

Shadow Dorset Council

Committee: Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: Tuesday, 8 January 2019
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Committee Rooms A/B, South Walks House,
South Walks Road, Dorchester, DT1 1EE

Membership:

T Jones (Chairman), C Brooks (Vice-Chair), S Bartlett, K Brookes, R Bryan, M Byatt, S Christopher, C Finch, S Gibson, B Goringe, N Lacey-Clarke, R Nowak, J Sewell, J Somper, J Tanner and M Wiggins

Chief Executive (Designate) for the Dorset Council: Matt Prosser

For more information about this agenda please telephone Democratic Services on 01305 252209 or email lwatson@dorset.gov.uk

For more information about the scrutiny items please telephone Lee Ellis (Scrutiny Officer) 01202 795251 or email lellis@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk

This agenda and reports are also available on the Council's website at www.dorsetareacouncils.co.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting with the exception of any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. **Please note** that if you attend a committee meeting and make oral representations to the committee your name, together with a summary of your comments will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes, which are the formal record of the meeting, will be available to view in electronic and paper format, as a matter of public record, for a minimum of 6 years following the date of the meeting.

Disabled access is available for all of the council's committee rooms. Hearing loop facilities are available. Please speak to a Democratic Services Officer for assistance in using this facility.

Recording, photographing and using social media at meetings

The council is committed to being open and transparent in the way it carries out its business whenever possible. Anyone can film, audio-record, take photographs, and use social media such as tweeting and blogging to report the meeting when it is open to the public, so long as they conform to the Council's protocol, a copy of which can be obtained from the Democratic Services Team.

A G E N D A

Page No.

1 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3 MINUTES

5 - 10

To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 December 2018.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public questions or statements on the business of the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the procedure rules as set out in the Shadow Dorset Council Constitution.

5 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHT REPORT

To review the latest Programme Highlight Report, to be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee on 14 January 2019.

A copy of the report will be added to this agenda as a supplement, in advance of the meeting.

6 READINESS OF CRITICAL/KEY SERVICES

To receive a verbal overview of issues relating to the readiness of critical/key services.

Members can refer to the information contained within the Programme Highlight Report (agenda item 5) to assist with discussion on this item.

7 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

11 - 46

The Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment

on the proposal set out at 4.1 of the report. Committee's feedback will be presented for consideration by the Shadow Executive Committee at its February 2019 meeting.

8 SHADOW OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

47 - 56

To consider the work programme for the committee for 2018/19.

To review the Shadow Executive Committee Forward Plan.

All members of the Shadow Dorset Council receive notification when Shadow Executive Committee agendas are published on Mod.Gov and the Shadow Dorset Council website. Members of the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee can review the items to be considered on each agenda and raise issues for review or comment to the Shadow Executive Committee as appropriate.

9 URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be specified in the minutes.

This page is intentionally left blank

Shadow Dorset Council

SHADOW OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 3 DECEMBER 2018

Present: Cllrs T Jones (Chairman), K Brookes, R Bryan, M Byatt, S Gibson, B Goringe, N Lacey-Clarke, J Sewell, J Somper and M Wiggins

Apologies: Cllrs C Brooks, S Bartlett, C Finch, R Nowak and J Tanner

Also present: Cllr A Alford, Cllr C Reynolds, Cllr P Shorland and Cllr A Thacker

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Natalie Adam (Service Manager - Advisory Service), Keith Cheesman (LGR Programme Director), David Fairbairn (Solicitor), Robert Firth (Corporate Manager - Legal Services), Aileen Powell (Unison representative), Lee Ellis (Scrutiny Officer), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

CHANGE TO ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman noted that he would be changing the order of agenda items 6 and 7 so that the item on 'Programme Highlight Report' would be considered before the item on the 'Dorset Council Constitution'.

A comment was raised in respect of the attendance of members of the committee at meetings and it was noted that relevant members had been contacted about this.

58. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

In response to a question, it was noted that members did not need to declare an interest in respect of the Code of Conduct contained within the draft Dorset Council Constitution, to be considered on the agenda.

59. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Bryan abstained from agreeing the minutes as a correct record as he had not been present at the meeting.

60. Public participation

There were no representations from members of the public.

61. TUPE - Progress to date

The committee received a presentation with regard to the TUPE process which covered:

- The key date in the process was 31 March 2019, after which staff would transfer to the new organisation
- Background and context - The HR Workstream Board was the key group in order to ensure that deadlines were being met and risks assessed. TUPE activity was being led through the TUPE Working Group. In addition, there were links to other workstreams, for example, ICT. Close working was undertaken with trade unions
- Legal position and process including TUPE legislation, working with other councils, getting the best approach for employees and work being undertaken with schools
- Current position – including the TUPE plan, meetings of the workstream, meetings with managers and trade unions, employee briefings, housekeeping for managers and communication of proposed TUPE destinations, standstill and vacancy management, consultation, letters and formal transfer
- Next steps – TUPE list data, measures and consultation and a timeline for action
- Unison were working hard with Human Resources colleagues and were in a position where they understood the process. There needed to be further work in order to agree the position regarding terms and conditions and TUPE measures.

Members raised questions in respect of the presentation and the following points were noted:

- A report would be taken to the Shadow Executive Committee with regard to the terms and conditions package and there would also be the opportunity to feed in the trade union comments
- Although there had been some issues in the early stages of the work, it was felt that the discussions between HR and the unions were productive, with both parties having an understanding and working towards doing the best for the new Council and employees
- Under TUPE legislation, staff would transfer to the new organisation with their current terms and conditions (subject to any measures). There would be a move over to new terms and conditions over a period of time where there was an economic, technical or organisational reason to do so
- In response to a question it was noted that there didn't appear to be any issues with recruitment and retention as a result of the change, beyond what would normally be expected
- The experiences of other unitary councils such as Cornwall and Wiltshire had been reflected upon, although the position in Dorset was different as it was to be the creation of a whole new council on a much larger scale than had previously been undertaken elsewhere

- It was noted that service continuity work was being handled by the theme boards working alongside the programme team
- Employee briefings were being led by the Chief Executive Designate which would include information on the impact of the work being undertaken and budgetary impacts. It was noted that the unions would be involved in the process

62. **Programme Highlight Report including SWAP Assurance report**

The Programme Director provided a verbal update in respect of the latest Programme Highlight Report, which would be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee on 17 December 2018. The report was not available for this meeting as the agenda for the Shadow Executive Committee would not be published until 7 December. There was no report from South West Audit Partnership at this time with their next report being the Gateway 2 report to be available in January 2019.

A number of comments were made with regard to the report not being available for the committee to view for this meeting. In response, the Programme Director noted that the report was currently being finalised and would be considered by the Programme Board prior to it being published in the Shadow Executive Committee agenda on Friday. The impact of the Shadow Executive Committee changing the date of their meeting was recognised and the Chairman indicated that he would be writing to the Leader of the Shadow Dorset Council to raise this issue. A copy of the reply would be provided to members of the committee.

The Programme Director noted that overall progress remained at Amber. There were two red milestones although it was noted that these were in relation to strategic priorities and would not impact on the arrangements for day 1. There were some issues with regard to the setting of the Budget with some pieces of work outstanding and a report to be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee with regard to releasing money from the budget. A series of communication pieces were to be sent out and there was confidence that outstanding issues would be resolved.

63. **Dorset Council Constitution**

The committee considered a report with regard to work undertaken to draft a Constitution for the new Dorset Council. A copy of the draft Constitution was provided for members' consideration. The draft Constitution had been developed with the Governance Working Group, which had agreed a number of principles to underpin the drafting of the various key parts of the Constitution. The draft Constitution was still work in progress, being subject to continued consultation with members and officers. The Governance Working Group would be meeting on 19 December 2018 to consider the comments from this committee and a member briefing and workshop to be held on 13 December. In addition a proposed draft committee structure was provided to members

The Legal Services Manager (Dorset Councils Partnership) provided an overview of the key principles which had been used to develop the draft Constitution, which included the preference of the Governance Working Group for a lean and light approach, consistency in use of terminology in the document, size of committees, decision making reserved to Full Council, Executive and overview and scrutiny arrangements.

Members considered the issues arising from the presentation and the draft document and during discussion the following points were raised:

- The Executive would be formed of the Leader and between 2 to 9 other members
- The detail around area forums was still work in progress and would be developed by the new Council including how they linked with town and parish councils and other local area organisations
- Relevant issues around emergencies and contingencies would be dealt with by the Executive or Full Council as appropriate and there was a need to consider officer delegations in this area with an appropriate reporting mechanism
- The draft committee structure included a body for the scrutiny of health matters however it was recognised that there may be a joint committee for the whole of Dorset
- A full discussion was held with regard to the proposed arrangements for area planning and a map of the proposed area boundaries was shown to members. The Governance Working Group had considered a range of options and had concluded that the option presented provided the best way forward and fitted in with the overarching principle of having a lean and light structure. A comment was made that it would be useful for members to see the background information and range of options considered and it was agreed that this information could be provided to members of the committee. Various comments were made with regard to the size of the areas, with some feeling that the areas were too large and would take away from local decision making and a comment was made with regard to the large workload for these committees. An alternative view was expressed that the areas should be kept as proposed so that the committees had a more strategic overview of issues in the Council and recognising the role that town and parish councils played in the planning process. It was felt that these issues could be explored with members during the member briefing and workshop session to take place
- It was expected that there would be a further review of the Constitution after a period of time
- Members considered arrangements for consideration of matters relevant to Revenues and Benefits and joint arrangements would be included in the Constitution. A point was noted that there was a proposal for a pan-Dorset arrangement
- Area arrangements were work in progress and was another area that could be focused on at the member briefing and workshop
- In response to a question it was noted that the work streams had been looking at the following themes – people, place, resources

and health. Place covered the regulatory work on the council including public realm

- A comment was made with regard to the proposed size of the Staffing Committee (5 members) and whether due to the small membership, there would be issues with being quorate? In response, it was not anticipated that the committee would sit very often but the point would be taken away and further considered
- There were opportunities for all members to have a role in the proposed committee structure which included joint committees and panels, however a point was noted that some members felt excluded
- In response to a question it was noted that decision making by individuals through the executive arrangements could be undertaken but that this could not apply to non-executive members. Portfolio holders could establish engagement with other members or establish advisory panels but they could not delegate the power to take decisions to non-executive members
- Consideration was given to the policies that would need to go to Full Council for approval and those that would not
- A comment was made with regard to powers proposed to be given to the Monitoring Officer and a concern was expressed that the Monitoring Officer could have unilateral authority to change the Constitution without consultation. It was noted that when this had been considered there was recognition that the Monitoring Officer shouldn't have to go through a process for every change to the Constitution. A suggestion was made that changes could be made in consultation with the Leader with the exception of where the Monitoring Officer was making changes in order to follow legal requirements. This comment would be taken away for further consideration as to the wording to be included
- A comment was made that there should be a review of the Constitution after a period of 12 months. In response it was noted that there could be recognition that a review would take place
- Members considered the proposed arrangements for overview and scrutiny and the arrangements for the call-in process. One view expressed was that the call-in process should sit with the Audit and Governance Committee and another view was that call-in should be undertaken by the 4 overview and scrutiny committees
- Members noted the interim committee arrangements for the period from 1 April 2019 until the elections for the Dorset Council in May 2019

64. Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

The Scrutiny Officer noted that a new date for a Special Meeting of the committee to undertake a Call to Account, would be confirmed shortly. A meeting of the committee was scheduled for 8 January 2019 and a further additional meeting would be arranged for late January/early February 2019 in order to consider the Budget.

Members discussed the arrangements for the special meeting for the Call to Account and how this could best be considered by the committee.

65. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

Duration of meeting: 9.30 - 11.34 am

Chairman

.....

Shadow Dorset Council

Date of Meeting	Shadow Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 8 January 2019 Shadow Executive Committee – 11 February 2019
Lead Member	Councillor Tony Ferrari, Lead Member for Finance
Officer	Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer
Subject of Report	Local Council Tax Support Scheme
Executive Summary	<p>The Shadow Authority will, at its meeting in February 2019, need to agree a Local Council Tax Support scheme for Dorset Council. MHCLG has provided the Council with the concession of not having an aligned scheme until 2021/22. This report considers the benefits of having an aligned scheme for 2019/20 and the opportunities this would bring to help reduce customer confusion and local authority administration.</p> <p>Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment on the process followed and support the proposal that Option B is adopted. The comments of the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported alongside this paper to the next meeting of the Shadow Executive Committee.</p>
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 1</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>This report reviews the Local Council Tax Support Scheme arrangements in place within the predecessor councils, takes account of the evidence contained within the appendices and makes a recommendation from amongst alternative options detailed below.</p>
	<p>Budget:</p> <p>Any costs can be met from existing budgets</p>
	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the LGR approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p>

	Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW
	Other Implications: None
Recommendation	Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to support the proposal that Option B be adopted as the LCTS scheme for Dorset Council
Reason for Recommendation	To help ensure that the Dorset Council Local Council Tax Support scheme treats claimants consistently, is clear to understand and is easy to administer
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix 2 – Details of existing Local Council Tax Support schemes Appendix 3 – Proposed options for the Dorset Council Local Council Tax Support scheme Appendix 4 – Consultation report summary
Background Papers	Existing Local Council Tax Support schemes for East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Councils
Officer Contact	Name: Stuart Dawson Tel: 01305 211925 Email: s.c.dawson@westwey.gov.uk
Date agreed by Lead Member	
Date agreed by Statutory Officers	Matt Prosser – Chief Executive (Designate) Jason Vaughn – Interim Section 151 Officer – 18 December 2018 Jonathan Mair – Interim Monitoring Officer – 18 December 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Council Taxpayers who are on low income can apply for Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) to help them with their Council Tax. Entitlement to LCTS is means tested and based on the circumstances and income of the claimant's household.
- 1.2 Each Council Tax billing authority is required to determine the LCTS scheme for its area. Billing authorities have the discretion to determine the principle factors for their scheme, including the maximum support that will be given to working age claimants. However, government has prescribed that certain claimants (i.e. pensioners and those working age claimants that the billing authority consider to be vulnerable) are protected within the scheme and be entitled to receive support of up to 100% of the Council Tax charge.
- 1.3 Government has developed a "default scheme" for pensioner claimants, which is aligned to the Housing Benefit scheme. Billing authorities are required, as a minimum, to incorporate the default scheme within its own scheme.

- 1.4 With the introduction of LCTS, the Dorset District Councils attempted to agree an aligned scheme across the county from 1 April 2013. However, this was not fully achievable and further changes have been made to the schemes over the intervening years. The current LCTS schemes for the five sovereign Councils are shown at Appendix 2.
- 1.5 The cost of LCTS awards is met from the Council Tax Collection Fund. Government originally provided funding to meet 90% of the estimated awards made in 2013/14. However, this funding was subsequently incorporated as part of the Revenues Support Grant and, as such, has been subject to the changes made to that grant over subsequent years.

2. Current position

- 2.1 The Shadow Authority will need to formally adopt a Dorset Council LCTS scheme for 2019/20 at the Council Tax setting meeting in February 2019. As part of the LGR discussions with MHCLG it was agreed that the Council will be allowed up to two years to agree an aligned LCTS scheme. This was in recognition that significant resources will need to be utilised to successfully implement the new Unitary Council and that there may not, initially, be the capacity to support the creation of an aligned scheme. However, Officers are of the view that there is the capacity within existing resources to create an aligned LCTS scheme from 1 April 2019.
- 2.2 The concession made by MHCLG would allow the Shadow Authority to agree an LCTS scheme which incorporated the existing schemes set out at Appendix 2. However, such a scheme would lead to customer confusion and dissatisfaction as claimants may be treated differently depending on where they live. Implementing an aligned LCTS scheme from 1 April 2019 would allow for all claimants to be treated consistently as well as providing the opportunity to simplify calculation of entitlement from a customer and administration point of view.
- 2.3 Members will also be aware that the wider roll-out of Universal Credit (UC) took place in 2017/18 and that this now covers most people of working age who now make a claim for state benefits. UC entitlement is reviewed monthly having regard to the claimant's (and their household's) actual circumstances and income for the past month. In view of this, claimants who are paid weekly can see their UC change depending on the number of week's salary received in the previous month.

The current LCTS schemes within Dorset look to calculate entitlement on the actual UC received by the claimant. This results in the LCTS award having to be changed for every fluctuation in UC, however small. Moving to an LCTS scheme which was based on an estimated average, rather than actual, UC would simplify the process from a customer perspective. It is believed that more and more Councils are taking this approach to help reduce customer confusion and local authority administration.

- 2.4 The table below provides a breakdown of the current LCTS award for the Dorset Council area.

Claimant Type	LCTS awarded £	Number of claimants	Average award £
Pensioners	10,604,642	9,849	1,076.72

Working age (protected)	7,703, 232	7,057	1,091.57
Working age (not protected)	7,043, 829	8,811	799.44
Total	25,351,703	25,717	985.80

2.5 At its meeting on 17 September 2018, the Shadow Executive Committee agreed that a review of LCTS take place and that customers and key stakeholders be consulted, over the period 15/10/18 to 10/12/18, on the following options.

I. Option A – status quo

Under this option, the Dorset Council LCTS scheme would be based on incorporating the existing sovereign Council schemes. As mentioned earlier, this would result in some claimants being treated more (or less) favourably than others with similar circumstances.

II. Option B – aligned scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (not protected) limited to 90%

Under this option, the Dorset LCTS scheme would be an aligned scheme which would limit the maximum support provided to unprotected working age claimants to 90%. The option would also look to calculate entitlement on an estimated average, rather than actual, UC over a six month period. Protection arrangements would be included allowing a claimant to ask for a review of their entitlement, during that period, if their circumstances had significantly changed.

This option would simplify the process and entitlement from a customer perspective and significantly reduce the administration of the scheme.

III. Option C - aligned scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (not protected) limited to 85%

Under this option, the Dorset LCTS scheme would incorporate the conditions mentioned in Option B but would limit the maximum support provided to unprotected working age claimants to 85%.

Further information about the options is shown at Appendix 3.

2.6 The financial data for the above options is estimated as follows:

	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	LCTS awarded £	Number of claimants	LCTS awarded £	Number of claimants	LCTS awarded £	Number of claimants
Pensioners	10,604,642	9,849	10,604,642	9,849	10,604,642	9,849
Working age (protected)	7,703, 232	7,057	7,703,232	7,057	7,703,232	7,057
Working age (not protected)	7,043, 829	8,811	6,922,075	8,659	6,537,516	8,178
Total	25,351,703	25,717	25,229,949	25,665	24,845,390	25,084

2.7 Those working age claimants who are not protected would see their LCTS reduced by (on average) 25p per week if Option B was implemented and by (on average) £1.09p per week if Option C was implemented.

3. Consultation results

3.1 The Consultation Report Summary is attached at Appendix 4, with the detailed consultation response available by request from the Consultation Team.

3.2 In summary, 382 overall responses were received of which 214 (57%) were from LCTS recipients and 156 (41%) were from Council Taxpayers. The remaining 12 responses were from people representing an organisation or from people who preferred not to say. Overall responses are as follows:

Option	Agree	Neither/don't know	Disagree
Option A	50%	24%	26%
Option B	46%	25%	29%
Option C	20%	29%	51%

3.3 Other key findings from the exercise are:

- I. The majority of those that supported Option A are current LCTS recipients.
- II. The majority of those that supported Option B are not current LCTS recipients.
- III. The majority of those that felt strongly opposed to Option C are current LCTS recipients.
- IV. The majority of those that provided further comments felt that there was a need for one system for efficiency, regardless of where you live.

4. Proposal

4.1 The proposal is that Option B be adopted as the LCTS scheme for Dorset Council for the following reasons.

- I. As Option B is an aligned scheme everyone will be treated consistently regardless of where they live in the Council area (unlike Option A).
- II. Protection will continue to be provided to those of pensionable age and those of working age who are in receipt of prescribed disability benefits or premiums.
- III. Those who are protected will continue to receive maximum support of up to 100%. Those who are not protected will receive maximum support of up to 90%. On average, working age claimants would see their entitlement reduced by 25p per week compared with a reduction, on average, of £1.09p per week if Option C was adopted.
- IV. Those who are in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) will have their LCTS entitlement calculated on an estimated average, rather than actual, UC over a six month period. This will simplify the process from the customer perspective and provide greater certainty over their entitlement. Under the protection arrangements, claimants will be able to request a review of their entitlement if their circumstances have significantly changed.
- V. Option B is, by far, the more efficient to administer out of all of the options considered.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment on the proposal set out at 4.1. Committee's feedback will be presented for consideration by the Shadow Executive at its February 2019 meeting.

EqlA - Full Equality Impact Assessment

Policy or Service to be assessed:

Revenues & Benefits Service – Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS)

Service and lead officer:

Stuart Dawson

Officers involved in the EqlA:

Patrick Lane Business Development Manager

What are you impact assessing?

Existing

New/proposed

Changing/Update/ revision

Other, please list:

Step 2: Scoping – what are you assessing?

Q1: What is the title of your service/strategy/policy/project?

Dorset Council – Council Tax Support Scheme April 2019

Q2: What is the aim of your service/strategy/policy/project?

The Council Tax Support Scheme is a means tested discount scheme which aims to provide financial support to Council Tax payers who are on a low income by making a reduction to their Council Tax bill.

At its meeting on 17 September 2018 the Dorset Shadow Executive agreed to undertake a review of Council Tax Support so that a new scheme can be in place for Dorset Council from 1 April 2019.

A public consultation exercise will take place between 15 October and 10 December 2018 allowing customers and key stakeholders to have the opportunity to comment on the following options:

- **Option A - Status quo**

Under this option, the Dorset Council CTS scheme would be based on incorporating the existing sovereign Council schemes.

- **Option B - aligned scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (not protected) limited to 90%**

Under this option, the Dorset Council CTS scheme would be an aligned scheme which would limit the maximum support provided to unprotected working age claimants to 90%. The scheme would also look to simplify arrangements where the claimant is receiving Universal Credit.

- **Option C - aligned scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (not protected) limited to 85%**

Under this option, the Dorset CTS scheme would incorporate the conditions mentioned in Option B but would limit the maximum support provided to unprotected working age claimants to 85%.

Protection arrangements will continue for those claimants who are Pensioners or who are considered by the Council to be vulnerable. (see question 3 for definition of vulnerable)

Q3: Who does/will it have an impact on? e.g. public, visitors, staff, members, partners?

Any changes to the CTS scheme will impact on those customers in receipt of CTS who are of working age and who are not in a protected group. Any change will also apply to any potential future claimants of CTS. The changes will apply to those people living in the current area covered by East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council.

The following types of claimant are protected and so any changes to the CTS scheme would not apply:

- Pensioners.
- Those receiving Disability Living Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Mobility), Personal Independence Payment, Carers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance Component. (Some claimants who receive these benefits do not always receive the necessary premium if there are other benefits in payment and this provision helps address this anomaly).
- Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension.

There will be a positive impact on those people identified above with protected characteristics.

There will be an impact on staff having to implement the changes and to become familiar with the scheme to ensure they are giving correct information and advice to the public.

Q4: Are there any potential barriers to implementing changes to your service/strategy/policy/project?

The proposed changes are open to public consultation and ultimately Member approval. The need for the council to deliver a balanced budget is likely to be one factor taken into consideration when deciding on the final scheme.

Q5: Who else will be involved in implementing this service/policy service/strategy/policy/project?

The staff of the Revenues & Benefits Service, along with the software supplier who will be required to make the necessary changes to the systems that calculate CTS.

Step 3: Information gathering – what do you need to know about your customers?

Q6: What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your policy or strategy will have an impact on, that is broken down by equality strand?

Age/Disability

- As of August 2018, there were 25,717 households in the new Dorset Council area that received some level of CTS and of these 66% received full protection. These will be people of Pension Credit age and those who are protected because of a disability. Consequently approximately 8,750 households will be affected by the proposed changes.

Gender re-assignment

- There is no published information regarding the number of CTS claimants who have undergone gender re-assignment and is not relevant in assessing eligibility.

Race

- Whilst we offer help with translation services and assistance to complete forms we do not record the race of people claiming CTS. This lack of recording could potentially have a negative impact. Race is not relevant in assessing eligibility.

Religion or belief

- We do not record the religion or belief of people claiming CTS, however this is not relevant when assessing eligibility.

Sex

- Whilst we do record the sex of the person claiming CTS the proposed changes apply regardless of sex.

Sexual orientation

- We do not record the sexual orientation of people claiming CTS, however this is not relevant when assessing eligibility.

Pregnancy and maternity

- In some cases we may be aware that someone claiming CTS is pregnant or on maternity leave by virtue of certain benefits they are claiming however this is not recorded as a separate factor as it is not relevant when assessing eligibility.

Marriage & Civil Partnership

- We do record whether someone claiming CTS is either married or in a civil partnership and would be able to extract this data, however the proposed changes apply to equally to both couples and single claimants.

Q7: Do you need any further information broken down by equality strand to inform this EqlA?

Yes No

If yes, list here and add actions to gather this data to your action plan at Step 5:

Q8: Is there any potential for direct or indirect discrimination?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, please explain how you are going to change this?

Under the proposed changes, and indeed the existing scheme, customers of working age, who are not protected, will receive less Council Tax Support than those of pensionable age, or those with a disability. This could be argued to be positive discrimination on the grounds of age and/or disability, however it is national government policy and is covered by legislation. (The Council Tax Reductions Schemes (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2017).

Step 4: Making a judgement about impacts

Age:

Claimants of CTS who have reached state pension credit qualifying age are not affected by any of the proposed changes.

Unprotected working age claimants will be on average £0.25 per week worse off under Option B and £1.09 per week worse off under Option C.

Disability:

Claimants of CTS who due to their disability receive one of the benefits listed in Q3 continue to be protected and will not be impacted by any of these changes.

Gender re-assignment:

Regardless of whether someone has undergone gender re-assignment anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes.

Race:

Regardless of race anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes.

Religion or belief:

Regardless of religion or belief anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes.

Sex:

- Regardless of sex anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes. It is likely however that the number of female single parents claiming CTS significantly outweighs the number of male single parents and consequently there is likely to be a higher number of females affected than there are males.

Sexual Orientation:

Regardless of sexual orientation anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes.

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Regardless of whether someone is pregnant anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes.

Marriage and Civil Partnerships:

Regardless of whether someone is married or in a civil partnership anyone of working age who is not protected will be impacted by these changes.

Conclusion:

The main impact of the proposed changes (option B or option C) will be an increase in the Council Tax payable and consequently a reduction in the disposable income for unprotected customers who currently pay a minimum of 8% towards their Council Tax charge.

Under Option A the Dorset Council CTS scheme would replicate the existing schemes having regard to where the customer lived. This would mean however that some residents would be treated more favourably than others as a direct result of where they live.

Under Option B unprotected customers would pay a minimum of 10% towards their Council Tax charge and on average would be £0.25 per week (£13 per year) worse off.

Under Option C unprotected customers would pay a minimum of 15% towards their Council Tax charge and on average would be £1.09 per week (£56.68 per year) worse off.

Step 5: Action planning

Step 5: Improvement plan – what are you going to change?

Expand boxes as necessary

Issue	Action	Performance Target (what difference will it make)	Lead Officer	Achieved
Making people aware of the changes	Ensure any agreed changes to the scheme are publicised on D4U	The people likely to be affected by the changes are made aware	Tina Frampton	
Answering queries	Ensure an advice line is available, utilising “Inform”	The people affected will be able to find out answers to their questions	Tina Frampton	

EqIA approved by:

Date:

Review date:

Check with your equality officer for the EqlA signing-off process and for posting the EqlA on the web

This page is intentionally left blank

Existing LCTS schemes

	EDDC Scheme	NDDC scheme	PDC scheme	WDDC scheme	WPBC scheme
Is the scheme a “means tested” scheme and similar to the old Council Tax Benefit scheme (where appropriate)?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Who is protected under the scheme?	<p>Pensioners</p> <p>Those receiving: Disability Premium, Enhanced Disability Premium, Severe Disability Premium, Carer Premium, Disabled Child Premium, Employment Support Allowance Component</p> <p>Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension</p>	<p>Pensioners</p> <p>Those receiving: Disability Premium, Enhanced Disability Premium, Severe Disability Premium, Carer Premium, Disabled Child Premium, Employment Support Allowance Component</p> <p>Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension</p>	<p>Pensioners</p> <p>Those receiving: Disability Living Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Mobility), Personal Independence Payment, Carers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance Component</p> <p>Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension</p>	<p>Pensioners</p> <p>Those receiving: Disability Living Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Mobility), Personal Independence Payment, Carers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance Component</p> <p>Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension</p>	<p>Pensioners</p> <p>Those receiving: Disability Living Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Mobility), Personal Independence Payment, Carers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance Component</p> <p>Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension</p>
What is the maximum LCTS for those that are protected?	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
What is the maximum LCTS for those that are not protected?	91.5% (based on Council Tax liability)	91.5% (based on Council Tax liability)	92% (based on award)	91.5% (based on Council Tax liability)	91.5% (based on Council Tax liability)
Does the scheme provide support for those that have a second adult living with them who is on low income (Second Adult Rebate)?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the scheme include a limit on the lowest amount given?	No	No	No	No	No

What is the maximum period of backdating that can be awarded?	6 months (if good cause is shown)	6 months (if good cause is shown)	1 month (if good cause is shown)	1 month (if good cause is shown)	6 months (if good cause is shown)
Is a Family Premium applied (where appropriate)?	Yes	Yes	No, if it relates to a new claim or new family from 1 April 2017	No, if it relates to a new claim or new family from 1 April 2017	Yes
Is LCTS awarded if the claimant is temporary absent from the UK ?	Yes, for up to 13 weeks (conditions apply). Up to 52 weeks in exceptional cases (conditions apply).	Yes, for up to 13 weeks (conditions apply). Up to 52 weeks in exceptional cases (conditions apply).	Yes, for up to 4 weeks (conditions apply). Up to 52 weeks if the absence relates to a bereavement, receiving medical care, etc.	Yes, for up to 4 weeks (conditions apply). Up to 52 weeks if the absence relates to a bereavement, receiving medical care, etc.	Yes, for up to 4 weeks (conditions apply). Up to 52 weeks if the absence relates to a bereavement, receiving medical care, etc.

LCTS Options

Option A – status quo

Under this option, the Dorset Council LCTS would replicate the existing schemes set out at Appendix 1. As a result, entitlement would be calculated having regard to where the claimant lived (e.g. those resident in the former EDDC area would receive support based on that Council's current LCTS scheme).

Option B - aligned scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (not protected) limited to 90%

Under this option, the Dorset Council LCTS would be aligned as follows:

- The scheme would be means tested and similar to the old Council Tax Benefit scheme (where appropriate)
- Protection would be provided to the following types of claimant:
 - Pensioners
 - Those receiving Disability Living Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Mobility), Personal Independence Payment, Carers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance Component. (Some claimants who receive these benefits do not always receive the necessary premium if there are other benefits in payment. This provision helps address this anomaly)
 - Those in receipt of War Disablement Pension, War Widows Pension or War Widows Disablement Pension.
- The maximum entitlement for protected claimants would be 100%
- The maximum entitlement for those claimants who are not protected would be 90% (based on Council Tax liability)
- The scheme would provide support for those that have a second adult living with them who is on low income (Second Adult Rebate)
- The scheme would not include a limit on the lowest amount given
- The maximum period of backdating that can be awarded is 1 month. (This links with the rules relating to Housing Benefit and should help reduce customer confusion)
- A Family Premium will not be applied in the award calculation if it relates to a new claim or a new family from 1 April 2017. (Also links to the rules relating to Housing Benefit and should help reduce customer confusion)
- If the claimant is temporary absent from the UK up to 4 weeks would be awarded (subject to conditions). However, up to 52 weeks would be awarded if the absence relates to a bereavement, or the claimant receiving medical care, etc. (Again, this links with the rules relating to Housing Benefit and should help reduce customer confusion).
- If the claimant is receiving Universal Credit (UC), LCTS would be awarded for a period of 6 months and calculated on an estimated UC average income for that period. The period would come to an end if UC was no longer in payment. Additionally, the claimant would be entitled to ask for a review of their entitlement, during that period, if their circumstances had significantly changed.

Option C - aligned scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (not protected) limited to 85%

Under this option, the Dorset Council LCTS would be aligned as per Option B (above) but the maximum entitlement for those claimants who are not protected would be 85% (based on Council Tax liability) and not 90%.

Dorset Council Tax Benefit Support Scheme, 2018

Consultation Response Report
Main report without appendices

Produced by Mark Simons
for the Shadow Dorset Council

December 2018

Dorset Council Tax Benefit Support Scheme, 2018

Consultation Response Report

<p>What was the consultation about?</p>	<p>The current two tier system of local government in Dorset is changing from 1 April 2019 and the nine existing councils will be replaced by the following two unitary councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, which will provide services covering that area • Dorset Council, which will provide services covering the rest of the County. <p>As a result of these changes the existing Council Tax Support schemes will effectively cease from that date and Dorset Council will need to agree a new scheme which is affordable, consistent and fair for all residents (not only those that receive support but also those who depend on wider services). This consultation exercise is being undertaken to help obtain feedback on the Council Tax Support scheme options being considered.</p>
<p>Over what period did the consultation run?</p>	<p>The consultation ran for 9 weeks finishing midnight on 10 December 2018.</p>
<p>What consultation methods were used?</p>	<p>The consultation was available both electronically and in paper form from libraries and council offices. The consultation was promoted widely through both the local press and social media. All households currently claiming council tax benefit were written to making them aware of the options being considered and seeking their views.</p>
<p>How many responses were received overall?</p>	<p>382 overall responses were received, with 377 confirming on what basis they were responding. 214 (57%) were responding as benefit claimants 156 (41%) responding as council tax payers and 2 (<1%) representing organisations and 0 (0%) representing local businesses.</p>
<p>How representative is the response to the wider population affected?</p>	<p>The response size is reasonable for a consultation of this type with 382 residents/organisations taking part.</p>
<p>Where will the results be published?</p>	<p>Results will be published on the council's website www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk</p>
<p>How will the results be used?</p>	<p>The feedback will be considered by the Shadow Authority in February 2019 when determining the 2019/20 scheme.</p>
<p>Who has produced this report?</p>	<p>Mark Simons, Consultation Officer DCC/DCP December 2018</p>

Analysis Method: Questions were considered on an individual basis. Overall responses were examined -and also specific responses of respondents who claimed council tax benefit and those who were just responding as council tax payers. The main method of analysis was looking at the percentage of respondents who expressed a view on each question. For several questions the percentage strongly supporting and supporting are calculated. Those opposing and strongly opposing are also recoded. One is taken from the other giving a net agreement figure. This could be positive or negative. A figure of zero would mean an equal number of people supported and opposed a statement.

For each open question the text comments have been studied and coded depending on what issues were raised. The coded comments are then reported on based on the amount of times those individual issues have been raised. Total redacted comments are provided in an appendix. Note: some figures may not sum due to rounding.

About respondents

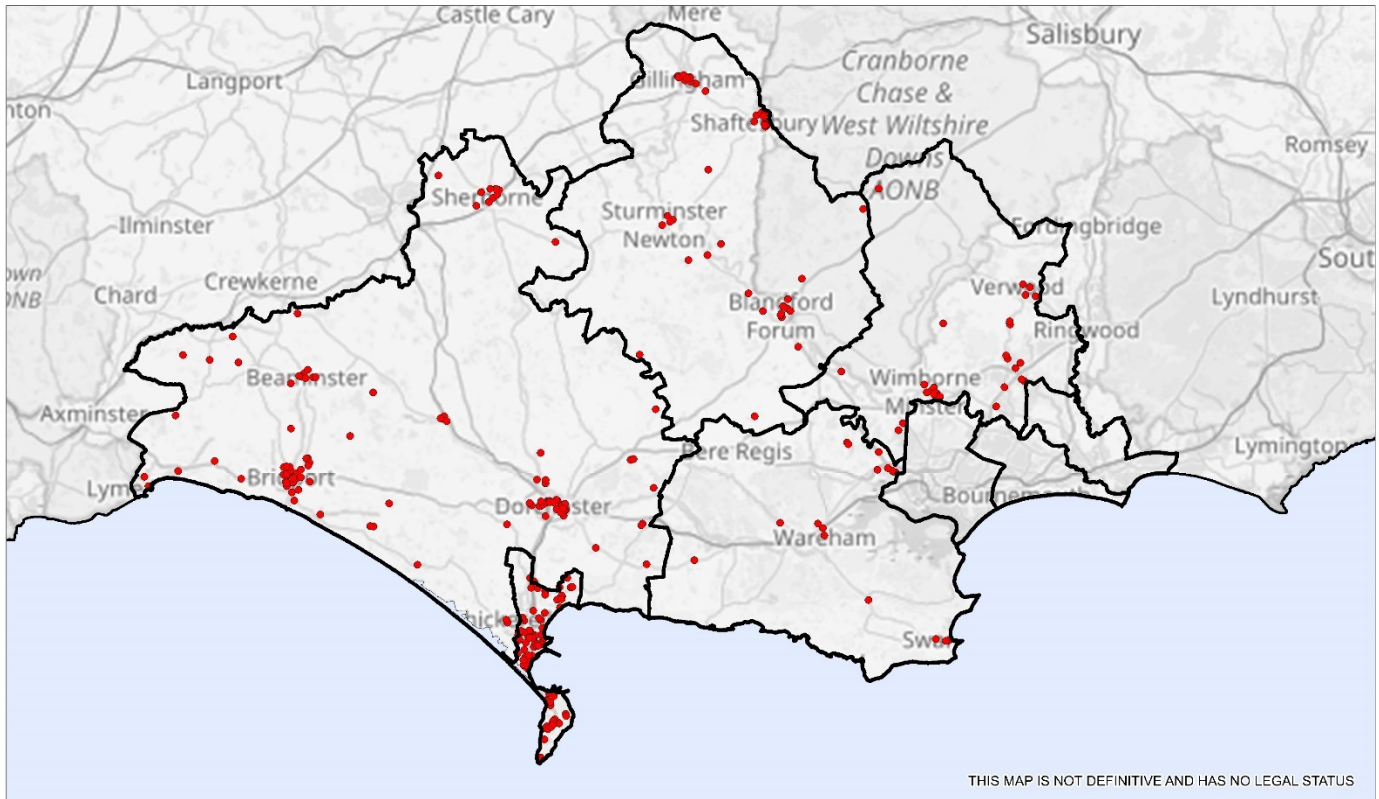
382 overall responses were received, with 377 confirming on what basis they were responding. 214 (57%) were responding as benefit claimants, 156 (41%) responding as council tax payers and 156 (41%) representing organisations and 0 (0%) represented local businesses. Those selecting “other” responded either as local residents or mixed households.

Are you responding as:

	Someone who receives council tax support	A council tax payer	A local councillor	A business	An organisation	Other
Number	214	156	0	0	2	5
% of all responses	56.8%	41.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.3%

Where do respondents live?

Respondents were asked for their postcode. 339 people provided their home postcode, with just under 305 proving to be complete and valid. The postcodes of all respondents living in or around the Dorset area were plotted on a map. Below is a map of those responses. This clearly shows responses (indicated by a red dot) were received from right across the Dorset area, with all areas being represented.



Dorset Council Tax Benefit Support Scheme, 2018 Consultation

Ref:
Date: 07/12/2018
Scale 1:393840
Drawn By:
Cent X: 382693
Cent Y: 100998

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Dorset County Council
© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100019190
 You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or
 interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not
 permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third
 parties in any form. Aerial Photography © UKPanspectives 2002
 © Getmapping 2005, 2009 & 2014

Respondents were also asked which district they lived in

(overall responses)	East Dorset	North Dorset	Purbeck District	West Dorset District Council	Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Number	39	53	24	147	177
%	10%	14%	6%	39%	31%

Whilst the number of respondents from each district/borough is not a good match with the overall population within the district, the responses are more in tune with the % of the population claiming council tax benefit who are of working age (see the table below). For example, Weymouth and Portland make up 18% of the Dorset Council area population but 31% of the respondents to the survey live in that area. Likewise, 24% of the Dorset Council area population live in East Dorset but only 10% of the responses come from that area but that fits well with the 11% of the respondents who live in that area.

District	% Population	% of Working Age Claimants	% Survey Responses
EDDC	24%	11%	10%
NDDC	19%	12%	14%
PDC	12%	14%	6%
WDDC	27%	31%	39%
WPBC	18%	32%	31%

What were the proposals

The Shadow Authority was proposing that the Council Tax Support scheme from 1 April 2019 be based on one of the following options.

- **Option A** Under this option, the Dorset Council Tax Support scheme would be based on incorporating the existing sovereign Council schemes. This would result in some claimants being treated more (or less) favourably than others with similar circumstances.
- **Option B** Under this option, the Dorset Council Tax Support scheme would be an aligned scheme which would limit the maximum support provided to unprotected working age claimants to 90%. The option would also look to calculate entitlement on an estimated average, rather than actual, Universal Credit over a six-month period. Protection arrangements would be included allowing a claimant to ask for a review of their entitlement, during that period, if their circumstances had significantly changed.

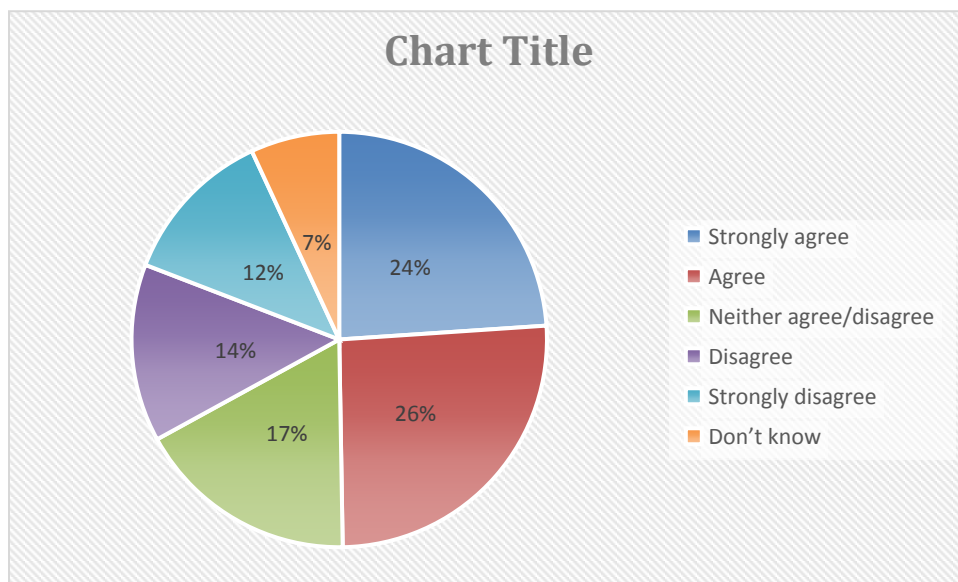
This option would simplify the process and entitlement from a customer perspective and significantly reduce the administration of the scheme.

- **Option C** Under this option, the Dorset Council Tax Support scheme would incorporate the conditions mentioned in Option B but would limit the maximum support provided to unprotected working age claimants to 85%.

Option A

Q2. Under this option the Shadow Authority would retain the existing Council Tax Support schemes as set out in Appendix (at the end of this document), having regard to where the claimant lives. In relation to this option please state to what extent you agree with this proposal.

(overall responses)	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Number	90	97	65	52	46	26
%	24%	26%	17%	14%	12%	7%



A total of 376 people responded to this question. **In simple agreement terms 50% strongly agreed/agreed with this option.**

50% of respondents either strongly agreed/agreed with option A whilst 26% disagreed/strongly disagreed. **This gives a net agreement figure of plus 24%**. In numeric terms this means 187 either strongly agreed/agreed whilst 98 disagreed/strongly disagreed. 17% neither agreed/disagreed with this option and 7% did not have a view.

When looking at the responses from people who were claiming benefit compared to those responding just as council tax payers this showed, as expected, stronger support for this option by those claiming benefit. The response in this case was net agreement figure of plus 48%. This compares to a net agreement figure of minus 7% for those responding as council tax payers.

Responses from people who said they were disabled showed a net agreement figure of plus 41%, which is high, showing support for this option.

Analysing the responses by the 5 district areas there is overall support for the option in each district area with a positive net agreement. However, support for this scheme (the status quo) is mixed across the districts. There is strong support in North Dorset District Council area (plus 48%) and East Dorset District council area (plus 54%). There is significantly less support in Purbeck (plus 17%), West Dorset District (plus 16%) and Weymouth and Portland Borough area (plus 14%)

Dorchester & District Labour Party official strongly disagreed with this option as “This would be unfair in treating people differently according to which former authority they lived in. In its favour people would receive a higher rebate than under B or C.”

Q3. Please provide any additional comments about this option below:

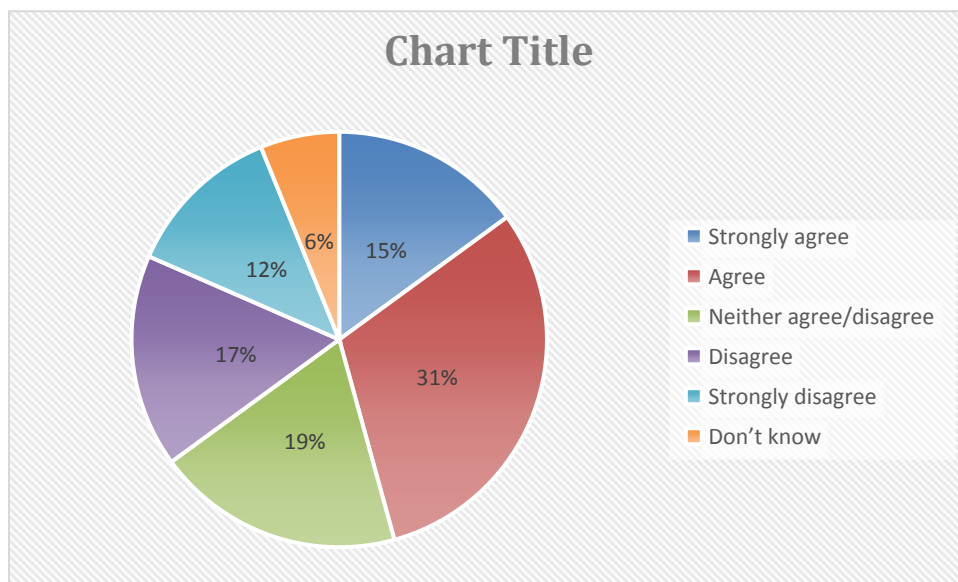
81 comments were received covering a wide range of issues. The comments were coded into themes raised. Whilst a significant number of comments responded that the need for one system regardless of where you live was important other people raised a wide range of concerns. There was support for the existing system as people understood it and knew where they were. The summary list is available in the table below and the full comments in the appendix.

Issue	mentions
Need one system for efficiency regardless of where you live	23
No need to change	11
Existing system is fair/logical	8
Can't afford to lose any money at all	7
Other	7
Better to harmonise but not reduce %	6
Universal Credit doesn't work so stay the same	4
Not clear enough/ don't understand	4
Should get appropriate support	3
Admin costs	3
Longer lead in time needed	2
Council Tax is unfair anyway	2
Universal Credit is better	2
Same system for everyone	2
Option C is better financially	2
Under 25s shouldn't pay anything	1
What's it based on?	1
Need to change as doesn't work	1
Need financial protection	1
Options B & C are easier to manage	1

Option B

Q4. Under this option, the Shadow Authority would introduce an aligned Council Tax Support scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (that were not protected) limited to 90%. In relation to this option please state to what extent you agree with this proposal.

(overall responses)	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Number	56	115	72	62	46	23
%	15%	31%	19%	17%	12%	6%



A total of 374 people responded to this question. **In simple agreement terms 46% strongly agreed/agreed with this option.**

46% of respondents either strongly agreed/agreed with option B whilst 29% disagreed/strongly disagreed. **This gives a net agreement figure of plus 17%.** In numeric terms this means 171 either strongly agreed/agreed whilst 108 disagreed/strongly disagreed. 19% neither agreed/disagreed with this option and 6% did not have a view.

When looking at the responses from people who were claiming benefit compared to those responding just as council tax payers this showed stronger support for this option by those responding just as council tax payers, with a net agreement figure of plus 27%. This compares to a net agreement figure of plus 8.6% for those responding as council tax claimants.

The responses from people who said they were disabled showed a net agreement figure of plus 21%, a relatively positive response.

Analysing responses by the 5 district areas the support for this scheme (Option B - aligned scheme with max 90% support) shows support is mixed. There is stronger support in West Dorset District Council area (plus 27%) and Weymouth and Portland area (plus 22%). Then there is less support in East Dorset District (plus 14%) and Purbeck (plus 13%). Finally, there was opposition to this scheme from North Dorset District area responses with a net agreement figure of minus 19%.

In Dorchester & District Labour Party official response they disagreed with this option saying “We support options B/ C with a maximum support for those of working age limited to 92% (as most generous existing scheme). BUT using actual Universal Credit payments not an estimated average. Linking to the rules for Housing Benefit leads to a reduction in the payment. Therefore, not in claimant’s interest. Creating the new Dorset Council is supposed to save money but we object to savings made at the expense of people on low income. Even £0.25 a week is a further cut, and some will face more than this.”

Q5. Please provide any additional comments about this option below:

A total of 64 comments were received. The comments were coded into themes raised. Whilst a number of comments responded that Option B was the best many other people raised a wide range of issues, some supporting the option and others opposing it. The summary list is available in the table below and the full comments in the appendix.

Dorchester & District Labour Party official strongly disagreed with this option as “This would be unfair in treating people differently according to which former authority they lived in. In its favour people would receive a higher rebate than under B or C.”

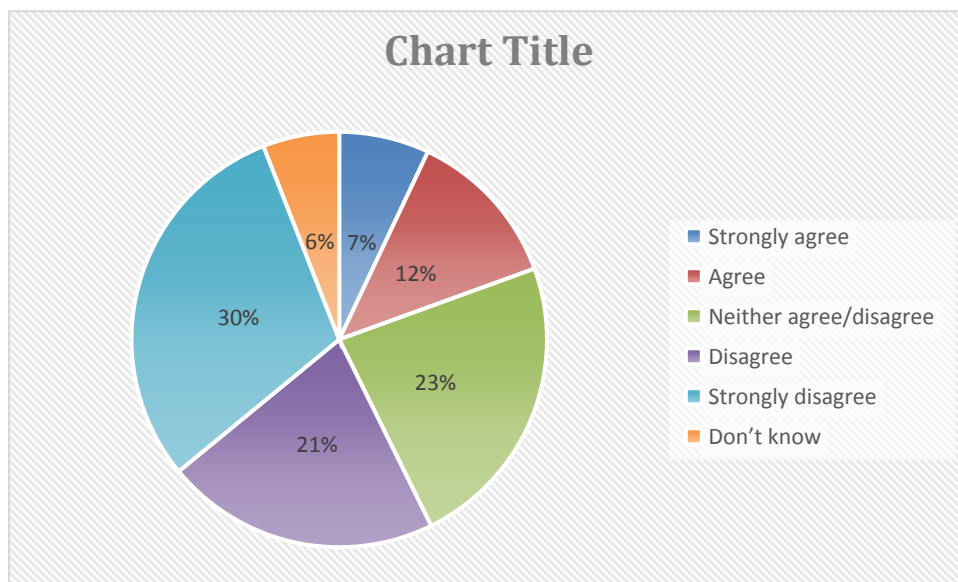
Issue	mentions
B is best option of three on offer	9
Impacts on the poorest	7
Should be based on current %	6
People can't afford ANY more	5
Other	5
Sensible way forward	4
Complicated with more getting into debt	3
Prefer option C	3
Should get 100%	2
Appears to be fairer	2
Less admin on option B is better	2
Option B is unfair	2
Unclear	2
Stay as is	2
Need protection	1

Option B ok with protection	1
Monitor over time	1
Aligned system	1
No one should be worse off	1
Prefer option A	1
Some people work system	1
% discount is too high	1
Get people back to work	1
Universal Credit is a disaster so don't link	1
Council will do what it wants anyway	1

Option C

Q6. Under this option, the Shadow Authority would introduce an aligned Council Tax Support scheme with a maximum support for those of working age (that were not protected) limited to 85%. In relation to this option please state to what extent you agree with this proposal

(overall responses)	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Number	26	46	86	79	111	22
%	7%	12%	23%	21%	30%	6%



A total of 370 people responded to this question. **In simple agreement terms 19% strongly agreed/agreed with this option.**

19% of respondents either strongly agreed/agreed with option C whilst 51% disagreed/strongly disagreed. **This gives a net agreement figure of minus 32%.**

In numeric terms this means 72 people either strongly agreed/agreed whilst 190 disagreed/strongly disagreed. 23% neither agreed/disagreed with this option and 6% did not have a view.

Responses from people who were claiming benefit compared to those responding just as council tax payers showed opposition to this option. Those claiming benefit strongly opposed it with a net agreement figure of minus 42%. This compares to a net agreement figure of minus 18% for those responding as council tax payers.

When looking at the responses from people who said they were disabled this showed strong opposition with a net figure of minus 36.7%.

Analysing responses by the 5 district areas there is very limited support for this scheme (aligned scheme with max 85% support). There is the highest opposition in East Dorset District Council area (with a net figure of minus 43%) and West Dorset District Council area (with a net figure of minus 41%). Then there is slightly less opposition in North Dorset and Weymouth and Portland. The opposition is the lowest in Purbeck but still minus 13% net, but the number of responses were limited.

In Dorchester & District Labour Party official response they disagreed with this option saying “We support options B/ C with a maximum support for those of working age limited to 92% (as most generous existing scheme). BUT using actual Universal Credit payments not an estimated average. Linking to the rules for Housing Benefit leads to a reduction in the payment. Therefore, not in claimant’s interest. Creating the new Dorset Council is supposed to save money but we object to savings made at the expense of people on low income. Even £0.25 a week is a further cut, and some will face more than this.”

Q7. Please provide any additional comments about this option below:

There were 55 comments made covering a range of issues. The most consistent response was that to adopt option C with a lower percentage support would lead to debt and hardship and other costs like debt recovery. Other comments focused on the percentage change and the lack of affordability. The summary list is available in the table below and the full comments in the appendix.

Issue	mentions
Will lead to debt and hardship	14
Keep % as before (92%)	6
Other	5
Can't afford this cut	4
C is the worst option	4
Confusing	3
C is the best of poor options	2
Everyone should contribute	2
Unnecessary	2
Council will ignore anyway	2
Prefer option B	2
Everyone should contribute	2
Universal Credit a disaster	2
Keep simple	1
People who pay full CT are just coping	1
Poor idea for single parents	1
Non- viable option	1
Affects all badly	1
Affects those with disability	1

Comparison of the responses to the three options

Looking at the **simple agreement figures** (strongly agree/ agree) for each of the three options it shows:

Option A: 50% agreement (with 26% strongly disagree/disagree)

Option B: 46% agreement (with 29% strongly disagree/disagree)

Option C: 19% agreement (with 51% strongly disagree/disagree)

The simple agreement figures show most support for option A and still significant support for option B with only 4% between the two. On the flip side Option C was opposed by a significant majority

Looking at the overall **net agreement figures*** for each of the three options it shows

Option A: Plus 24%

Option B: Plus 17%

Option C: Minus 32%

Hence, the overall figures show most support for option A and still significant support for option B. On the flip side Option C was opposed by a significant majority

*net agreement compares the percentages “strongly agreeing” or “agreeing” with the percentages “disagreeing” or “strongly disagreeing”. A figure of zero means an equal percentage support as oppose, a positive figure shows support and a minus figure shows opposition.

Q8. Please use the space below to describe any alternative options you would like the council to consider:

There were 90 comments in this section of the consultation. Whilst some offered other alternatives to the three proposals being consulted on, many of the comments covered a very wide range of issues relating to council tax and the benefits system. Because of the wide range of comments with no strong themes running through the comments are not summarised here but included in full in the appendix.

Specialist officers of the council will consider the viability of any suggestions included within the answers to this question.

Q9 The council has a duty to take into account the impact of decisions on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation).

Are there any positive or negative impacts that you believe the council should take into account in the decision-making process in relation to protected characteristics? If so, please describe below, and suggest any ways in which the council could reduce or remove any potential negative impact or increase any positive impact.

There were 67 comments in this section of the consultation. Whilst some offered suggestions of impacts on protected groups relating to the three proposals being consulted on, many of the comments covered a very wide range of issues relating to council tax and the benefits system. Because of the wide range of comments with no strong themes running through the comments are not summarised here but included in full in the appendix.

About You

Q10 Are you responding as:

	Someone who receives council tax support	A council tax payer	A local councillor	A business	An organisation	Other
Number	214	156	0	0	2	5
% of all responses	57%	41%	0.0%	0.0%	<1%	1%

57% of the responses came from people receiving council tax support and 41% were responding as council tax payer. Throughout the report the responses from each group were considered separately as well as together.

Q11 Are you providing your organisation's official view?

	Yes	No
Number	9	284
%	3%	97%

Q12 What is the name of your organisation/business?

In reality only one official response was received from an organisation. This was from the Dorchester & District Labour Party.

Q14 What age group do you belong to?

	Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-and over	Prefer not to say
Which age group do you belong to?	0.0%	2.7%	9.7%	16.7%	24.2%	26.9%	16.4%	3.5%

The tables above show the profile of people taking part in the consultation. The consultation has attracted residents covering quite a wide age range. In Dorset itself 24% of the population are aged

65+. In the survey responses 17% were aged 65+. As the main impact is on working age people the response fits with that age profile.

Q15 The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS for example) are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
Number	71	258	43
%	19.1%	69.4%	11.6%

19.1% of respondents considered they had a disability. The data has been used when analysing the responses to the questions to see if people who have a disability had a different view to the majority on the key questions in the consultation.

Q16 Please us which type of impairment applies to you?

	Physical disability	Learning disability/difficulty	Longstanding illness or health condition	Mental health condition	Sensory impairment	Prefer not to say	Other
Number	34	8	40	27	8	3	1
% of all responses	48.6%	11.4%	57.1%	38.6%	11.4%	4.3%	1.4%

Respondents were asked to specify all impairments that related to them. A longstanding illness or health condition was the most common, with 57% selecting that. This was closely followed by physical disability and then mental health condition.

This page is intentionally left blank

Shadow Dorset Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Subject	Decision Maker	Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Meeting Date	Consultation	Background Documents	Member/Officer Contact
Call To Account – Transfer of Assets		Special Meeting - 3 January 2019, 9.30am			Lead Officers – Jonathan Mair (Interim Monitoring Officer, Shadow Dorset Council), Stuart Caundle (Head of Paid Service, Dorset Councils Partnership) and Stephen Hill (Strategic Director, Dorset Councils Partnership) Lead Members – Cllr R Knox (Leader, Shadow Dorset Council), Cllr T Ferrari (Lead Member for Finance, Shadow Dorset Council), Cllr J Cant (Lead Member for Property and Assets, Shadow Dorset Council)
Readiness of Critical/Key Services Page 47		8 January 2019, 6.30pm			Lead Officers - Helen Coombes (Interim Transformation Programme Lead, Dorset Council), Nick Jarman (Interim Corporate Director for Children's Services, Dorset County Council), Bridget Downton (General Manager, Planning and Community Services, Purbeck District Council), Mike J Harries (Corporate Director for Environment & Economy, Dorset County Council), Jason Vaughan (Interim Section 151 Officer, Shadow Dorset Council), Jonathan Mair (Interim Monitoring Officer, Shadow Dorset Council)
Local Council Tax Support	Shadow Executive Committee	8 January 2019, 6.30pm			Lead Officer - Stuart Dawson (Head of Revenues and Benefits, Dorset County Council)
Programme Highlight Report, including SWAP Assurance Report Key Decision – No	Shadow Executive Committee	8 January 2019, 6.30pm			Lead Member – Leader of Shadow Dorset Council Lead Officer – Keith Cheesman, LGR Programme Director

Public Access – Open				
Forward Plans/Work Programmes Key Decision – No Public Access – Open		8 January 2019, 6.30pm		Lead Officer - Lee Ellis, Scrutiny Officer
Budget		Special Meeting - 21 January 2019, 6.30pm		Lead Officer – Jason Vaughan (Interim Section 151 Officer)
Communications		4 February 2019, 9.30am		Fiona Napier – Communications Tom Cornwall - Strategic Communications Lead
Programme Highlight Report, including SWAP Assurance Report Key Decision – No Public Access – Open	Shadow Executive Committee	4 February 2019, 9.30am		Lead Member – Leader of Shadow Dorset Council Lead Officer – Keith Cheesman, LGR Programme Director
Forward Plans/Work Programmes Key Decision – No Public Access – Open		4 February 2019, 9.30am		Lead Officer – Lee Ellis, Scrutiny Officer
Transformation Road Map	Shadow Executive	7 March 2019, 6.30pm		Lead Officer – Matt Prosser, Designate Chief Executive
Programme Highlight Report, including SWAP Assurance Report Key Decision – No Public Access – Open	Shadow Executive Committee	7 March 2019, 6.30pm		Lead Member – Leader of Shadow Dorset Council Lead officer – Keith Cheesman, LGR Programme Director
Forward Plans/Work		7 March 2019, 6.30pm		Lead Officer - Lee Ellis, Scrutiny Officer

Programmes					
Key Decision – No Public Access – Open					

This page is intentionally left blank

Shadow Dorset Council
Shadow Executive Committee - Forward Plan - January 2019 (2)

For the period 14 JANUARY 2019 to 31 MARCH 2019
(publication date – 7 DECEMBER 2018)

Explanatory Note:

This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions

Key decisions are defined in the Shadow Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions of the Shadow Executive Committee which are likely to -

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (***Thresholds - Dorset County Council £500k and District and Borough Councils £100k***); or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

When determining the meaning of "*significant*" for these purposes the Shadow Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Private/Exempt Items for Decision

Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Decision Due Date	Consultation	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
Programme Highlight Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<u>Consultees:</u> Members Services <u>Means of Consultation:</u> Task and Finish Groups Workshops Ongoing programme activity	None	Lead member - Leader of Shadow Dorset Council <i>Lead officer - Keith Cheesman, LGR Programme Director keith.cheesman@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i>
Risk Management Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<u>Consultees:</u> Sovereign Councils Programme Board <u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings Correspondence	None	Lead member - Councillor Rebecca Knox <i>Lead officer - Matt Prosser, Chief Executive Designate matt.prosser@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i>
Forward Plan Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<u>Consultees:</u> Shadow Executive Committee Dorset councils Programme Board <u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings	None	Lead member - Leader of Shadow Dorset Council <i>Lead officer - Lee Gallagher, Democratic Services Manager - Dorset County Council l.d.gallagher@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i>
Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Forecast - Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Open	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group <u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings	None	Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari <i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i>

<p>Council Tax Discounts, Long Term Empty Charges</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Business Rates Relief</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Insurance Arrangements</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Convergence Plan</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u></p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u></p>		<p>Lead member - Councillor Rebecca Knox</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Nicola Houwayek, HR Strategic Lead nicola.houwayek@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>TUPE Measures</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	14 Jan 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Trade Unions</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Consultation meetings</p>	Current Terms and conditions and policies for employees across all sovereign councils	<p>Lead member - Councillor Peter Wharf</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Nicola Houwayek, HR Strategic Lead nicola.houwayek@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>

<p>Constitution - Dorset Council</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p> <p>Shadow Dorset Council</p>	<p>14 Jan 2019</p> <p>24 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Governance Task and Finish Group Monitoring Officers Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Councillor Spencer Flower</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jonathan Mair, Interim Monitoring Officer</i> <i>j.e.mair@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Transition Period Plan (operating arrangements and interim transition)</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p>	<p>14 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Governance Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Leader of Shadow Dorset Council</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Keith Cheesman, LGR Programme Director</i> <i>keith.cheesman@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Weymouth Town Council</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Page 54</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p>	<p>14 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> None</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Leader of Shadow Dorset Council</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Keith Cheesman, LGR Programme Director</i> <i>keith.cheesman@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Three Year Highways Capital Programme (Highway Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block Schemes) incl Christchurch</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p> <p>Item referred for decision from Dorset County Council.</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p>	<p>14 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Portfolio Holder District Councillors County Councillors</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Highways Member Portal</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Councillor Daryl Turner</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Mike Harries, Chief Executive - Dorset County Council</i> <i>m.j.harries@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>

<p>Equalities Scheme</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p>	<p>14 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Equalities Working Group Lead members Lead officers</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Councillor Peter Wharf</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Matt Prosser, Chief Executive Designate matt.prosser@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Councillor and Democratic Arrangements</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p>	<p>14 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Governance Task and Finish Group Monitoring Officers Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Councillor Spencer Flower</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jonathan Mair, Interim Monitoring Officer j.e.mair@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Members Allowances Scheme 2019/2020</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Dorset Council</p>	<p>24 Jan 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Independent Remuneration Panel Governance Task and Finish Group Monitoring Officers Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Councillor Spencer Flower</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jonathan Mair, Interim Monitoring Officer j.e.mair@dorsetcc.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Corporate Plan</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p> <p>Shadow Dorset Council</p>	<p>11 Feb 2019</p> <p>20 Feb 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> None</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Leader of Shadow Dorset Council</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Matt Prosser, Chief Executive Designate matt.prosser@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>2019/2020 Budget</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	<p>Shadow Executive Committee</p> <p>Shadow Dorset Council</p>	<p>11 Feb 2019</p> <p>20 Feb 2019</p>	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Public and Business Sector Councillors Budget Task and Finish Group Dorset Finance Officers Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings Public and Business Sector Consultation</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>

<p>Capital Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	11 Feb 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	11 Feb 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	11 Feb 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	11 Feb 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u> Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u> Meetings</p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Fees and Charges</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Open</p>	Shadow Executive Committee	11 Mar 2019	<p><u>Consultees:</u></p> <p><u>Means of Consultation:</u></p>	None	<p>Lead member - Councillor Tony Ferrari</p> <p><i>Lead officer - Jason Vaughan, Interim Section 151 Officer jvaughan@dorset.gov.uk</i></p>

Page 56