

## **Question from Nick Ireland to the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources regarding LGR Programme Costs**

### Question

Why is this report only being presented as an urgent item published today (14 January 2019) when the consequences of the decision taken at the Shadow Executive meeting in December were known immediately?

What assurances can be given that we won't be asked to fork out more for the LGR programme before April?

### Answer

The simple answer to the first question is that it was missed due to human error, with everyone so busy and the Christmas break. The Shaping Dorset team assumed Dorset County Council would pick up the required approval automatically, but that did not happen and it was not until January's Programme Board that the need for a sovereign council decision was raised. It should have been spotted, but it was not; apologies.

The second question is more challenging, but perhaps it is more concerned with assurance around the *overall* cost of the programme rather than costs accruing before 1 April?

We have anticipated some additional costs from the early commencement of the Exec Directors and I believe that the Programme Director's report to the SEC sought to ensure the request covered all expected costs insofar as they were known or anticipated.

It is also right to point out that the scope of convergence has grown over time progressively moving to encompass contribution levels 2 to 6. As well as some new officers arriving earlier than budgeted we have also crystallised redundancy costs in 2018/19 that were not originally expected until 2019/20.

However, exceeding anticipated costs this financial year in this situation is good not bad. With some activities - like Convergence - the earlier we invest the earlier we make savings, giving us more money to spend on front line services. Other events, like the early arrival of new staff will allow us to be more effective in the new organisation.

We will continue to manage and monitor the costs closely.