of the Joint Committee. The Managing Director, Bournemouth Borough Council, suggested the opportunity to add a standing item to each Joint Committee agenda to receive any recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny meetings across the four local authorities.

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One Member suggested the early population of the Forward Plan to allow for Overview and Scrutiny to accurately understand the upcoming work of the Joint Committee and to allow for proper planning, particularly in identifying Task and Finish Group Members.

The Managing Director, Bournemouth Borough Council, requested that Task and Finish Group membership be confirmed to Democratic Services as soon as possible.

DECISION MADE:

- a. That the Forward Plan be received and updated in light of decisions taken by the Joint Committee.
- b. That a standing item be added to future Joint Committee agendas to address Overview and Scrutiny recommendations.

24. FUTURE MEETING DATES

In planning for future meetings of the Joint Committee, the Chairman encouraged all Members to be as flexible with their availability as possible to aid with efficient date setting.

DECISION MADE:

That the following dates and locations for future meetings of the Joint Committee be noted:

15 December 2017 at 10:00 am in Christchurch Civic Offices

15 January 2017 at 10:00 am in Poole Civic Offices

The meeting closed at 11.33 am.

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Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

6

Report Subject	Programme Update
Meeting date	15 th December 2017
Report author	Julian Osgathorpe, Joint Strategic/Executive Director, Bournemouth and Poole Councils
Contributors	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Programme Board LGR Central Programme Team
Status	Public
Classification	For information for all Members of the Committee
Executive summary	This report provides an overview of programme activity undertaken on behalf of the Joint Committee. It also sets out the format to be used for reporting Activity, Risks/Actions/Issues, Resources/Budgets and any Key Decisions required by the programme as we move forwards.
Recommendations	The Joint Committee is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the progress made since the last Joint Committee on approved workstreams 2. Note the proposed activity to progress approved workstreams in the lead up to the next Joint Committee 3. Note the format and content of this report to be used for future programme reporting 4. Note the proposed workshop with the LGA following the Joint Committee on 15th January 2018
Reasons for recommendation	To note the progress made on the Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Joint Committee programme to prepare for local government reorganisation in Dorset.

Background detail

1. The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee (BCPJC) is made up of representatives of four Dorset councils; Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, Borough of Poole and Dorset County Council.
2. The Committee has been convened to respond to the decision of the Secretary of State to support the reorganisation of local government in Dorset. The committee is responsible for convening and directing a complex programme to implement significant

change within an extremely compressed time line through to the anticipated Vesting Day of the new local authority on 1st April 2019.

3. The committee has approved a programme governance framework to oversee, direct and manage the delivery of LGR within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area. This framework can be summarised as comprising and functioning as follows
 - a. Joint Committee – Nominated councillors from the preceding authorities to provide strategic direction and oversight of the programme
 - b. Programme Board – Chief Executives and Managing Director from the preceding authorities to be accountable for the delivery of the programme workstreams, budgets, resource allocation along with the management of key risks and issues arising from the programme activities
 - c. Programme Director/Manager/Team – responsible for day to day delivery of the programme workstreams, budgets, resources and the identification, mitigation and resolution of risks and issues
4. The committee has approved an outline programme divided into three phases in order to help create and maintain a robust means of focusing, prioritising and managing work, resources, cost and deliverables. These phases are described as
 - a. Creating the new unitary authority
 - b. Delivering senior staffing structures and business functionality for April 2019
 - c. Designing and building the new local authority
5. The committee has approved a high level programme plan for the delivery of the three phases, showing the likely critical path through the various workstreams and phases. The purpose of this report is to provide the Joint Committee with an overview of all material programme activity.
6. The format and content of this report going forward is proposed as follows:
 - a. Highlighted activity undertaken on the programme since the last Joint Committee
 - b. Highlighted activity planned on the programme prior to the next Joint Committee
 - c. Escalation of any Risks, Actions or Issues from the programme
 - d. Escalation of any Resourcing and Budget issues from the programme
 - e. Key decisions required from the Joint Committee as a result of these items
7. As the programme moves towards full mobilisation and into delivery, the content of these sections will become more meaningful.

Highlight Programme Activity in the Last Period

8. The Council Tax Harmonisation Strategy Task & Finish Working Group have continued to meet. An update report from the group outlining their progress and any recommendations to the Joint Committee is on this Agenda.
9. The Structural Change Order Task & Finish Working Group has been convened and had their first meeting. An update report from the group outlining their progress and any recommendations to the Joint Committee is on this Agenda.

10. The Disaggregation Task & Finish Working Group Members have been proposed and a meeting is being convened. An update report from the Programme Team on the activity undertaken within this workstream is on this Agenda.
11. The Civic Duties Task & Finish Working Group Members have been proposed and a meeting is in the process of being convened.
12. Discussions have taken place between the Department for Communities & Local Government, the Boundary Commission and the Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Programme Board. A scoping report on the Electoral Arrangements workstream is included on this Agenda.
13. The LGA have been consulted on the CEX Recruitment workstream and a workshop for all Members of the Joint Committee is proposed following the next Joint Committee meeting on 15th January 2018.
14. A Programme Management Office approach and discipline is being established to support the delivery of the programme. In the short term, and pending a final decision by the Secretary of State, this is currently being supported by resources within the preceding authorities.

Highlight Programme Activity in the Next Period

15. Support the Structural Change Order Task & Finish Working Group in delivering their recommendations to the next Joint Committee. Based on the current schedule provided by the Department for Communities & Local Government, this will be the final opportunity for the Joint Committee to consider and approve the discretionary content within the Structural Change Order.
16. Support the Council Tax Harmonisation Strategy Task & Finish Working Group in modelling and refining the preferred options. Based on the current schedule provided by the Department for Communities & Local Government, the Joint Committee will need to approve the strategy for the harmonisation of council tax at the March Joint Committee meeting.
17. Convene and support the Task & Finish Working Groups for Disaggregation and Civic Duties in preparation for their reporting to future Joint Committee meetings.
18. Convene and support any new Task & Finish Working Groups established as a result of the items on this Agenda.
19. Commission appropriate workstreams to deliver programme activity required as a result of decisions taken on this Agenda.

Risks, Actions and Issues

20. The risks, Actions and issues will be developed and managed through the Programme Board and Programme Team. In the event that there is a need to escalate any to the Joint Committee for either awareness or decision they will be fully outlined with background information, a description of available options and carry recommendations for approval.
21. There are no Risks to be escalated at this stage.
22. There are no Actions to be escalated at this stage.
23. There are no Issues to be escalated at this stage.

Resourcing and Budget

24. A description of cost categories along with an apportionment methodology for programme costs was set out and agreed at the Joint Committee on 21st November 2017.

25. The budget and resourcing for the Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Programme will be developed and managed through the Programme Board and Programme Team over the coming weeks subject to a final decision by the Secretary of State.
26. Once available, it will be presented to the Joint Committee for approval and delegation sought for the Programme Board to manage the programme within the stated resources.
27. There are no resourcing or budget issues to be reported at this early stage of the programme.

Key Decisions Required

28. There are no key decisions required from the Joint Committee arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

29. None arising from this report

Summary of human resources implications

30. None arising from this report.

Summary and Recommendations

32. Following the governance arrangements agreed at the meeting on 30th October 2017, there is a need to regularise the reporting of programme activity to the Joint Committee.
33. The Joint Committee is asked to:
 - a. Note the progress made since the last Joint Committee on approved workstreams
 - b. Note the proposed activity to progress approved workstreams in the lead up to the next Joint Committee
 - c. Note the format and content of this report to be used for future programme reporting
 - d. Note the proposal to hold a workshop following the next Joint Committee on 15th January 2018. This workshop will be facilitated by the LGA and be focussed on the development of the process for recruitment to the role of Chief Executive for the shadow authority.

Background papers

[Joint Committee Programme Update Report 21st November 2017](#)

Appendices

None

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

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Report Subject	Consolidated Medium Term Financial Plans (MTFPs)
Meeting date	15 December 2017
Report author	Adam Richens Chief Financial Officer Bournemouth and Poole Councils ☎01202 451137 Bournemouth ☎01202 633183 Poole ✉ a.richens@poole.gov.uk
Contributors	Steve McKenzie, Chief Executive Purbeck District Council Ian Milner, Strategic Director Christchurch Borough Council Richard Bates, Chief Financial Officer Dorset County Council
Status	Public
Classification	For information for all Members
Executive summary	A cultural of strong financial management will be fundamental to the success of a new unitary in delivering services and meeting its statutory obligations. This culture is set even before any Shadow Authority is formed by the Joint Committee's overview of a consolidated MTFP and ensuring sovereign Councils are aware of any decisions which will have financial implications for the new unitary council.

Recommendations	Members of the Joint Committee are requested to; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the MTFP position noting the caveats as set out in paragraph 8. 2. Note the intention to provide a further update report once the 2018/19 budgets of the relevant Councils have been approved. 3. Note that Chief Financial Officers will now highlight in reports to the relevant sovereign Councils any decisions which will have significant financial implications for the proposed new Unitary Council. 4. Note that once the Shadow Authority has been established that the Chief Financial Officers highlight to the SA any sovereign Council decisions which will have either a significant financial impact or involves significant financial risk exposure to the new Unitary Council. Such matters will be included in the regular MTFP update reports.
Reasons for recommendations	To provide the Joint Committee with an initial high level overview of the medium term financial plan position for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together with the Christchurch element of the one for Dorset County Council.

Background detail

1. The Joint Committee at its meeting on the 30th October 2017 received the following statement in respect of reporting significant financial changes.

The Structural Change Order is likely to require all existing councils to co-operate in the formation of the new unitary councils by taking such steps as may be necessary to prepare for the transfer of their functions, property, rights, staff, assets and liabilities. It is, as yet, unclear as to how far the existing councils will need to go in terms of co-operating with each other. However, as one of the reasons for the creation of the two new unitary councils is to ensure local authority services remain financially sustainable in the medium term, it would not be unreasonable for each of the existing councils to cooperate in ensuring the new councils are viable, at their creation.

Each of the current councils has a medium term financial plan. It is recommended that each of the Joint Committees receives a high level aggregated medium term financial plan, drawn together from the current plans of the councils. It is accepted that this would involve disaggregating the medium term financial plan of Dorset County Council. However, this could be done on a broad estimated basis and the resultant medium term plan caveated.

It is also proposed that any significant change to the medium term financial plan of a council should be drawn to the attention of the relevant Joint Committee by the s151 officer of the Council creating the change. It would also make sense for the s151 to draw any proposed change to the attention of the Council making the change, at the time that the change is approved.

This proposal would help to provide some context to the financial decisions the Joint Committees (or their successor bodies) make concerning the strategy for council tax harmonisation, disaggregation of services and the target operating model.

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

- The MTFP position of each of the current sovereign Councils will provide important context to the purpose and work programme of the Shadow Authority for any new unitary council.
- It is important to highlight that the creation of two councils instead of nine in Dorset was designed to help protect local services in the future. Lower overheads means that a greater proportion of local authority resources can be spent on frontline services such as parks, road repairs, libraries, children's services and adult social care.
- Figure 1 below presents the consolidated MTFP position for Bournemouth Unitary Authority, Christchurch Borough Council and Poole Unitary Authority.

Figure 1: Consolidated MTFP Position, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

	2018/19 £000s	2019/20 £000s	2020/21 £000s	Total £000s
Bournemouth	1,457	4,146	7,514	13,117
Christchurch	0	134	97	231
Poole	1,001	4,361	2,516	7,878
Annual Funding Gap	2,458	8,641	10,127	21,226
Cumulative Funding Gap	2,458	11,099	21,226	

- Before consideration is even given to the impact of the Christchurch element of the Dorset County Council budget the following key information can be established for the new Urban Unitary Authority;
 - £235m Net Budget Requirement
 - £0.6bn Balance Sheet Net Assets
- No attempt has been made in Figure 1 to breakdown the MTFP position of Dorset County Council (DCC) into the two new Unitary Councils. Figure 2 below shows the total forecast funding gap for DCC.

Figure 2: MTFP Dorset County Council

	2018/19 £000s	2019/20 £000s	2020/21 £000s	Total £000s
Dorset County Council	10,900	15,300	7,700	33,900
Annual Funding Gap	10,900	15,300	7,700	33,900
Cumulative Funding Gap	10,900	26,200	33,900	

DCC have developed a Forward Together programme designed to support the deliver of the required savings with particular emphasis on the current 2018/19 budget gap and the consequences of any ongoing implications associated with in-year pressures.

7. The disaggregation work-stream should enable the forecast MTFP deficit of DCC to be broken down between the two new Unitaries.
8. The information presented in Figures 1 and 2 is based on the MTFPs of each Council as published and in the public domain. Members should note the following caveats in regards to this information;
 - a) No attempt has been made to adjust the information to ensure each MTFP is on a consistent basis. However significant progress has been made since February 2016 in ensuring the MTFPs of Bournemouth and Poole Unitary Councils are on a consistent as a consequence of having a shared Chief Financial Officer.
 - b) Although broadly similar, each Council follows a slightly different annual budget setting process and therefore maybe at different stages in confirming the actions necessary to enable a balanced 2018/19 budget to be presented or any further future year MTFP contributions.
 - c) The MTFPs for the three upper tier Councils have been drawn together based on the planning assumption of a 4.99% Council Tax increase in 2018/19 (1.99% plus a 3% social care precept) and an increase of £5 per year in the Christchurch Borough Councils band D charge.
 - d) 2019/20 is the end of the current four year local government finance settlement. With the suspension in the 2017 Queens' speech, of the 100% business rates reform programme, there is little indication of what the structure of local government funding will be from April 2020 onwards. This is one demonstration of the fact that the MTFPs become less robust as the time period increases.
 - e) Government are though pressing ahead with its Fair Funding Review of Local Government with a view to implementation from 2020/21 onwards. At its crudest this is exploring the relationship between three core issues, the volume of services needed, the cost of those services and the ability to raise income locally. The assumption had previously always been that core government grant funding was designed to fill the gap between these three issues. The risk is that local councils will be pushed further into negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG) which will see even more of the Councils retained business rates redistributed nationally.
9. The intention will be to provide further regular updates to the Joint Committee with the next formal report produced once the 2018/19 budgets of the relevant sovereign Councils have been approved.

Commitment to co-operate

10. A key responsibility of the Shadow Authority (SA) will be to set a financially robust and financially sustainable 2019/20 budget for the new unitary authority. In order to fulfil this requirement the SA will place a significant level of reliance on the financial management and monitoring arrangements of each of the sovereign authorities particularly in regards to their 2018/19 budgets and in actual performance to budget in the build up to the 2019/20 budget setting process.
11. The new unitary council is served well by the culture of strong financial management that already exists in each of the four Councils. The continuation of this approach will be a critical success factor.

12. To support this process it is proposed that the Chief Financial Officers (s151 Officers) now highlight in reports to their sovereign Councils any decisions which will have significant financial implications for the proposed new Unitary Council.
13. It is then proposed that once the Shadow Authority has been established that the Chief Financial Officers highlight to the SA any sovereign Council decisions which will have either a significant financial impact or involves significant financial risk exposure to the new Unitary Council. Such matters will be included in the regular MTFP update reports.

Consultation

14. All Dorset Chief Executives and Dorset Chief Financial Officers have had an opportunity to contribute to the report.

Summary of finance and resourcing implications

15. A set out in the report

Summary of legal implications

16. None specifically related to this report

Summary of human resources implications

17. None specifically related to this report

Summary of environmental impact

18. None specifically related to this report

Summary of equalities and diversity impact

19. None specifically related to this report

Summary of risk assessment

20. A key thread of the Future Dorset submission was the opportunity to best protect public services as the government continues to reduce the funding it gives to local councils.
21. The Chief Financial Officers of each of the sovereign Councils will have a key role in ensuring the Shadow Authority is made aware of any significant financial matters which will impact on the future sustainability of the proposed new unitary authority.

Background papers

22. More detail on the current MTFP positions of each Council can be found on the following publically available papers;

Bournemouth: Cabinet 13 December 2017

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/CouncilMeetings/CommitteeMeetings/Cabinet/2017/12/13/agenda/Agenda-and-reports-package.pdf>

Poole: Cabinet 5 December 2017

<http://ha2.boroughofpoole.com/akspoole/users/public/admin/kab14.pl?operation=SUBMIT&meet=210&cmte=CAB&grpid=public&arc=71>

Christchurch: Resources Committee 25 October 2017

<http://moderngovcbc.christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=287&MId=1041&Ver=4>

Dorset County Council

<http://dorset.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=943&Ver=4>

Appendices

23. None

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

Agenda item

8

Report Subject	Disaggregation
Meeting date	15 th December 2017
Report author	Sarah Longdon ☎01202 633018 ✉ s.longdon@poole.gov.uk
Contributors	Jane Portman, Managing Director, Bournemouth Borough Council Debbie Ward, Chief Executive, Dorset County Council, Andrew Flockhart, Chief Executive, Borough of Poole David McIntosh, Chief Executive, Christchurch Borough Council
Status	Public
Classification	For information for all members
Executive summary	Since the Joint Committee approved the principles for disaggregation at the last meeting on 21 st November, plans have continued to be developed to carry out the work in the required timeframe. The pilot exercise is underway and due to complete in mid-December. The Oversight Group will be mobilised in December. The Task and Finish Group will meet in January. The full schedule of service reviews will start in January 2018.
Recommendations	The Joint Committee is asked to note the progress of the disaggregation planning and high level plan
Reasons for recommendations	To monitor progress of this critical workstream

Background detail

1. The Joint Committee received a report at the last meeting on 21st November 2017 setting out the high level principles and approach to work for the disaggregation of county council services delivered in the Christchurch area. The critical nature of this work was explained in the report, and that it must be completed by the end of June 2018 in order for the budget setting process to take place in both new unitary authorities.
2. Now that the principles guiding this work have been approved, detailed planning has taken place to map out all relevant services, identify the service leads who will carry out the assessments, and create a priority order for the assessments to take place.
3. A draft schedule has been produced that sets out the timetable for the work, starting in January 2018, and allowing for a contingency period of time to review and agree any outstanding queries at the end of the process.
4. A pilot process is underway with the Libraries service to test the process and refine the approach so that the subsequent service assessments can be carried out as efficiently as possible and achieve the planned timescale.
5. The first meeting of the Oversight Group has been arranged for the lead officers who will oversee the process and resolve issues. This group will approve the schedule, review the output of the pilot exercise and agree a set of communications for staff involved in the assessments, members and all staff in general.
6. At the last Joint Committee meeting it was agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group for Disaggregation. The members of this group have been identified and an initial meeting is being arranged for January, when progress of the early work can be assessed. Jan Thurgood, Strategic Director, People Theme, Borough of Poole has been appointed lead officer for this group.
7. Throughout the process progress will be monitored by the Oversight Group, chaired by Debbie Ward, Chief Executive, Dorset County Council and will be reported to the Task and finish Group and the Joint committee.
8. A key component of the plan will be the identification and management of risk. The most important of which is the capacity of the authorities and their relevant services to commit to this work whilst continuing to deliver services and meeting current savings targets.

9. Summary Timeline	
November- December 2017	Libraries service pilot completed
December 2017	Oversight group mobilised
January 2018	Task and Finish Group mobilised
January – March 2018	First iteration of service assessments completed
April – May 2018	Issue resolution and finalisation of disaggregation
June 2018	Final approval by Shadow Authority

Consultation

All Dorset Chief Executives and Dorset S151 officers have been consulted on the plan.

Summary of finance and resourcing implications

It may be necessary to provide supplementary resource by means of backfilling key staff. This will be reported through update reports to the Committee.

Summary of legal implications

None specifically related to this report

Summary of human resources implications

HR officers will be part of the Oversight group and will review the service assessments in terms of HR implications.

Summary of environmental impact

None specifically related to this report

Summary of equalities and diversity impact

HR officers will be part of the Oversight group and will review the service assessments in terms of equalities and diversity implications.

Summary of risk assessment

As risks are identified they will be tracked and monitored through the Oversight Group.

Background papers

None

Appendices

None

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

9

Report Subject	Council Tax Harmonisation
Meeting date	15th December 2017
Report authors	<p>Adam Richens ☎01202 633633 ✉ a.richens@poole.gov.uk</p> <p>Ian Milner ☎01202 795176 ✉ imilner@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk</p>
Contributors	Cllr J Beesley, Cllr M Greene, Cllr M Haines, Cllr T Jamieson, Cllr D Mellor (The Council Tax Harmonisation Task and Finish Group)
Status	Public
Classification	For information for all Members
Executive summary	<p>A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the Council Tax Harmonisation Task and Finish Group in reviewing the options that could be considered in harmonising Council Tax across Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch. The group has worked within the original terms of reference set by this Committee and more recently applied the principles approved by this Committee at its meeting on 21st September 2017.</p> <p>Further work is required and will be influenced by the output of the work-streams reviewing disaggregation and the combining of Medium Term Financial Plans. However, subject to this, the group is confident that, at this point, a strategy can be achieved that ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no Council Taxpayer will see an increase greater than the Government's referendum limit and therefore pay no more than they would have done had there been no LGR;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • harmonisation across all areas is achieved within a period between ten years and as close to five as possible; • Council Taxpayers in the Christchurch area see a freeze or reduction in their Council Tax for a significant period. <p>This report sets out the background to the work recently undertaken, the factors considered and the implications.</p>
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members note the content of the report and request a further update in the new year once the disaggregation and MTFP work has progressed further; 2. Members include within the representation to the Secretary of State confirmation that a Council Tax Harmonisation strategy is well advanced and seeks to ensure that; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no Council Taxpayer will see an increase greater than the Government’s referendum limit and therefore pay no more than they would have done had there been no LGR; • harmonisation across all areas is achieved within ten years; • Council Taxpayers in the Christchurch area see a freeze or reduction in their council tax throughout the harmonisation period:
Reasons for recommendations	To enable the finalising of the financial modelling of the Council Tax harmonisation options to take place within agreed principles.

Background detail

1. At its meeting on 30 October 2017 the Joint Committee resolved that a task and finish group be established to begin developing a Council Tax harmonisation strategy that took into account the issues raised within the report that was presented.
2. The variables that the report identified were:
 - the period over which harmonisation could occur;
 - the increases in Council Tax for Poole and Bournemouth in year one and beyond;
 - the possibility of freezing or reducing Council Tax in Christchurch;
 - the impact of a Town Council precept in Christchurch;
 - Council Tax foregone.
3. A process of recalculating outcomes under alternative assumptions to determine the impact of the variables under sensitivity analysis was undertaken. The initial output of this was presented to the Task and Finish Group that met on 6 November 2017. Members of the group were content with the approach and requested that further modelling take place.
4. As a result 18 models were developed that blended the variables to produce different outcomes. The outcomes ranged from:
 - harmonisation between 1 and 10 years;
 - increases in year 1 for Council Taxpayers in Bournemouth and Poole between 1.27% and 5.44%;
 - the freezing of Council Tax in Christchurch for up to 7 years to reductions of 8.24% in year 1
 - having a £25 Christchurch Town Council precept to not having one at all
 - Council Tax foregone between £1m to £65m over a 10 year period
5. At the Joint Committee on 21 November 2017 it was resolved, "*That while recognising that the Task and Finish Group on Council Tax Harmonisation needs to look at all available options, this Joint Committee urges the Task and Finish Group to prioritise options which: -*
 - *ensure that no Borough's Council Tax levels will rise at a rate exceeding the Government's referendum limits; and*
 - *include freezes and/or reductions to the absolute level of Council Tax paid by Christchurch residents.*"
6. The Task and Finish Group met directly after this meeting and applied the resolved position to the modelling in order to eliminate those that did not meet this specific criteria. Of the 18 initial models 5 were identified as fitting within the parameters agreed by the Joint Committee.

7. These models will undergo a further full due diligence process and as mentioned earlier may be influenced by the output of disaggregation and MTFP strategies.
8. There is a clear indication, however, that the principles agreed by the Joint Committee can be met, with outcomes that show that:
 - Harmonisation could be undertaken by the end of year 7;
 - Poole Council Taxpayers would see an annual increase below the referendum limit. An increase of approximately £29 per annum for 7 years for a band D property at **current** referendum limits;
 - Bournemouth Council Taxpayers could see an increase lower than the referendum limit. An increase of approximately £24 per annum for 7 years for a band D property at **current** referendum limits;
 - Christchurch Council Taxpayers could see a saving of approximately £948 over the 7 year period based on a band D property at **current** referendum limits;
 - Council Tax foregone would start at £1m in year 1 and increase to £8.4m by year 10. The forecast savings of a Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch unitary are estimated at this stage to be £10.3m per annum.
9. The timescales as to exactly when the strategy needs to be agreed is still to be confirmed with DCLG but a recent letter to Chief Executives and the Managing Director stated *'during this period of representation following the minded to announcement, Dorset Councils may wish to begin considering equalisation (harmonisation) arrangements, and to include in any representation they might make to the Secretary of State an indication of the arrangements they would like to see'*.
10. **Summary** – The Task and Finish Group are confident that the modelling undertaken has been comprehensive in considering a wide range of options and that in the knowledge of the output of the disaggregation and MTFP work-streams will be able to recommend a strategy that fits with the resolution of the Joint Committee.

Consultation

11. The Chief Executives and Managing Director have had the opportunity to contribute to the report.

Summary of finance and resourcing implications

12. None specifically related to this report.

Summary of legal implications

13. None specifically related to this report.

Summary of human resources implications

14. None specifically related to this report.

Summary of environmental impact

15. None specifically related to this report.

Summary of equalities and diversity impact

16. None specifically related to this report.

Summary of risk assessment

17. A harmonisation strategy must be agreed by the Joint Committee in order to ensure the parliamentary order can be progressed.

Background papers

18. None.

Appendices

19. None.

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

10

Report Subject	The Structural Change Order – Report of the Task and Finish Group
Meeting date	15 December 2017
Report Author	Andrew Flockhart, Chief Executive, Borough of Poole
Contributors	Members of the Task and Finish Group – Cllrs Mellor (Chairman), Challinor, Dunlop, M Greene (sub) and Flagg. Tanya Coulter, Monitoring Officer, Bournemouth & Poole
Status	Public
Classification	For decision by all members of the Committee
Executive summary	The report details the Task and Finish Group's responses to nine questions which relate to issues in the Order and upon which the DCLG has asked for the Joint Committee's views. Some issues require further clarification with DCLG before the Group can consider them fully. A further report in January is suggested.
Recommendations	That the Joint Committee: 1. Agree the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group as set out in this report and that these decisions are communicated to the DCLG. 2. Request the Task and Finish Group to consider the other issues about the Order which are not yet resolved and to report back to the Committee on these.
Reason for Recommendations	To enable the Committee to contribute to the development of the Structural Change Order before it is laid before Parliament.

Background detail

1. At its meeting on 21 November, the Committee established a Task and Finish Group to work with officers on the input to the Structural Change Order (the Order) and report back to the Committee.
2. The Group has met and considered questions about the Order which are detailed below. The Group determined a view on the questions and this has shaped their recommendations to the Committee.

The Name of the New Authority

3. The Order must include a name for the new local authority. The name presented in the Order will be used in respect of all meetings, minutes and legal documentation.

Question 1: Do Members want, for the purposes of the Order, to suggest a name using a combination of the names of the existing local authorities in the area?

The Group recommends that the name comprises a combination of the names of the existing local authorities in the area.

Question 2: Given that (the Group's) answer to Q1 is yes, which criteria, if any, would Members recommend is used to arrange the names of the three towns?

The Group recommends that we maintain the practice of arranging the names in alphabetical order and, as such, is Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

The Shadow Authority

4. Whilst the Committee is being asked for a view on whether or not to have a Shadow Authority it is the only suitable vehicle for the reorganisation in this area. This is because all but one of the existing authorities in the area will be dissolved and there will be no continuing authority in the conurbation area. (In the Dorset area the County Council will continue and will be able to "host" the implementation executive.)

Question 3: Does the Group agree that a Shadow Authority is the appropriate vehicle?

The Group recommends that a Shadow Authority is created.

5. The Shadow Authority will consist of all members of the councils of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. This would lead to a membership of 120 comprising 54 Members from Bournemouth, 42 from Poole and 24 from Christchurch.

Question 4: Do Members agree that all 120 members of the three existing councils for the area should be members of the Shadow Authority?

The Group recommends that all 120 members of the three existing councils for the area should be members of the Shadow Authority

6. The Group considered the title, size and the role of the Committee of the Shadow Authority. The Committee will take responsibility for planning the creation of the new authority including its budget and ensuring all services are delivered on “day one”.
7. The Committee will not have any executive responsibilities in relation to the operation of the existing councils. The Shadow Authority and the Committee will have some continuing responsibilities after vesting day up until the election of the new council in May 2019. Further information will be obtained about this from the DCLG
8. The Group considered the relative roles and responsibilities and the interface between the work of the Joint Committee and the Shadow Authority’s Committee. The Group noted that:
 - a. The Joint Committee will cease to function on the inception of the Shadow Authority.
 - b. The Shadow Authority will dissolve after the council elections in May 2019.
9. Officers are seeking clarification from the DCLG on the extent to which the Committee can take non-executive decisions such as the appointment of a Chief Executive and approving key policies and which decisions will need to be referred to the full Shadow Authority.
10. The Task and Finish Group is taking advice on options for how the Leader and Shadow Executive Committee of the new council are selected. The Group will consider the advice and report back on this to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

Question 5: In which way do Members wish to suggest the Committee for the Shadow Authority is established and operates?

The Group recommends that the Committee is called a Shadow Executive Committee and that it comprises 16 Members reflecting the principles which shaped the Joint Committee which provide for a balance of representation from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

The Group noted that there will be a need for the Shadow Executive Committee to engage representatives of Dorset County Council and that a means of doing

so needs to be developed and confirmed. Officers will seek further information about this from the DCLG and the Group will consider this matter further

11. The Shadow Authority will need to operate with a Constitution and Standing Orders. The Order could set out that one of the constituent council's Constitution & Standing Orders is to be used for the purposes of the Shadow Authority. At present the Joint Committee operates using Bournemouth Council's Constitution and Standing Orders. The Group considered the option of operating with any one of the three Councils' Constitution & Standing Orders

Question 6: Which of the constituent councils' Constitution and Standing Orders are members content for the Shadow Authority to use?

The Group recommends that the Shadow Authority and Committee operate with Bournemouth Council's Constitution and Standing Orders.

12. The Group noted that Members can determine their preference for the scrutiny arrangements. It can be specified in the Order that either there will be a scrutiny committee consisting of a certain number of members elected by the Shadow Authority (SA) or by the local authorities. Or this decision could be left for the SA at its first meeting.

Question 7: Would Members wish to recommend that the Order includes the scrutiny arrangements or that this matter is left to the first meeting of the SDA to determine?

The Group recommends that the matter of scrutiny arrangements is left for the Shadow Authority to determine when it is established.

13. The Group considered the need to make arrangements for the location and venue for the first meeting of the Shadow Authority which could take place in the spring or early summer of 2018. Given the number of people who would attend the meeting and the likely public interest in it, a suitable, sufficiently large and accessible meeting venue will be necessary.

Question 8: Are Members content that officers establish a process now to search for and make provisional bookings at a venue in 2018?

The Group recommends that officers start to find and book a venue that is suitable for the Shadow Authority to meet in.

Other Matters

14. The Group considered a further matter which relates to the legal status of the new Authority. It can be a Borough council with County functions (currently the

position of Poole and Bournemouth) or could be a County council with District functions. The latter will be the case for the new Dorset unitary council as the County will be a continuing authority. There is minimal difference in law. The Borough with county functions enables greater flexibility in terms of timing of elections and therefore is recommended, and is also consistent with the current two unitary councils in the area concerned.

Question 9: Is the suggestion that the new authority be a Borough with County functions agreeable to Members?

The Group recommends that the legal status of the new authority is a Borough Council with County functions.

15. The Group considered electoral arrangements for the new authority and noted that a further and separate report on this will be presented to the Joint Committee for its consideration.

Background Papers

[Report on the Structural Change Order](#) to the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch Joint Committee on 21 November 2017

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Joint Committee

11

Report Subject	Electoral Arrangements
Meeting date	15 December 2017
Report Author	Andrew Flockhart, Chief Executive, Borough of Poole
Contributors	David McIntosh, Chief Executive, EDDC and Christchurch BC Jonathan Mair, Monitoring Officer, Dorset CC Tanya Coulter, Monitoring Officer, Bournemouth & Poole Richard Jones, Monitoring Officer EDDC and Christchurch BC
Status	Public
Classification	For the information of all members of the Committee Recommendation 2 for decision by Full members
Executive summary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A full local government electoral review in Dorset could be achieved subject to the actions described in this report. It would offer benefits in supporting the creation of a new council in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and in Dorset. 2. A fall back position will, as always, be included in the Order. The size of the proposed new council needs to be confirmed. DCLG expects the size of the council in the fall back arrangements and that proposed to the LGBCE will be the same as or very similar to those in the case submitted. 3. To enable these outcomes a lot of work needs to be done with the guidance of the Joint Committee. Officers need to resolve the capacity issues to deliver this work. 4. Clearly Members need to be involved in the development of the warding proposals to be submitted in May. It is suggested that a Task and Finish Group is established to support this work and report back to the Committee.

Recommendations	<p>That the Joint Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the report on electoral arrangements that could be put in place for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area in the event of the Secretary of State making a final decision to implement the local government reorganisation proposals in Dorset and Parliament approving the legislation. 2. Consider whether to establish a Task and Finish Group to work with officers to develop the work described in this report. 3. Request a further report on this at its meeting in January
Reason for Recommendations	To enable the Committee to contribute to the development of the electoral arrangements that could be proposed for the new council in the event that the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with reorganisation and Parliament approves the necessary legislation.

Background detail

5. At its meeting on 21 November, the Committee approved a Forward Plan which included an item for consideration on 15 December on the possible electoral arrangements for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole authority.
6. Officers have consulted with DCLG officials about this.
7. If the Secretary of State decides to implement and the secondary legislation is approved by Parliament, the proposal for reorganisation would require new electoral arrangements. A review of boundaries within Dorset would support the creation of new governance model in the two new unitary councils. However, the deliverability of a local government electoral review in the time available would be very challenging and may not be feasible without bespoke arrangements.
8. A Structural Change Order (the Order) presented to Parliament would include a fall back electoral arrangement. This would be based on existing wards and divisions. Whilst this would not offer the advantages of a full electoral review it could be achieved. The fall back electoral arrangements would apply only if a Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) electoral review had not been completed in time for the election.
9. It should be noted that any decision about a fall back electoral arrangement would be a matter entirely for the Secretary of State, subject to Parliamentary approval. Equally in preparing the fall back provisions DCLG will have

discussions locally with those implementing the proposal. Such fall back arrangements could include the merging of wards if required to accommodate better electoral equality.

10. In the event that the Order is presented to Parliament it will include a specific number of Members for both new councils. These are likely to be the same as or very similar to the numbers presented in the case for change submitted with the proposal and upon which the Secretary of State has based his statement to Parliament that he is minded to implement the proposal for restructuring local government in Dorset subject to Parliamentary approval.
11. The LGBCE cannot start any work on an electoral review until the Order comes into force. This could be between March and June 2018. A local government electoral review normally takes between 16-18 months which includes a preliminary phase of information gathering. DCLG will coordinate this initial work to allow the review to be completed in time for implementation in 2019.
12. In the event of the Secretary of State taking a final decision to implement the proposal and Parliament approving the necessary legislation, the LGBCE could undertake an electoral review provided that the councils have undertaken with DCLG some preliminary work to prepare and forward to DCLG three sets of information:
 - i. A 5 year electoral forecast (to November 2023)
 - ii. The size of both councils – formulated by the councils following the LGBCE's published guidance – together with a rationale
 - iii. Proposals for ward boundaries developed by the councils
13. DCLG would need to receive the first two sets of information by 31 January 2018.
14. The third set of information should be submitted to DCLG by early May 2018.
15. In order to avoid wasteful work it is suggested that the Councils use the LGBCE guidance in carrying out work on the number of councillors. In doing this three key factors need to be taken account of in determining the size of a council i.e. the capacity:
 - i. To form an executive body to lead an administration
 - ii. To enable scrutiny and representation of the authority
 - iii. To enable relationships with the electorate at ward/division level
16. The Shadow Authority would be expected to calculate and justify the size of the proposed council in a cogently presented case. There are examples elsewhere nationally that can be studied and learned from.

17. As for the proposals for ward boundaries, more than one set of proposals could be received. The Shadow Authority could consult on its proposals.
18. In the event that the Secretary of State makes a final decision to implement the reorganisation it is likely for the purposes of the Order that he will decide on the size of each council in the light of the councils' submission in February 2017, and having regard to the LGBCE's guidance.
19. In the event that Parliament approves the Order and it is made by early June the LGBCE will proceed with the full review, drawing on the preliminary work which the councils, with DCLG, will have undertaken. Prior to that date, all work on electoral arrangements would be led by the DCLG.
20. In these circumstances the LGBCE could issue draft recommendations (for consultation) in June. For the review to be viable final recommendations would need to be made in November 2018. The LGBCE Order would be laid in Parliament (for 40 days) after then. The LGBCE's final recommendations cannot be altered.

Background Papers

[Report on the Structural Change Order](#) to the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch Joint Committee on 21 November 2017.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE JOINT COMMITTEE – FORWARD PLAN

What is the subject?	What is the issue?	When is the issue going to the Joint Committee?	Who are the key people/groups to be consulted before the decision is made	Council officer writing the report/Member providing report	Is the report likely to be considered in private i.e. it contains confidential or exempt information?
Programme Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on the status of the programme.	15 December 2017	Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Julian Osgathorpe	No
Structural Change Order	To consider a report from the Programme Board on decisions required for the Structural Change Order.	15 December 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No
Council Tax Harmonisation	To consider a report from the Task and Finish group on modelling.	15 December 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, Council Tax Harmonisation Task & Finish Group	Adam Richens / Ian Milner	No
Disaggregation – Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress.	15 December 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Executive/Strategic/Coporate Directors, Service Managers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Sarah Longdon	No

What is the subject?	What is the issue?	When is the issue going to the Joint Committee?	Who are the key people/groups to be consulted before the decision is made	Council officer writing the report/Member providing report	Is the report likely to be considered in private i.e. it contains confidential or exempt information?
Consolidated Medium Term Financial Plans (MTFPs)	To consider a report from the Section 151 Officers on an outline MTFP for the BCP Unitary Authority	15 December 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Adam Richens / Ian Milner	No
Electoral Arrangements	To consider a update from the Monitoring Officers / Executive Lead Officer on the possible Electoral arrangements for the BCP Unitary Authority	15 December 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, CLG Officials, Electoral Commission, Programme Board/Team.	Tanya Coulter	No
January 2018					
Programme Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on the status of the Programme.	15 January 2017	Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Julian Osgathorpe	No
Structural Change Order	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress Prior to submission to DCLG for review	15 January 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No
Council Tax Harmonisation	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	15 January 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, Council Tax Harmonisation Task & Finish Group	Adam Richens / Ian Milner	No

What is the subject?	What is the issue?	When is the issue going to the Joint Committee?	Who are the key people/groups to be consulted before the decision is made	Council officer writing the report/Member providing report	Is the report likely to be considered in private i.e. it contains confidential or exempt information?
Disaggregation Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	15 January 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Executive/Strategic/Corporate Directors, Service Managers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Sarah Longdon	No
Electoral Arrangements	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	15 January 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No
February 2018					
Programme Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on the status of the Programme.	21 February 2017	Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Julian Osgathorpe	No
Structural Change Order	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	21 February 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No
Council Tax Harmonisation	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	21 February 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, Council Tax Harmonisation Task & Finish Group	Adam Richens / Ian Milner	No
Disaggregation Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	21 February 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Executive/Strategic/Corporate Directors, Service Managers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Sarah Longdon	No

What is the subject?	What is the issue?	When is the issue going to the Joint Committee?	Who are the key people/groups to be consulted before the decision is made	Council officer writing the report/Member providing report	Is the report likely to be considered in private i.e. it contains confidential or exempt information?
Electoral Arrangements	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	21 February 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No
Chief Executive Appointment Process	To consider a report on the process for the appointment of the Chief Executive	21 February 2017	Members of the Joint Committee, Monitoring Officers and HR Officers	Tanya Coulter	No
Civic Arrangements	To consider a report from the Task and Finish Group	21 February 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No
March 2018					
Programme Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on the status of the Programme.	20 March 2017	Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Julian Osgathorpe	No
Consolidated Medium Term Financial Plans (MTFPs)	To consider a report from the Section 151 Officers on the confirmed position from each MTFP for the BCP Unitary Authority	20 March 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Adam Richens / Ian Milner	No
Structural Change Order	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	20 March 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No

What is the subject?	What is the issue?	When is the issue going to the Joint Committee?	Who are the key people/groups to be consulted before the decision is made	Council officer writing the report/Member providing report	Is the report likely to be considered in private i.e. it contains confidential or exempt information?
Council Tax Harmonisation	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress / approve the strategy for CTax Harmonisation	20 March 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, Council Tax Harmonisation Task & Finish Group	Adam Richens / Ian Milner	No
Disaggregation Update	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	20 March 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Executive/Strategic/Corporate Directors, Service Managers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers.	Sarah Longdon	No
Electoral Arrangements	To consider a report from the Programme Board on progress	20 March 2017	Chief Executives/Managing Director, Monitoring Officers, Programme Board/Team, Section 151 Officers, CLG Officials.	Tanya Coulter	No