



## Dorset Council

**Date:** Thursday, 11 May 2023  
**Time:** 6.30 pm  
**Venue:** Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

All members of Dorset Council are requested to attend this meeting of the Full Council.

**Chief Executive:** Matt Prosser, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services  
Meeting Contact [susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

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### Agenda

#### Page No

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

To elect the Chairman of Council for 2023/24.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

To elect the Vice-chairman of Council for 2023/24.

**3. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**4. MINUTES**

5 - 32

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their decision councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of

the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

**6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman of Council.

**7. ELECTION OF LEADER OF COUNCIL**

To elect the Leader of Council for 2023/24.

**8. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER OF COUNCIL, CABINET/PORTFOLIO HOLDERS AND LEAD MEMBERS**

The Leader of the Council to advise on the appointment of the Deputy Leader, Cabinet membership/Portfolio Holders and Lead Members.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS FROM THE LEADER OF COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBERS**

To receive any announcements and reports from the Leader of Council and members of the Cabinet.

**10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

A period of 30 minutes is allocated to receive and respond to questions and statements on the business of the Council in the following order:

- (a) Questions and statements from Town and Parish Councils;
- (b) Questions and statements from those living or working in the Dorset Council area;

A person or organisation can ask either 2 questions, or 2 statements or 1 question and 1 statement at each meeting. No more than 3 minutes shall be allowed for any one question or statement to be asked/read.

**The full text of the question or statement must be received by 8.30am on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023.**

Details of the Council's procedure rules can be found at:  
[Council Procedure Rules](#)

**11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

A period of 15 minutes is allocated to receive and respond to petitions in accordance with the council's petitions scheme.

A period of 15 minutes is allocated to receive and respond to deputations in accordance with the council's constitution.

The petitions scheme and procedures relating to deputations can be

viewed at:  
[Council Procedure Rules](#)

**12. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

To receive questions submitted by councillors. The deadline for receipt of questions is 8.30am on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**13. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - PARISHES IN THE VALE OF ALLEN GROUP, THE WINTERBORNE FARRINGDON GROUP, CHICKERELL AND WEYMOUTH - FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS** 33 - 66

To consider a report by the Service Manager, Democratic & Electoral Services.

An amendment to the recommendations contained within this report has been submitted by Cllr L O'Leary in advance of the meeting and has been appended to the report. Pages 59-66.

**14. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES, JOINT PANELS AND BOARD AND THE ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN** 67 - 86

To consider a report by the Team Leader, Democratic Services.

**15. REVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RULES** 87 - 94

To consider a recommendation from the Audit & Governance Committee.

**16. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS - AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** 95 - 108

To consider a recommendation from the Audit & Governance Committee.

**17. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICERS AND DELEGATION TO AMEND POLLING PLACES** 109 - 112

To consider a report by the Democratic & Electoral Services Manager.

**18. 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 recorded in the minutes.

**19. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph x of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

**There is no scheduled exempt business.**



## DORSET COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2023

**Present:** Cllrs Rod Adkins, Tony Alford, Jon Andrews, Mike Barron, Pete Barrow, Shane Bartlett, Pauline Batstone, Belinda Bawden, Laura Beddow, Derek Beer, Richard Biggs, Dave Bolwell, Alex Brenton, Cherry Brooks, Piers Brown, Ray Bryan, Andy Canning, Graham Carr-Jones, Simon Christopher, Kelvin Clayton, Robin Cook, Tim Cook, Toni Coombs, Jean Dunseith, Mike Dyer, Beryl Ezzard, Tony Ferrari, Spencer Flower, Simon Gibson, Barry Goringe, Paul Harrison, Jill Haynes, Brian Heatley, Ryan Holloway, Rob Hughes, Nick Ireland, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Paul Kimber, Rebecca Knox, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Howard Legg, Robin Legg, Cathy Lugg, David Morgan, Louie O'Leary, Jon Orrell, Emma Parker, Mike Parkes, Andrew Parry, Mary Penfold, Val Pothecary (Chairman), Byron Quayle, Molly Rennie, Belinda Ridout, Mark Roberts, Maria Roe, David Shortell, Jane Somper, Andrew Starr, Gary Suttle, Clare Sutton, Roland Tarr, David Taylor, Gill Taylor, David Walsh, Bill Trite, Peter Wharf, Kate Wheller, Sarah Williams and John Worth

**Apologies:** Cllrs Susan Cocking, Janet Dover, Les Fry, David Gray, Matthew Hall, Ryan Hope, Bill Pipe and David Tooke

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

Susan Dallison (Democratic Services Team Leader), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), Hayley Caves (Member Development and Support Officer), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Jennifer Lewis (Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement), Jacqui Andrews (Service Manager for Democratic and Electoral Services), Sean Cremer (Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Kathryn Dillon, Katie Hale (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Chris Matthews (Interim Head of HR), Kirstie Snow (Business Partner - External Affairs) and Elaine Tibble (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**46. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Susan Cocking, Janet Dover, Les Fry, David Gray, Matt Hall, Ryan Hope, Bill Pipe and David Tooke.

**47. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 were confirmed and signed.

**48. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

**49. Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements to report.

**50. Public Participation - Questions and Statements**

Public questions, statements and the responses from the Leader of the Council and appropriate Portfolio Holder are set out in Appendix 1 attached to these minutes.

**51. Public participation - petitions and deputations**

There were no petitions or deputations.

**52. Announcements and Reports from the Leader of Council and Cabinet Members**

The Leader of the Council advised councillors that his report would be published following the meeting and the report included the following points:

- Support for cost of living – The Council had an opportunity to reflect upon its responsibilities as to how it can assist those residents most in need and £2M was being allocated from unearmarked reserves.
- The Facebook Live session on the Budget had been viewed 1800 times and provided a unique opportunity for members of the public to engage with the council – The session had been well received and more sessions would take place, covering differing themes.
- Cllr Ray Bryan had participated in a Parliamentary Transport Select Committee to highlight difficulties faced by rural authorities, including Dorset, in relation to transport.
- Levelling Up Bid – The Council had been successful in obtaining £19.4M of funding for investment in Weymouth.
- The outcome of the LGA Peer Review would be reported to Cabinet in February – Feedback had been largely positive.

Cllr Walsh added that he was encouraged by the results of lobbying and that the Government was indeed listening and taking notice of Dorset Council, having recently referred to the work it was undertaking. He added that this was something to be proud of and that the Council must continue its lobbying to ensure that it received the recognition it reserved.

In response to a question relating to the announcement for £2M to be allocated to fund the cost of living support, Cllr Beddow explained that the Council would be working with charities and other organisations to ensure that the funding went to those most in need and it was hoped that it would leave behind a legacy that would benefit people in the years to come.

**53. Questions from Councillors**

There were five questions received from councillors. A copy of the questions and the responses are attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes.

**54. Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan**

The Finance, Commercial & Capital Strategy Portfolio Holder presented the Budget strategy and medium-term financial plan (MTFP). A copy of his speech is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

The Chairman invited the Group Leaders to present their replies to the budget proposals.

Cllrs Ireland, Sutton and Hughes presented their budget speeches which are attached as appendices to these minutes.

Cllr Ireland proposed an amendment to the budget, which was seconded by Cllr Jill Taylor.

Members debated the amendment as proposed, comments included:

- The proposal was not necessary as a separate piece of work was being undertaken to provide a fund of £2M, which would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting later in February.
- Surprise was expressed that no prior notification of the proposal to offer a £2M fund had been received. It would also be favourable to have allow for both options – i.e. the £2M fund and the sum requested in the amendment.
- There was no information in relation to the item on the Cabinet Forward Plan, with the exception of a report title.

In accordance with procedure rule 19.6 a recorded vote was taken.

Those who voted in favour of the amendment:- 30

Jon Andrews, Peter Barrow, Shane Bartlett, Belinda Bawden, Derek Beer, Richard Biggs, David Bolwell, Alexandra Brenton, Andy Canning, Kelvin Clayton, Tim Cook, Beryl Ezzard, Brian Heatley, Ryan Holloway, Nick Ireland, Stella Jones, Paul Kimber, Robin Legg, Howard Legg, David Morgan, Jon Orrell, Molly Rennie, Maria Roe, Andrew Starr, Gary Suttle, Clare Sutton, Roland Tarr, David Taylor, Gill Taylor, Sarah Williams

Those who voted against the amendment:- 43

Rod Adkins, Anthony Alford, Michael Barron, Pauline Batstone, Cherry Brooks, Piers Brown, Ray Bryan, Graham Carr-Jones, Simon Christopher, Robin Cook, Toni Coombs, Jean Dunseith, Mike Dyer, Tony Ferrari, Spencer Flower, Simon Gibson, Barry Goringe, Paul Harrison, Jill Haynes, Robert Hughes, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Andrew Kerby, Rebecca Knox, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cathy Lugg, Laura Miller, Louis O'Leary, Emma Parker, Mike Parkes, Andrew Parry, Mary Penfold, Valerie Potheary, Byron Quayle, Belinda Ridout, Mark

Roberts, David Shortell, Jane Somper, William Trite, David Walsh, Peter Wharf, Kate Wheller, John Worth

Those who abstained:- 0

Following a recorded vote, 30 for, 43 against and 0 abstentions the amendment was LOST.

Following the amendment being lost, Members continued to debate the budget as originally proposed.

The Finance, Commercial & Capital Strategy Portfolio Holder was confident that the budget was balanced but still encouraged prudence when committing reserves.

Members were appreciative of the officer work that had gone into producing the budget and the opportunity of attending budget cafes, cross party working and input from the Scrutiny Committees.

Cllr Flower presented his speech as seconder of the budget proposal, attached as an appendix to the minutes.

Proposed by Cllr Suttle, seconded by Cllr Flower.

In accordance with procedure rule 19.6 a recorded vote was taken.

Those who voted in favour of the recommendations:- 59

Rod Adkins, Anthony Alford, Jon Andrews, Michael Barron, Shane Bartlett, Belinda Bawden, Pauline Batstone, Derek Beer, David Bolwell, Cherry Brooks, Piers Brown, Ray Bryan, Graham Carr-Jones, Simon Christopher, Kelvin Clayton, Tim Cook, Robin Cook, Toni Coombs, Jean Dunseith, Mike Dyer, Tony Ferrari, Spencer Flower, Simon Gibson, Barry Goringe, Paul Harrison, Jill Haynes, Brian Heatley, Ryan Holloway, Robert Hughes, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Andrew Kerby, Rebecca Knox, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cathy Lugg, Laura Miller, David Morgan, Louis O'Leary, Jon Orrell, Emma Parker, Mike Parkes, Andrew Parry, Mary Penfold, Valerie Potheary, Byron Quayle, Belinda Ridout, Mark Roberts, David Shortell, Jane Somper, Andrew Starr, Gary Suttle, Clare Sutton, Roland Tarr, David Taylor, William Trite, David Walsh, Peter Wharf, Kate Wheller, John Worth

Those who voted against the recommendations:- 11

Peter Barrow, Richard Biggs, Andy Canning, Beryl Ezzard, Nick Ireland, Stella Jones, Paul Kimber, Robin Legg, Howard Legg, Molly Rennie, Maria Roe

Those who abstained:- 2

Alexandra Brenton, Sarah Williams



Following a recorded vote, 59 for, 11 against and 2 abstentions the recommendations were approved.

#### DECISION:

1. the revenue budget summarised in Appendix 1 was agreed;
2. the increase in general council tax of 1.9987% and 1.9987% in the social care precept, providing a band D council tax figure for Dorset Council of £1,905.93; an overall increase of 3.9974% was agreed;
3. the council tax resolution in Appendix 2 was agreed;
4. the council tax base agreed by the S151 Officer earlier in this budget setting process was noted;
5. no change to the current scheme of Local Council Tax Support as set out in this report was agreed;
6. the capital strategy set out in Appendix 3 and note the review in progress around the current capital programme and emerging bids was agreed;
7. the treasury management strategy set out in Appendix 4 was agreed;
8. the assumptions used to develop the budget strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), as set out throughout this report and summarised in Appendix 5 was agreed;
9. the recommended balances on earmarked reserves and on general funds, including the minimum level of the general fund, the application of a further £3.5m of reserves to support the safety valve agreement, and the repurposing of £3m of the Council's other reserves for spend-to-save investment in transformation was agreed;
10. the fees and charges policy set out in Appendix 6 was agreed;
11. the responses to the recommendations and comments made as part of the budget scrutiny process (Appendix 7) were agreed;
12. recommendations 1-6 from the 8 December 2022 Harbours Advisory Committee meeting regarding fees and charges, budgets and asset management plans were agreed;
13. the flexible use of £5.3m of capital receipts for the purposes of transforming the Council's asset portfolio over the next three to five years was agreed.

#### **Reason for the Decision**

The Council was required to set a balanced revenue budget, and to approve a level of council tax as an integral part of this. A balanced budget is essentially one where all expenditure is funded by income without unsustainable use of one-off or short-term sources of finance.

The Council was also required to approve a capital strategy, a capital programme and budget, and a treasury management strategy, each of which were included with the report.

55. **Community Governance Review - Parishes of the Vale of Allen Group, the Winterborne Farringdon Group, Chickerell and Weymouth - Draft Recommendations**

The Leader of Council presented the report of the Community Governance Review, which set out the draft recommendations to be put forward for public consultation.

Cllr P Wharf seconded the recommendation.

Some Members expressed that they were not able to support sending the draft recommendations as set out in the report for consultation and that the right questions were not being asked of the public.

The Leader explained that there was an opportunity for the community to get involved in shaping the electoral boundaries and that all feedback would be taken on board.

The Deputy Leader confirmed the arrangements that had been in place for the process so far. He highlighted that there was no “perfect solution” and that a degree of compromise would be needed. He further encouraged Members to work with their communities to work up alternative arrangements that satisfied the requirements of the boundary commission, the community and numbers during the consultation stage.

**Decision:**

1. That the proposals set out in this Appendix be adopted by the Council as Draft Recommendations for the purposes of the Community Governance Review.
2. That the Draft Recommendations be published for consultation purposes for a period of 8 weeks from 20 February 2023 to 17 April 2023.
3. That the results of the consultation, together with proposed Final Recommendations, be reported to Full Council on 11 May 2023.

**Reason for Decision:**

To ensure that community governance arrangements within the areas specified were reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and achieve electoral equality.

**56. Calendar of Meetings 2023-2024**

In presenting the calendar of meetings for 2023/2024, Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council proposed its formal adoption.

Cllr L O’Leary seconded the recommendation.

Comments were made in relation to the timings of meetings and a request was made of the Leader to consider that meetings be held in the evenings in the future, as currently it did not allow all members of the public to participate and also

precluded some elected members and also put some who wished to stand as elected members off.

A counter-argument was put forward that reminded members that there were often other commitments in the evening, such as town and parish meetings which they were expected to attend. Additionally, it was highlighted that employers were required to allow employees reasonable time off to conduct public duties.

The Leader suggested that it might be appropriate to discuss establishing a Task and Finish group with the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee outside of the meeting.

**Decision:**

1. That the calendar of meetings for the period May 2023 to May 2024 be approved.

2. That authority be delegated to the Director – Legal and Democratic Services to make any necessary changes, in consultation with relevant Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, to ensure effective political management.

**Reason for Decision:**

To ensure effective political management, comply with the Dorset Council Procedure Rules and to put into place appropriate arrangements for council committee meetings.

**57. Pay Policy Statement 2023-2024**

The Corporate Development and Transformation Portfolio Holder presented the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24.

Proposed by Cllr Haynes, seconded by Cllr Heatley

In the absence of comments or questions, the Chairman went straight to the vote.

**Decision:**

(i) That the provisions of the Localism Act and content of the Pay Policy Statement for the 2023/24 financial year were noted.

(ii) That the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 was approved.

(iii) That the changes to the pay policy for Chief Officers determined by the Cross-Party Working Group in 2022.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Full Council was responsible for approval of the annual pay policy statement.

**58. Urgent items**

There were no urgent items

59. **Exempt Business**

There was no urgent business.

**Duration of meeting:** 6.30 - 9.30 pm

**Chairman**

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**Full Council  
14 February 2023**

**Questions and Statements submitted for the Public Participation Period**

**Question 1 – submitted by Tom Villiers, on behalf of the North Dorset Beekeepers Association - WITHDRAWN**

North Dorset Beekeepers Association is a registered charity with the objects of “advancing the education of the public and beekeepers in the craft of a beekeeping and the importance of bees in the environment”. Its aims dovetail with the Dorset Council Pollinators Action Plan 2019-2024. Although beekeepers are not listed as a partner organisation, we believe we are in a strong position to help the council fulfil its action plan, by raising awareness and promoting pollinators. As we are run entirely by volunteers, there would be no cost to either residents or the council.

Currently operating from a small and inconvenient site in the grounds of the Forum School in Shillingstone, we have been searching for an improved site where we could better meet our object to provide education and assistance to beekeepers and those interested in pollinators throughout the county. With the help of Cllr Pauline Batstone, a suitable site was identified on Dorset Council owned land at Holloway Farm, Shillingstone, and we are very grateful that the council’s County Farms Department agreed in September 2020 that half an acre could be made available to us on a long and affordable lease. Subsequently the site was identified on the ground and pegged out by a council employed surveyor, supervised by Amy Foster of the County Farms Department.

Heads of terms for the lease were agreed in April 2021 and on the assumption that the full lease would be completed swiftly, we applied for planning permission to erect a purpose designed an eco-friendly building, which would include disabled access and facilities. This was granted in December 2021 and included the standard term that building a must commence within three years.

Before construction can start funds have to be raised and we plan to do this and nationally and locally, principally by seeking individual donations, by applications to grant making trusts, such as the National Lottery, and by members fundraising efforts. For instance, we have recently made an application to Dorset’s Capital Leverage Fund, which was supported by a number of councillors. But despite the members of the association having already raised more than £40,000, we cannot approach most potential donors until a lease for the site has been signed.

The lack of a lease is therefore a significant hindrance to fundraising efforts and may prejudiced our ability to comply with the terms of the planning permission. Our solicitor last wrote to the council’s legal department on 29 November 2022 but has yet to receive a substantive reply, although a meeting is scheduled for 7 February.

We are very grateful to the council for making this land available. Regrettably, discussions on the lease have become very protracted and we believe that they could and should be concluded.

## Question

Is the council able to authorise the signing of this lease now? If not, could you please explain what has to be done to complete the process?

### **Question 2 – submitted by Mrs S Bennett**

“We fix around 20,000 potholes every year. We aim to permanently repair potholes on our first visit. Our pothole repairs include more extensive patching of 'failed' areas surrounding the defect, instead of just repairing the immediate pothole. This approach will reduce the likelihood of further potholes forming in the future.” From current DCC Highways website page: Roads: highways and maintenance: Fixing Potholes.

In our village of Shroton on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023 I reported with photographs, 14 of the very worst potholes, not all the potholes that existed, but all that were over 4cms in depth and longer than 23cms, the width of a dinner plate. 5 were filled on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 by a Velocity 1 method. By 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 I was re reporting the worst that had been 10.5cms deep and was already breaking up with a large deep pocket at its edges. It was refilled on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023, again leaving a large deep pocket. I re reported this plus 2 of the other original 5 potholes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of this month, as they were all beginning to break up and showing jagged edges. The reporting of potholes in our village is now a weekly if not daily task for the villagers.

We acknowledge that we are not a large village, but we have a thriving rural economy. We have: Wessex Internet, Meggy Moo Award Winning Farm Shop, a large dairy farm, a well-known local pub sited the bottom of an historic earthworks owned by the National Trust and several Work From Home Enterprises. All of these rely on the good standard of the roads to conduct their business. Suffice it to say, ordinary villagers would also like to travel in safety.

The team of workers return over again but are fighting a losing battle as the roads are not able to hold the fill. I have some sympathy for these teams as they are being asked to do a job for which an adequate solution is not being given. To borrow a quote from Geoffrey Howe:

*It's rather like sending our opening batsmen to the crease only for them to find that before the first ball is bowled, their bats have been broken by the team captain.*

I am now receiving updates which say not to use the Velocity 1 as site managers' report the fill “will not stay”. This was evident to parishioners in the first instance. The practice of dob and fill and not to return is clearly not working, it is inadequate on our roads and a complete waste of time and money.

**What arrangements are in place for monitoring the repairs so that the right repair is made the first time?**

### **Response from Cllr Ray Bryan:-**

Thank you for your question regarding the condition and maintenance of roads in Shroton and Iwerne Courtney.

Our Highways Maintenance Plan, which can be viewed on the Dorset Council website, sets out clear service levels for maintenance activities, which includes our reactive response to potholes.

We acknowledge your concerns for public safety and the frustration of repeat repairs. We are committed to a right-first-time approach. However, during the coldest and wettest months of the year we sometimes need to carry out temporary repairs to make them safe before a permanent repair can be made.

All Dorset's roads are part of an inspection regime where our officers inspect defects and monitor repairs. However, if anyone wants to report a pothole, the best way to do it is online via the council's website.

### **Question 3 – submitted by Mr N Bennett**

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, MAINTENANCE**

Twelve rural roads are being reconstructed in Dorset this autumn thanks to the Department for Transport's Pothole Fund. Dorset Highways has identified roads that have evolved from tracks and have very little construction, and have significant cracking, undulation or pothole damage, for permanent repair. This programme of work will use in-situ recycling to strengthen the foundation of the road before a double surface dressing is applied to seal the roads from water damage and provide a textured surface for vehicles.

Jack Wiltshire, Dorset Council Head of Highways, said: "These roads have become so damaged they require extensive repairs to ensure that homes and businesses can continue to be safely accessed. They have little to no foundation, and under the road surface is essentially the gravel track they have evolved from over many years. "Our contractor will use a specialised machine to simultaneously crush the existing carriageway and mix it with cement to create a hydraulically bound material for the road foundation. This process is around a third of the cost of a conventional carriageway reconstruction method and is also a more sustainable treatment – by reusing material already in place and producing zero waste from the site. "He added: "Without the money we've been awarded from the DfT's Pothole Fund we would have to continue with costly reactive, piecemeal, short-term repairs on these roads, which isn't good enough. "Mr Wiltshire's 3rd Paragraph perfectly describes the state of large stretches of Telegraph St, Bessell's Lane, Fairfield Rd and New Field Lane, which surround Shroton, and are used by the heavy lorries, tractors, delivery lorries etc. hauling for Park Farm, the Solar Farm and Wessex Internet, as well as private cars. These stretches, apart from the very numerous potholes, are breaking up, some with extensive cracking which releases

large stones and flints. Other areas show where the surface is so worn that the bed rocks are exposed and are in the process of breaking free. Proper surface rebuilding, as described by Mr Wiltshire, would extend the life of the road for many many years, obviating the inadequate and very temporary yearly patch up job, which as Mr Wiltshire said, "isn't good enough". Saving considerable costs in the long term.

**My question is: - When can we expect proper repairs, as described by Mr Wiltshire, just 15 months ago, to take place?**

**Response from Cllr Ray Bryan:-**

Most of our highway funding comes from the Department for Transport. As this is a set amount, roads nearing the end of their life are assessed by experienced engineers to establish the best treatment option. A works programme is then setup based on our available funding.

Last year we produced a forward looking road maintenance programme based on the most up to date road condition, primarily for the A, B and C road network. New Field Lane and Fairfield Road have been identified for work to be carried out this financial year.

January's pattern of very cold overnight temperatures on already wet roads has had a significant impact across the country. We're taking this into account as we assess the rest of the programme that will need to be delivered this year. Based on the prioritisation criteria set out in our policy, the full list of schemes planned for the financial year 2023/24 will be ready by the end of March.

**Question 4 – submitted by Jane Ashdown**

When members of STAND – Save the Area North of Dorchester - have met Councillors to discuss the progress of the revised Dorset Local Plan, and in particular DOR 13, we have frequently been told that Councillors are unable to comment in case their remarks are seen as predetermination.

This seems to us to run counter to the role of a local councillor as set out on the council's website: "Councillors act as a communication channel between the council and its citizens. They promote citizens' interests and needs to the council and assist the public to better understand the issues being addressed by local government and the services it provides."

STAND trusts that the Council does not wish to stifle continuing public discussion regarding the draft Local Plan, and therefore values the role of Councillors as a "communications channel."

In December Councillor Walsh was quoted in the media as saying: "The North Dorchester Garden Community development is already part of the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland local plan and is part of the future of Dorset."

He later apologised for this misleading statement, saying it was not an indication of predetermination on his part, but simply a mistake.



**Will the Leader of the Council now accept that members of the Council may express opinions in public about the proposals in the draft Local Plan, and that this may be considered an indication of predisposition rather than predetermination or, in the final analysis, that they could simply be mistaken?**

**Response from Cllr Spencer Flower:-**

Like anyone else a councillor can be predisposed to a particular point of view. That is to be expected and is, I am told, perfectly lawful. What we must not do is approach decisions having already made up our minds in advance and unwilling to listen.

There are dangers in a councillor associating themselves closely with one particular pressure group and speaking after having listened only to that group. Doing so can give the impression that they have made up their mind in advance and even that they are speaking on behalf of that group.

My encouragement to councillors is to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer before committing in public to a particular point of view.

**Question 5 – submitted by Cllr Luke Wakeling and Cllr Colin Huckle**

It is extremely disappointing, that the CGR Steering Group has taken the view of an extremely small minority of residents. With 9 comments for "Option One", and 32 comments for "Option Two", that is a net response of 23 comments. From two towns with a combined population of 60,000, the Steering Group has eliminated one option, based on the input of just 0.04% of residents.

The LGBCE guidance is quite technical, but clear what principles should be followed, to create good community boundaries. Even more disappointingly, within the responses received, very few responses actually address the principles required by the guidance. Whilst some people have strong opinions about boundaries for emotional or historical reasons, the task at hand is to set boundaries fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and in accordance with the applicable laws. In the evidence collected, there is very little to support the option carried forward.

WTC's proposal was a modification of Option One, improving those parts which offered poor democracy and did not follow the principles in the guidance. In particular; the requirement to address anomalous boundaries (§15-17, §26 and §84-85), the need for good electoral equality (§161-162, §165-166), and creating good building-blocks to improve the upper boundaries (§85), for whenever they might next be reviewed. It is also notable that the guidance, which speaks of Parish Councils up to 31 members in size (§154), was published before the Localism Act 2011, which has drastically changed the role that Parish Councils fulfil. WTC is an elected body, representing the 53,000 residents of Weymouth, and made an honest submission, that follows the guidance, in good faith. It is quite undemocratic, that this alternative will not be taken forward for public consultation.

The draft warding in your papers tonight, has two wards proposed – Nottingham and Lanehouse, that have extremely poor electoral quality, fewer than half the number of electors/members of the other wards. This impacts negatively on the fairness of elections across Weymouth and is contrary to §164,166 & 167 of the guidance.

WTC provides significant services, particularly in relation to the visitor offer and tourism, that support huge economic benefits to the area. Residents who are connected to Weymouth, and benefitting from the services that WTC provides, should be within the Weymouth boundary, and sharing the cost for these services.

The option that most closely met the requirements of the LGBCE, has been discarded before the main public consultation, without good reason. The residents of Chickerell and Weymouth have now got no choice, just a bad option.

**Why has the Steering Group ignored the very clear guidance? To have done this makes the proposal flawed.**

#### **Response from Cllr Spencer Flower:-**

When formulating the Draft Recommendations for public consultation, the Community Governance Review working group have taken into account many factors, not solely the responses received during the initial public consultation that ran from 1 November to 28 December. This includes the requirements of legislation, the Guidance issued by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, electoral forecasts for the distribution of electors likely to occur in the next 5 years, as well as responses to the public consultation. The working group has also taken into account the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) report that was prepared for the creation of Dorset Council wards. The Commission state that their final recommendations for Dorset Council wards, based on evidence received, reflect the three statutory criteria of: • Equality of representation • Reflecting community interests and identities • Providing for effective and convenient local government.

The working group were particularly mindful of the Guidance that says that no parish ward should be divided by a district boundary where reasonably practicable and have strictly applied this principle wherever possible. The situation in Weymouth is fairly unique in Dorset where the majority of parish wards cross principal council boundaries as a result of Dorset Council and Weymouth Town Council being created at the same time, and neither the principal council that created the Town Council warding, nor the LGBCE creating Dorset Council warding, having an awareness of each other's proposed warding arrangements.

Dorset Council attended a meeting with Weymouth Town Council prior to the closure of the most recent period of public consultation, and reiterated that the Council would strictly apply the Commission's Guidance that parish wards should not be divided by Dorset Council ward boundaries wherever this was reasonably practicable. Contrary to this guidance offered at that meeting, Weymouth Town Council submitted warding proposals, not based on either of the two options being consulted on, which crossed Dorset Council ward boundaries.

Whilst the Commission have based Dorset Council wards on evidence received that the Council has sought to follow wherever possible, the working group recognise that Weymouth Town Council do not feel that the boundaries accurately reflect the communities and for this reason, Full Council today is being asked to agree an undertaking to work with the Town Council when the Dorset Council Wards are next reviewed to put forward a proposal that both parties feel represents the communities within the parish of Weymouth.

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**Full Council  
20 October 2022**

**Questions submitted by Councillors**

**Question 1 – submitted by Cllr Paul Kimber**

The Portland community are clearly very upset and disappointed by the headlines on the 16th of December regarding the future of the Portland hospital, despite the need to get the MIU reopened.

As the Dorset Council knows the Portland community showed their concerns, and reiterated the need for the MIU to reopen, by linking arms around the hospital.

Leading members of the Portland community recently campaigned for COVID vaccination clinic to be held at the Portland hospital. This was very successful, and again the feedback from the Portland community this was very well received.

The Portland hospital development unit has also continually campaigned for the Portland hospital MIU to reopen.

Portland needs a MIU when will this much needed MIU will reopen?

**Response from Cllr Peter Wharf:-**

Thank you for the question. As you know, I forwarded you an update via email in advance of full Council which highlighted that while the Portland MIU remains closed, residents are able to access the urgent care unit at Weymouth hospital. In my response I pointed out that this is a decision that rests with Dorset Healthcare, as the provider of the service. However, I did also say that I would raise the matter with NHS Dorset, and Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust, as the provider of the service.

I have since received this response from Dawn Dawson, acting Chief Executive of Dorset Healthcare. She states: 'There are no immediate plans for changes with the MIU position. We continue to try and manage the urgent care demand across the system in the most efficient way according to the resource available, vacancies and sickness levels, Weymouth Urgent Treatment Centre is the local alternative for residents.' Dawn also highlighted that the Trust was holding a listening event on 8 February to hear first-hand from local people and to try to understand the needs that may not be being met locally – not just from urgent care.

**Question 2 submitted by Cllr Matt Hall**

As Dorset Council moves towards a new Local Plan, will Cllr Walsh confirm that D.C. will use this time wisely to develop additional Supplementary Planning Documents such as a Householders Guide to Extension Design to enable a better understanding of planning requirements and a more consistent approach to the decision-making

process? Such documents are proven to assist Councillors, Town & Parish Councils, Developers, the wider public and Town Planners.

**Response from Cllr David Walsh:-**

The priority area of work for the planning policy team continues to be the local plan. If resources allow, informal guidance for applicants may also be prepared, though we are likely to be cautious about preparing further Supplementary Planning Documents at the moment, as the changes currently proposed by national government suggest that existing Supplementary Planning Documents will only remain in force for a limited period once the new system is introduced.

**Question 3 submitted by Cllr Matt Hall**

As the Kitt Hill situation in Sherborne rapidly approaches its first birthday with no current sign of a solution, can the Portfolio Holder for Highways please confirm what Dorset Council is doing to speed up the much needed and overdue repairs to the property wall that has so negatively impacted residents, businesses, and tourists for far too long.

**Response from Cllr Ray Bryan:-**

Dorset Council fully recognises the concerns raised by the Local Councillors in relation to Kitt Hill. Throughout this complex issue both Officers from Dorset Highways and Building control have made sure that the safety of the public has been maintained and the road is passable with traffic control. We have been in constant engagement with the owners, and we believe that the works needed will be agreed and more information will be given in the near future.

**Question 4 submitted by Cllr Nick Ireland**

With so many large commercial roofs across the county, could the respective portfolio holders outline what Dorset Council is doing to promote the system of prior approval for solar panel installations on commercial premises?

**Response by Cllr David Walsh:-**

It is recognised that Dorset Council has a positive role to play in securing a net zero future and our commitment to this is set out in the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan, a refresh of which is due to be considered by Cabinet in March. The planning system also has a vital role to play in supporting this, and Dorset Council is currently preparing interim guidance and a position statement on climate change, together with a sustainability checklist for planning applications and guidance for occupiers of listed buildings. With the agreement of Cabinet at its meeting in March, the position statement will be the subject of consultation before it is finalised.

The installation or alteration of solar equipment on non-domestic premises benefits from permitted development rights. This is subject to limitations and conditions, one of which requires prior approval in some cases, such as where sites are within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, conservation areas, or on listed buildings. Dorset Council must exercise care not to predetermine its position as the Local Planning Authority in considering prior approval applications when these are needed. However, through our pre-application advice service (which is accessible via the Council's website) we can help any commercial or business operator to understand what may or may not require planning permission and, where permission is required, will be able to positively advise on any proposals for renewable energy generation.

**Question 5 – submitted by Cllr Howard Legg**

Church Street, Upwey, gets flooded regularly following moderate or heavy rainfall. This has been experienced by local residents for decades.

The appropriate local authority, currently Dorset Council, places flood signs on the road, puts cones in place, clears debris and cuts escape channels for the water, all of which have limited effect and follow the occurrence. The latest example of this follow up action occurred in late January. No substantial works are undertaken to either prevent water covering the road or to drain it away before flooding occurs.

When can local residents expect Dorset Council to fulfil its obligations to manage this problem before the road gets flooded and to ensure partners such as the Environment Agency as well as local landowners do what they are obligated to do?

**Response by Cllr Ray Bryan:-**

Thank you for raising your concerns about the drainage at Church St, Upwey. Let me assure you that Dorset Council recognise that there is an issue here and that they are fulfilling their obligations to manage this problem. Colleagues from the Highways and Flood Risk Management teams are working with the Environment Agency to agree the next steps that need to be taken. The Highways team are currently designing a drainage improvement scheme that will involve replacement of about 60m of pipework. This still needs to be agreed by the Environment Agency, but we are working closely with them to obtain their support.

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## **Budgets 2023/24 – Secunder response**

Firstly, can I congratulate Cabinet Member – Gary Suttle and other members of the Cabinet, as well as senior officers Aidan Dunn, and his team in finance, along with other Service Directors and all those involved, for the excellent work that has been carried out in the preparation of the 2023/24 budget we have before us this evening. This is without doubt Chairman, a well-presented budget; a budget which has been zero based. A soundly based Budget which has enabled members of this council to get a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities we will face in the coming months and years ahead.

Can I echo the remarks made by Gary Suttle regarding the key role that the two cross-party Budget Cafes and the two Scrutiny Committees have played this year, in what has been a very challenging process. Ensuring we are able to achieve a balanced budget; achieved once again without the need for reductions in services and with a combined Council Tax and Social Care Precept coming in below the prevailing referendum limit of 5%. Such an approach has allowed for the involvement of members cross-party, fitting well with the pledge I made at Annual Council in May 2019 that we should work in a collaborative way across the chamber, working at all times to achieve the best outcomes for the people of Dorset. This healthy financial situation has not happened by accident, but through sound fiscal management of the business of this council, which has ensured, once again that we can achieve a balanced budget with no services cuts. This is quite unique in the current financial climate in Local Government.

We still of course have much more to do, but I believe we are clearly on the right track, moving forward at pace, having achieved so much since May 2019. Honouring our pledges to the people of Dorset.

Gary Suttle eloquently set out the assumptions on which the budget has been based, so I will not dwell on this further.

Chairman, we have before us this evening a well prepared, soundly based budget which meets the statutory requirement of being balanced without the need to reduce, or cut services. However, despite the considerable savings made to date of over £76.0m and those projected; along with additional funding from Government for Social Care, we have still needed to increase our council tax, albeit below the referendum limit. This was not a decision taken lightly, and I appreciate some of the concern expressed by Dorset taxpayers. However, we must do the right thing. We must look after those who need our help. The young people in care and those with age related health and mobility issues, continue to need our support so they can cope. Without those savings and increases in Council Tax we would have been faced with the prospect of reductions in discretionary services to balance budgets. Thankfully, we have avoided such a situation.

I will continue to press Government for multi-year settlements for future years. As well as the need for a better settlement, which accounts for the additional costs of providing services in a predominantly rural County; and a change to the formula used to calculate annual grant allocations, which currently favour urban areas rather than Shire Counties. As you are aware Chairman, I take every opportunity to be a strong advocate for Dorset with Government. Dorset deserves a better deal. For far too long we have been treated unfairly by successive Governments down the years. I am optimistic that we are making our case well for more central government funding and testament to that optimism was the better than expected settlement for 2023/24 for social care which has helped to mitigate risk and has underpinned the strength of this budget.

So, Chairman I will conclude by confirming my full support for this budget, as per the recommendations set out in the report before us tonight. This will be a budget that enables this Council to offer the best outcomes overall for the communities we serve. Helping to establish a basis on which to take this council forward in a strong, financially sound and structured way; enabling us to fulfil our ambitions to serve the communities of Dorset well, through transformation of council structures and investments in our front-line services. This fits well with the promises made to the people of Dorset when Local Government Reorganisation was first proposed and subsequently approved by the Government.

Yes, we remain bold and ambitious, but we must also make sure we maintain strong, structured and stable finances. This is the bedrock for being able to achieve our key priorities as set out in the Dorset Plan and the Cabinet Commitments. In other words, doing the boring bit well will always pay dividends. It is surely the foundation on which we can build for the present and the future for Dorset Council.

Thank you, Chairman

As I normally do in preparation for this meeting, I looked back on my previous responses to the proposed budget of the day and the theme that stands out, despite my various efforts to phrase the same thing in different ways, is that the burden of providing services to our residents and the inequity in having to support a significantly skewed demographic, falls vastly on the resident population of our area.

There is of course an argument that this is genuine local government, where we all pay for what we receive. But it isn't, because what we do pay is via our Council Tax bills, the system which replaced Thatcher's Poll Tax and which is increasingly regressive with regard to property values, takes little account of ability to pay, and is widely regarded as fundamentally unfair.

This budget for a change doesn't take the maximum council tax increase possible, a move presumably designed to try and move Dorset Council down from the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest council tax in the country to somewhere lower in the top 10 but has consequences in both permanently reducing the funding available to this council until it ceases to exist, so forever essentially, and possibly impacting on the success of future funding bids to central government. It also fails to match inflation, with most estimates of UK inflation for the remainder of 2023 and early 2024 averaging out at about 6%.

And because of the nature of Council Tax, the benefit of this decision isn't targeted by any means at all to those most in need. Other councils in England have proposed taking the maximum possible and then been creative in establishing a method of redistribution, acknowledging both the system's failures and the diverse needs of their populations. It is regrettable that this administration didn't propose to do similar but here we are relying on our long suffering residents and phase of the moon dependent government handouts.

I hope that all members of this council have read the 'Forgotten Towns' treatise published last year, highlighting the preventable decline of Weymouth and Portland over the last thirty years with shocking statistics, amongst others, relating to social mobility and how far below the national average wage the area is, with the associated deprivation that brings.

The cry we hear every year is that Dorset doesn't get enough funding from government and yet nothing changes. The RSG is still absent and much of what we do receive involves this council investing considerable time and expense to take part in the current bidding system, where London-based civil servants decide how and where regional money is spent.

Most agree the bidding system is no longer fit for purpose, but we did at least receive notification of £19m in 'levelling up' funding for Weymouth recently.

£19m, which you'd like to think will be spent constructively but in reality, much will go on necessary harbour repairs which previous administrations have failed to carry out due to the failure to reinvest harbour profits, and literally destructively to demolish buildings on land we own in the forlorn hope that it will attract capitalist investment rather than us seizing the opportunity to make a difference to our residents and developing it ourselves. The ghost of 'Charles Street' truly has risen.

And in case you missed it, the funding is just for Weymouth, not Portland; when you take Weymouth out of the equation, Portland's statistics are even worse, yet it receives nothing, and the plague of poverty will continue to spread.

So, we're left as usual with a government that is not only now kwartenging our nurses and doctors, but also its own Tory administrations.

This budget fails to acknowledge or address the damage caused by Trussonomics and turns a blind eye to the demographic timebomb of social care in Dorset, because the current administration won't be in power when it explodes.

When Dorset Council was formed in 2019 we were told that our immediate ambition was to be 'safe and legal.' That limited ambition, with the addition of action on the Climate and Ecological Emergency, seemed reasonable in those early days.

And since then we've been buffeted by the Covid pandemic, a range of other budgetary pressures, particularly in Adult Social Care, and now the inflation crisis.

In this context, with gross expenditure set to increase by 8.5% to enable us to basically carry on doing what we've done this past year, no projected cuts to frontline services, and a large contingency fund to mitigate against inflationary pressures, this is another safe and legal budget, and we'll vote for it, because that's the responsible thing to do.

But, whilst thanking officers and members for all their hard work on this, we do feel this budget lacks ambition. Three areas where there is some agreement across this chamber are:

- First, the recognition, which has come through strongly in Scrutiny, that we must do much better on housing, to keep our young people and essential workers in the county
- Second, the need to reverse the ongoing decline of public transport, especially in rural areas, to improve the mobility of mainly younger, poorer and elderly residents
- and third, that we should be expediting a more commercial approach to our surplus assets to resource greater ambition in these and other areas, such as Youth Services. In Weymouth and Portland alone, 6 Youth Clubs have closed since the swingeing cuts implemented by our predecessor council and I'm disappointed that the Youth Fund has been frozen at £100k.

Significant improvements to housing and public transport would require significant resources but, to contemplate the re-introduction of Council Housing and, as Councillor Bryan has suggested, running our own public transport, we'd expect to see in this budget at least some modest funding for capacity building, but it's not there. In relation to climate mitigation we invested in staff to work out how to do it, prior to securing substantial funds to get on with it, and we'd like to see the same with social housing and public transport.

So, whilst we will support this budget, we think this Council can do better than safe and legal, and should be preparing itself to tackle some of our more entrenched issues.

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Thank you Chair:

Cllr Rob Hughes the Isle and Royal manor of Portland.

Speaking on behalf of the independent group, we are happy to accept this budget as proposed.

I take this opportunity, to thank Cllr. Suttle and his team of officers, along with the other cabinet members and their teams, who have also worked hard over the past months to bring in this budget at a rate of just under 4%. for this year.

The 2 budget cafes did an excellent job of informing members of the issues faced by the council going forward, as well as the cost savings already made since this council was formed in 2019.

Thank you also to the members of the two scrutiny committees for your time and careful consideration of this budget.

I'm sure It cannot have been easy for those involved to keep our costs down in these challenging times for people across the whole county, whilst maintaining a high level of service for all our residents and communities within Dorset for the year ahead within a well-balanced budget.

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## Full Council 11 May 2023

### Community Governance Review – Parishes in the Vale of Allen group, the Winterborne Farringdon group, Chickerell and Weymouth – Final Recommendations

#### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

**Local Councillor(s):** Vale of Allen – Cllrs P Brown and R Cook  
Winterborne Farringdon – Cllr R Tarr  
Chickerell – Cllrs J Dunseith and J Worth  
Weymouth – Cllrs P Barrow, T Ferrari, D Gray  
R Hope, B Heatley, H Legg, L O’Leary, J Orrell,  
C Sutton, G Taylor and K Wheller  
Portland – Cllrs S Cocking, R Hughes and P Kimber

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Jacqui Andrews  
Title: Service Manager, Democratic and Electoral Services  
Tel: 01258 484325  
Email: [jacqui.andrews@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:jacqui.andrews@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Public

**Brief Summary:** To agree Final Recommendations for Community Governance of the parishes forming the Vale of Allen Grouped Parish Council, (namely Crichel, Gussage All Saints, Gussage St Michael, Hinton and Witchampton), the parishes forming the Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council (namely Bincombe, Whitcombe, Winterborne Came, Winterborne Herringston and Winterborne Monkton) and also the parishes of Chickerell and Weymouth. The Final Recommendations for new governance arrangements will be the subject of a Reorganisation Order that will take effect on 1 April 2024.

#### Recommendation:

That the proposals set out in Appendix 1 be adopted by the Council as Final Recommendations for the purposes of the Community Governance Review that will form a Reorganisation Order taking effect on 1 April 2024.

## **Reason for Recommendation:**

To ensure that community governance arrangements within the Dorset Council area are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in the area and achieve electoral equality.

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 On 22 October 2022, Full Council approved terms of reference for a community governance review, looking at the existing parish governance arrangements in the parishes forming the Vale of Allen group, the Winterborne Farringdon group, Chickerell and Weymouth, inviting representations from local councils, residents and any interested parties in respect of current and future arrangements.
- 1.2 Initial submissions were invited between 1 November 2022 and 28 December 2022, and these were reviewed by a working group made up of the Group Leaders and the Deputy Group Leaders in preparing the draft recommendations which were agreed by Full Council on 14 February 2022. The draft recommendations were subject to a period of public consultation between 20 February 2023 and 17 April 2023.
- 1.3 A cross-party member working group considered all the responses received during the second period of public consultation and propose Final Recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

### **2. What is a Community Governance Review?**

- 2.1 A Community Governance Review is a legal process whereby the Council will consult with those living in the area, and other interested parties, on the most suitable ways of representing the people in the area identified in the review. This means making sure that those living in the area, and other interested groups, have a say in how their local communities are represented.
- 2.2 Section 93 of the 2007 Act allows principal councils to decide how to undertake a Review, provided that it complies with certain duties in that Act including details set out relating to consultation, the need to ensure any proposals reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient. The Council has to publish its recommendations but the manner in which the Council consults with its residents is not prescribed.
- 2.3 A Review can consider one or more of the following options:
  - creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;

- the naming of parishes and the style of new parishes and the creation of town councils;
- the electoral arrangements for parishes (for instance, the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding);
- grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes;
- other types of local arrangements, including parish meetings.

### 3. **Why is the Council undertaking a Review?**

3.1 The Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published in 2008 recommends that principal councils should undertake a review of its area every 10-15 years. For some areas of the Council, a Review has not been undertaken for some time and, following the creation of Dorset Council, it is deemed appropriate to undertake a Review of all parishes within its area.

3.2 In this review, the Council was guided by the relevant legislation in Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”), the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews that the government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England have issued ([“the Guidance”](#)), and the [Terms of Reference](#) for the review that were adopted by Full Council on 22 October 2022.

### 4. **Considerations of the Review**

4.1 Electoral equality: It is an important democratic principle that each person’s vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the election of councillors. There is no provision in legislation that each parish councillor should represent, as nearly as may be, the same number of electors. However, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England believes it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation between different parish wards. Such variations could make it difficult, in workload terms, for councillors to adequately represent the interests of residents. There is also a risk that where one or more wards of a parish are over-represented by councillors, the residents of those wards (and their councillors) could be perceived as having more influence than others on the council.

When undertaking a review and considering electoral arrangements, the Council is required to consider any change in the number and distribution of electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with

the day when the review starts. Electorate forecasts have been prepared by the Council using extant planning permissions and the Local Plan to project the five-year electorate forecast. It may be the case that some areas have wards that will have fewer electors than in other wards within the same parish when the Reorganisation Order takes effect in 2024, but the figures are calculated on the anticipated electorate in 2027.

- 4.2 Whilst the Working Group recognised that Dorset Council are not bound by the same rules as the Commission in terms of reflecting principal council ward boundaries, the Guidance says that the principal council “should be mindful of the provisions of Schedule 2 (electoral change in England: considerations on review) to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 in relation to reviews of district or London borough and county council electoral arrangements. These provide that when the LGBCE is making changes to principal council electoral arrangements, no unwarded parish should be divided by a district or London borough ward or county division boundary, and that no parish ward should be split by such a boundary. While these provisions do not apply to reviews of parish electoral arrangements, the LGBCE believes that, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, they are relevant considerations for principal councils to take into account when undertaking community governance reviews.”. This Guidance was reiterated by the LGBCE when advice was sought and they responded on 25 May 2022 advising “The Council are not bound by the same rules as the Commission in terms of reflecting principal council ward boundaries, so you don’t have to recommend a parish ward that follows the Dorset Council ward boundary. However, in the spirit of effective and convenient local government, our view would be that it might be advisable to do so.”
- 4.3 Dorset Council recognises that Weymouth Town Council do not agree with the LGBCE that the principal council wards recognise local communities. Dorset Council undertakes to work with Weymouth Town Council at a future date when the LGBCE next reviews Dorset Council warding arrangements, to put forward a proposal that both parties feel represents the communities within the parish of Weymouth, based on the recommendations set out in this review. Whilst the LGBCE will not change the outer parish boundary, their powers do enable them to make alterations to warding arrangements within the parish. Dorset Council will work with the Town Council to develop a proposal that both feel reflects the communities at the time of that Review of Dorset Council warding arrangements. However, in the meantime, Dorset Council will follow the Guidance that states that the parish wards and principal council wards should not cross wherever reasonably practicable, recognising that this might be necessary in a small number of cases to ensure good electoral equality. Dorset Council has applied this Guidance throughout its community governance review considerations both for this review and the earlier review for the whole of the Dorset Council area.

- 4.4 The working group has balanced these submissions against the wider requirements and duties that are placed upon it in the 2007 Act.
5. **Final recommendations by area**
- 5.1 Appendix 1 to the report sets out the Final Recommendations of the cross-party member working group by parish.
6. **Implementation**
- 6.1 If Full Council chooses to accept the Final Recommendations of the Review, concluded after public consultation, it will be necessary for the legal team to prepare a Reorganisation Order and publish this together with the reasons for the changes, making maps available for public inspection. There are also various bodies that must be notified of the changes including the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- 6.2 Any changes to governance arrangements of the parishes will take effect ahead of the next scheduled parish elections in May 2024.
7. **Financial Implications**
- 7.1 There are no financial implications for Dorset Council associated with this report.
8. **Environmental Implications**
- 8.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.
9. **Well-being and Health Implications**
- 9.1 There are no well-being and health implications associated with this report.
10. **Other Implications**
- 10.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.
11. **Risk Assessment**
- 11.1.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:  
Current Risk: LOW  
Residual Risk: LOW

12. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 12.1 A detailed Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and can be found attached to the Full Council report on 15 July 2021 [here](#).

13. **Appendices**

- 13.1 Appendix 1 – Final Recommendations for changes to parish Community Governance Arrangements.

14. **Background Papers**

[Local Government Boundary Commission for England - Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)  
[Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#)

**Dorset Council**  
**Community Governance Review**  
**Final Recommendations**

**Recommendations:**

1. That the proposals set out in this Appendix be adopted by the Council as Final Recommendations for the purposes of the Community Governance Review.
2. That the Final Recommendations form a Reorganisation Order to take effect on 1 April 2024.

**Contents:**

<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	Page 2
<b>Section 2: General principles and types of recommendation</b>	Page 3
<b>Section 3: Evidence</b>	Page 4
<b>Section 4: Assessment and Final recommendations</b>	
Vale of Allen	Page 6
Chickerell	Page 7
Weymouth	Page 8
Winterborne Farringdon	Page 11

## Section 1: Introduction

Dorset Council has undertaken a Community Governance Review of all the parishes within the Vale of Allen Grouped Parish Council, Chickerell, Weymouth and all parishes in the Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council. In this review, the Council was be guided by the relevant legislation in Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the [Guidance](#) on Community Governance Reviews that the government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England have issued (the Guidance), and [the Terms of Reference](#) for the review that were adopted by Full Council on 20 October 2022.

This Review relates to the areas named in the paragraph above and gives consideration to changes to parish areas and parish electoral arrangements. These changes include the alteration, merging, creation and abolishing of parishes; and the naming of parishes/wards. They also involve changes to the council size (the number of councillors to be elected to the council), and whether to divide the parishes into wards for the purposes of elections. The general principles for the proposals that the Council is making, along with the different types of recommendations, are outlined below.

Town and parish councils are the first tier of local government, and they are statutory bodies. They serve their electorates; they are independently elected by their local government electors, and they raise their own precept. Town and parish councils work towards providing local services and improving community well-being. The National Association of Local Councils describes their activities as falling into three main categories: representing the local community; delivering services to meet local needs and striving to improve the quality of life and community well-being within their areas.

Dorset Council is responsible for community governance arrangements within the Council area, and it is considered good practice to review community governance every 10-15 years.

On 1 November 2022, the Council commenced an 8-week period of consultation requesting comments on a number of options for the areas included in the review, and welcoming alternative options for consideration from the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils, Members of Parliament, existing parish councils, local residents and other interested organisations – the consultation closed on 28 December 2022. The review was widely publicised through the Council's website, social media, and advertisements in local libraries as well as through the parish councils themselves.

The Group Leaders and their deputies met as a working group and gave careful consideration to all submissions received. They also took into consideration the analytical work undertaken to determine where electoral equality is no longer met or will not be met in 2027 (the period that has to be taken into account for the purpose of the review). The working group developed Draft Recommendations that were supported by Full Council on 14 February 2023, and these Draft Recommendations were subject to a further 8 week period of public consultation between 20 February



2023 and 17 April 2023 giving parish councils, electors and other interested persons or organisations with an opportunity to comment on the Draft Recommendations prior to Final Recommendations being made by Full Council.

The Final Recommendations, agreed by Full Council on 11 May 2023, will form the basis of a Reorganisation Order that will take effect on 1 April 2024 ahead of the elections for the parish councils scheduled for 2 May 2024.

The Community Governance Review does not include the electoral arrangements for Dorset Council or Parliamentary seats. This is the responsibility of central government through the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and the Boundary Commission for England, respectively.

## **Section 2: General principles and types of recommendation**

### **Parish areas and their boundaries**

The Council began its review by giving consideration to the parish areas and their boundaries. In particular, the Council has sought to ensure that each parish:

- reflects the identities and interests of the different communities in the area. The Council considers that this is a ‘community of identity’ test, which is especially applicable to the new developments that presently cross parish boundaries.
- is effective and convenient. The Council considers that this is a ‘viability’ test, and the Council is keen to ensure that parishes are viable and are able to actively and effectively promote the well-being of their residents and to contribute to the real provision of services in their areas in an economic and efficient manner.
- takes into account any other arrangements for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in the area that reinforce the ‘community of identity’ test.

### **Parish grouping and electoral arrangements**

The Council has considered submissions in respect of both the grouped parishes of Vale of Allen and Winterborne Farringdon and also the towns of Chickerell and Weymouth.

The Council has considered the electoral arrangements of each parish (the term “parish” includes the towns). The term ‘electoral arrangements’ covers the way in which a council is constituted for the parish, including:

- the number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- the division (or not) of the parish into wards for the purpose of electing councillors;
- the number and boundaries of any such wards;
- the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward;
- the name of any such ward.

The Council is required by law to consider any change in the number or distribution of the local government electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the Review started. The Final Recommendations take into account the electorate as the Council has projected it to 2027.

The Council has also given careful consideration to representations made in respect of the current warding arrangements of the parish councils. In considering whether a parish should be divided into wards for the purposes of elections to the parish council, the Council is required by legislation to consider the following:

- whether the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient;
- whether it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the council.

In allocating parish councillors to parish wards, the Council has been particularly mindful of the government's Guidance that "it is an important democratic principle that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the elections of councillors" to a parish council. While there is no provision in legislation that each parish ward councillor should represent, as nearly as may be, the same number of electors, the Council concurs with the Guidance that it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation between different parish wards. The Council has therefore attempted to ensure that the ratio of electors to councillors across the different wards of a parish is equitable insofar as that is practical.

### **Section 3: Evidence**

In undertaking the Review, Dorset Council has taken into account key data for each parish and parish ward. The range of data used is as follows:

**Electorate size and housing development data:** Analysis of the present sizes of parish councils in the area together with the 5 year projected electorate. The 5 year projected electorate has been calculated using information about the scale and exact locations of expected future housing developments within the Council area. It is also based on the Council's housing development plans as set out in the Local Plan.

**May 2019 Elections data:** The Council has used the Returning Officer's data on the number of nominations at the last ordinary elections for the parishes in May 2019 relative to the number of seats, including the numbers of parish councillors that did not go through the process of nomination and election and who were therefore co-opted to the parish council to fill vacancies that remained unfilled at those elections.

**Responses to the Initial Submissions consultation:** the Council has considered responses to the consultation between 1 November 2022 and 28 December 2022 (the first of two public consultations planned for the Community Governance Review). All responses received can be viewed on the Community Governance Review page of the Council's website [here](#).

Responses to the Draft Recommendations: the Council has considered responses to the proposals on the Draft Recommendations in a consultation period that ran from 20 February 2023 to 17 April 2023. All responses received can be viewed on the Community Governance page of the Council's website [here](#).

Council size: The legal minimum number of parish councillors for each council is five (Section 16, Local Government Act 1972). The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) considers that a council of no more than the legal minimum of five members is inconveniently small, and it considers that a practical working minimum should be seven (NALC Circular 1126/1988). The government's Guidance makes the point that "the conduct of parish council business does not usually require a large body of councillors" (Guidance, paragraph 157).

There is no requirement in legislation that the number of councillors should be proportional to electorate size. The view given in the Guidance is as follows: "In considering the issue of council size, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England is of the view that each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities. Nevertheless, having regard to the current powers of parish councils, it should consider the broad pattern of existing council sizes. This pattern appears to have stood the test of time and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have provided for effective and convenient local government." (Guidance, paragraph 156).

With regard to parish wards, the Guidance adds another consideration, which is that the levels of representation and the ratios of electors to parish councillors should be broadly equitable. This report has already noted the emphasis in the Guidance "that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the election of councillors" (Guidance, paragraph 166).

## Section 4: Assessment and Final Recommendations

### Recommendation 1 – Vale of Allen Grouped Parish Council (Parishes of Crichel, Gussage All Saints, Gussage St Michael, Hinton and Witchampton)

Based upon the evidence currently available, Dorset Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would:

- help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community;
- help to secure a more effective and convenient governance of the area.

During the consultation period on the draft recommendations, 4 responses were received, all of which supported the draft recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Dorset Council's Final Recommendation is to make the changes to the current governance arrangements as set out in Map Recommendation No.1 moving the area marked "A" from the parish of Pamphill to the parish of Witchampton, and moving the area marked "B" from the parish of Hinton to the parish of Witchampton.

## Recommendation 2 - Chickerell

Based upon the evidence currently available, Dorset Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would:

- help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community;
- help to secure a more effective and convenient governance of the area.

The current governance arrangements for Chickerell are as follows:

Parish Ward	Number of councillors	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2027	Electors per councillor 2027
Charlestown & Littlesea	4	1733	1780	445
Chickerell Village	6	3205	4179	697

The current governance arrangements for the Parish Council do not achieve electoral equality, and it is the Government's Guidance that "it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government either for voters or councillors, to have significant difference in levels of representation between different parish wards". Dorset Council recommends a change to councillor numbers for each Ward as set out below – the proposal retains the same overall number of councillors for the parish of Chickerell but the distribution between the 2 wards is proposed to change to achieve electoral equality:

Parish Ward	Number of councillors	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2027	Electors per councillor 2027
Charlestown & Littlesea	3	1733	1780	593
Chickerell Village	7	3205	4179	597

The responses where commentary was given supported the proposals for Chickerell in that there were no changes to the boundaries of the parish, with one respondent specifically supporting the redistribution of Councillors. The responses that opposed the draft recommendations did not give any reasons for this.

**Recommendation:** Dorset Council's Final Recommendation is to change the distribution of councillor numbers to achieve electoral equality.

### **Recommendation 3 – Weymouth**

Based upon the evidence currently available, Dorset Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would:

- help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community;
- help to secure a more effective and convenient governance of the area.

It was recognised that the existing parish ward boundaries of Weymouth are split by Dorset Council ward boundaries as a result of the creation of Weymouth Town Council at the same time as the creation of Dorset Council when the ward boundaries of each were not known. This situation does not occur anywhere else within the Dorset Council area. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England Guidance states that this should be avoided wherever reasonably practicable, and Dorset Council has applied this Guidance throughout its community governance review considerations both for this review and the earlier review for the whole of the Dorset Council area.

The draft recommendations that were agreed for consultation did identify 2 wards with very low elector numbers. Taking into account the important need to ensure electoral equality, the Working Group is proposing to Full Council that in a very small number of cases crossing Dorset Council Ward boundaries has been necessary to achieve this. However, the principle of not crossing Dorset Council ward boundaries wherever reasonably practicable has otherwise been applied.

Whilst considering the responses, the Working Group noted that the suggested proposals put forward by the Town Council sought to bring areas currently in the parish of Chickerell into the parish of Weymouth. These proposals had previously been rejected by the Working Group, and subsequently Full Council, taking into account the viability of the parish of Chickerell, and also the evidence from local residents who stated that their sense of community and social identity sits with Chickerell.

In preparing the Final Recommendations, the Working Group has taken into consideration the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) report that was prepared for the creation of Dorset Council. It states that their final recommendations reflect the three statutory criteria of:

- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

At the Full Council meeting on 14 February 2023, Dorset Council recognised that Weymouth Town Council do not agree with the LGBCE that the principal council wards recognise local communities. Dorset Council undertakes to work with Weymouth Town Council when the LGBCE next reviews Dorset Council warding arrangements, to put forward a proposal that both parties feel represents the communities within the parish of Weymouth, based on the recommendations set out in this review. Whilst the LGBCE will not change the outer parish boundary, their powers do enable them to make alterations to warding arrangements within the parish. Dorset Council will work with the Town Council at a future date to develop a proposal that both feel reflects the communities at the time of that Review of Dorset Council warding arrangements. However, in the meantime, Dorset Council will follow the Guidance that states that the parish wards and principal council wards should not cross wherever reasonably practicable.

The Working Group carefully considered all the representations put forward by a number of Weymouth residents in respect of the proposed warding of the area, and the alternative proposal that was submitted. The Working Group carefully considered comments received about where the residents of the new development on the land transferring from Bincombe may perceive their “community” to be but were not persuaded by the arguments put forward. The Working Group were of the view that it would not be unusual for residents of large housing developments to cross main roads to use amenities and, in fact, there was a proposal to reduce the speed limit on the road that would have to be crossed between the new development in Bincombe and the Littlemoor ward. However, this was not the case if residents had to travel into the Upwey and Broadwey Ward to use facilities there. It was recognised that it was not unusual to have 2 distinct communities split by a main road being in a single ward.

It remains the view of the Working Group Council that the area of land to be developed, that currently sits in the parish of Bincombe, should sit within the parish of Weymouth as future residents are likely to identify with Weymouth as their community.

Whilst Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council supported the move of the southern boundary of Bincombe where a large scale development is proposed, they did not support the move of other existing properties, particularly Nightingale Drive. They expressed concern that this may impact on electoral equality of Dorset Council’s ward boundaries, and may also make their own parish potentially unviable. Dorset Council considered this submission carefully but felt that in the interests of good community governance, that the residents of the Nightingale Drive area should reside within a single parish, and not be split across 2 different parishes.

Weymouth Town Council's submission included a suggestion to extend the southern boundary of the parish from its position at the centre of the now demolished Ferry Bridge at Small Mouth Cove to the centre point of the existing Ferry Bridge some 100m to the south. Dorset Council supported this proposal and the boundary change formed part of the Draft Recommendations. Portland Town Council objected to this proposal setting out concerns that any boundary changes could compromise future development opportunities by splitting the administrative area of the Fleet entrance between two Town Councils. The Working Group did not agree with this observation and propose the change set out in the Draft Recommendations should form part of the Final Recommendations.

The Working Group is proposing that the Draft Recommendations form the basis of Final Recommendations with an amendment to warding arrangements of Nottingham and Lanehouse to ensure improved electoral equality.

**Recommendation:** Dorset Council's Final Recommendation is to revise parish and ward boundaries as identified in Map Recommendation No.3 with associated Ward maps and to assign Ward names councillor numbers as follows:

Parish Ward	Number of councillors	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2027	Electors per councillor 2027
Littlemoor	2	3681	4089	1873
Preston	2	4350	4350	2160
Melcombe Regis	2	3548	3970	1985
Radipole & Southill	2	3929	3870	1935
Lodmoor	2	3424	3406	1703
Wyke North	2	3517	3730	1865
Wyke South	2	3519	3732	1866
Rodwell	2	3938	4153	2077
Upwey & Broadway	3	3846	4744	1581
Westham West	3	3670	4886	1629
Westham East	2	3231	3797	1899



#### Recommendation 4 - Winterborne Farringdon

Based upon the evidence currently available, Dorset Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would:

- help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community;
- help to secure a more effective and convenient governance of the area.

The current governance arrangements for Winterborne Farringdon are as follows:

Parish	Number of councillors	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2027	Electors per councillor 2027
Bincombe	3	435	843	281
Whitcombe	2	20	19	10
Winterborne Came	3	37	36	12
Winterborne Herringston	2	23	22	11
Winterborne Monkton	3	58	61	20

The current governance arrangements for the Grouped Parish Council do not achieve electoral equality, and it is the Government's Guidance that "it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government either for voters or councillors, to have significant difference in levels of representation between different parish wards". Having taken account of areas of Bincombe moving within the parish of Weymouth, Dorset Council therefore recommends a change to councillor numbers as follows:

Parish	Number of councillors	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2027	Electors per councillor 2027
Bincombe	2	435	69	35
Whitcombe	2	20	19	10
Winterborne Came	2	37	36	18
Winterborne Herringston	2	23	22	11

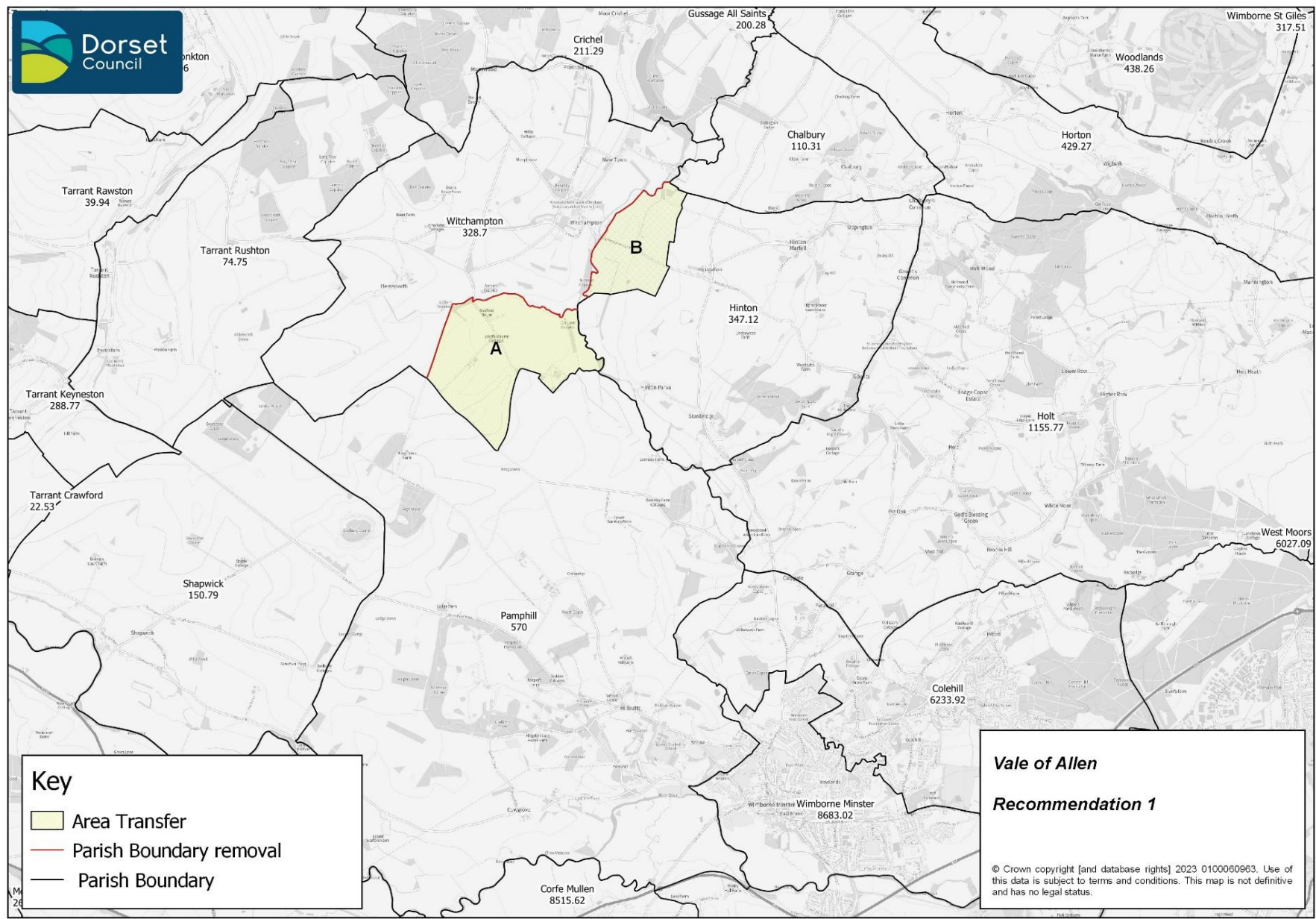
Winterborne Monkton	2	58	61	30
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**Maiden Castle** - Currently, the entrance and approach to Maiden Castle lies within Winterborne Monkton parish. The Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council have proposed that the whole of the Maiden castle site, is moved within the parish of Winterborne Monkton as currently 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the boundary abuts Winterborne Monkton parish. It is suggested by the Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council that such a change would not impact on Winterborne St Martin parish as there would be no issues of representation and no burden or loss of income for the affected parishes. They believe that moving the boundary to unite the castle with its landscape would allow a more coherent case for the ongoing preservation and protection of its approaches in the future. No representations were received in respect of this proposal during the initial public consultation, so Dorset Council is proposing this change as part of its Draft Recommendations.

**Loscombe** – Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council’s view is that Loscombe protrudes discordantly into Whitcombe parish. They state that few properties are involved and whilst the Parish Council has no strong feelings, they suggest that a more coherent western boundary for Loscombe would be to follow the A352 rather than the line of the old road that was lost after the 1769 Turnpike Act diverted the road. No representations were received in respect of this proposal during the initial public consultation, so Dorset Council is proposing this change as part of its Draft Recommendations.

Two responses were received to the Winterborne Farringdon proposals objecting to the draft recommendations. One had no commentary for the objection, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> asked that the boundaries be left as they are without citing any rationale for the submission to leave the boundaries unchanged. It is thought that the comment most probably relates to the changes to the Bincombe parish boundary moving some of the properties from the parish of Bincombe into the parish of Weymouth.

**Recommendation:** Dorset Council’s Final Recommendation is to change councillor numbers to achieve electoral equality and to amend the parish boundaries as reflected in Map Recommendation No.4 Map, moving the area marked “A” from the parish of Winterborne St Martin to Winterborne Monkton, and moving the area marked “B” from the parish of West Knighton to Whitcombe. .

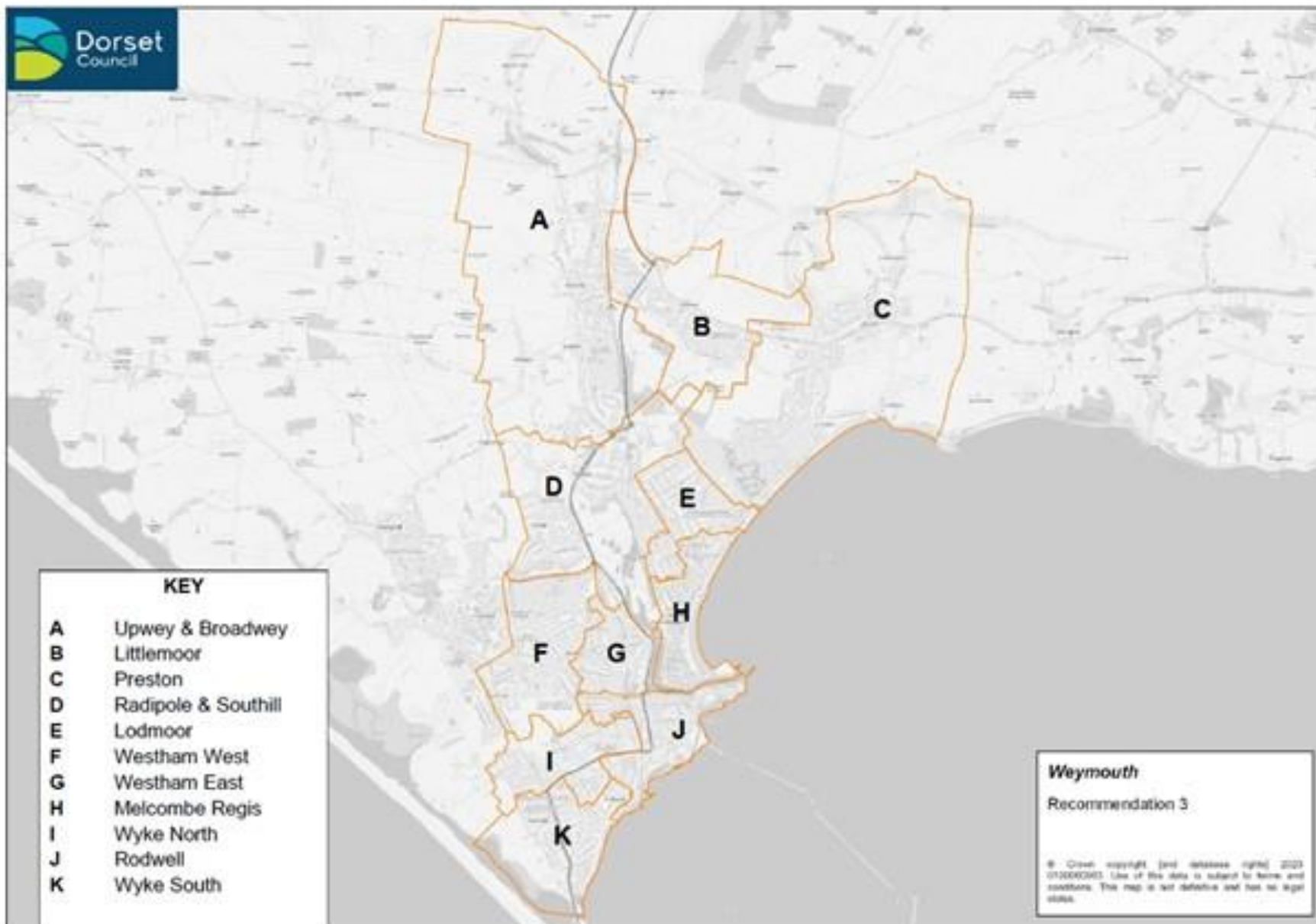


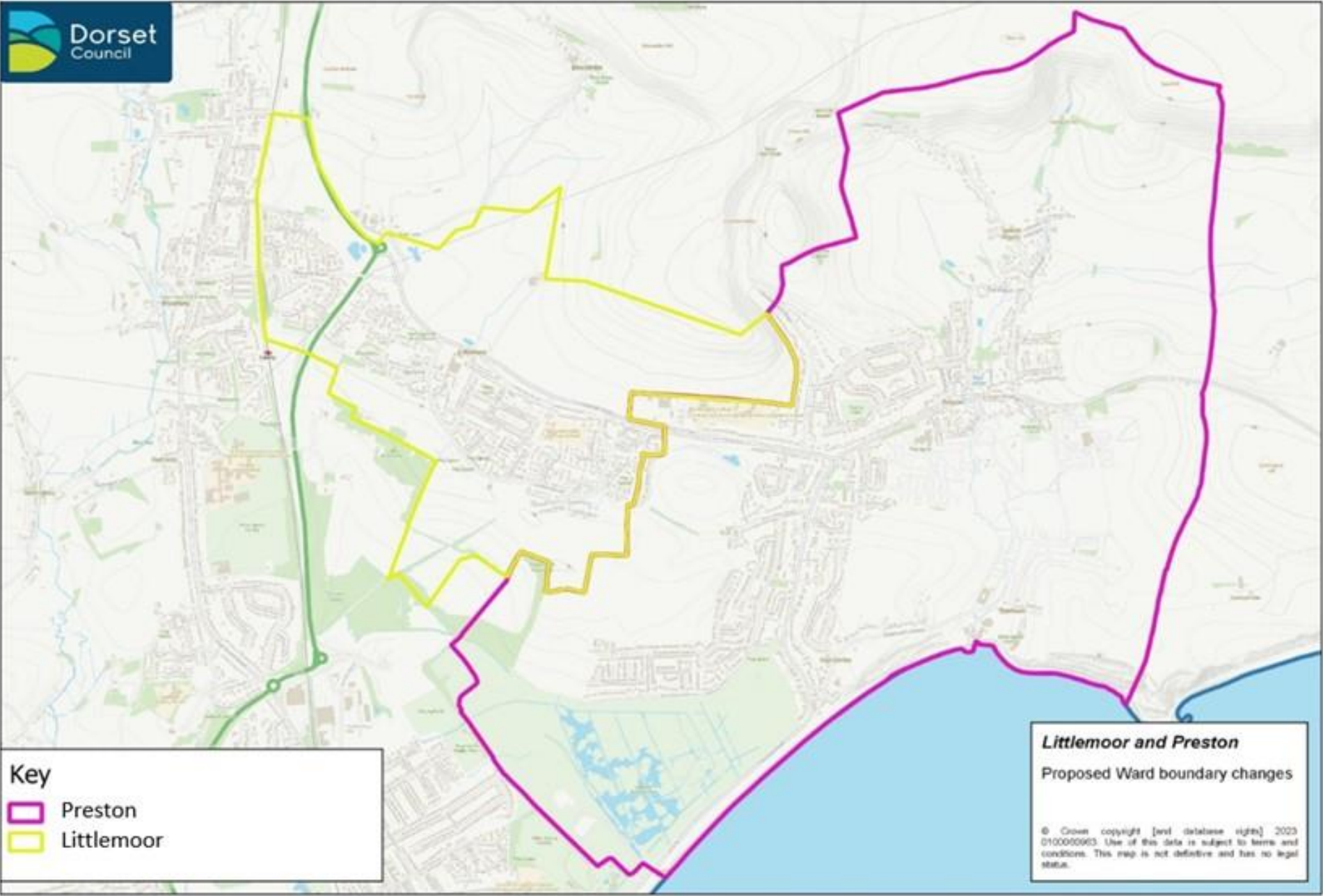
**Key**

- Area Transfer
- Parish Boundary removal
- Parish Boundary

**Vale of Allen**  
**Recommendation 1**

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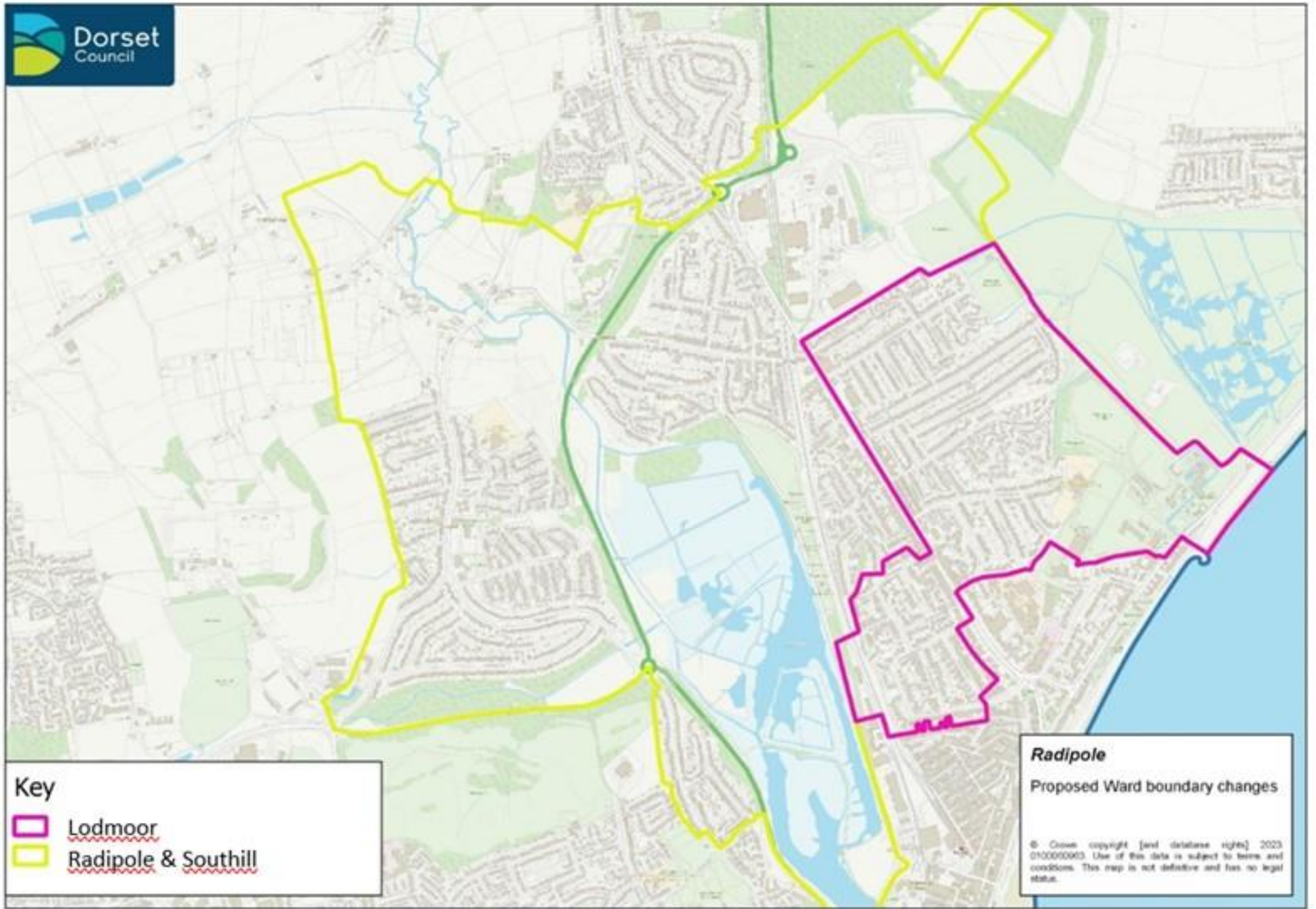


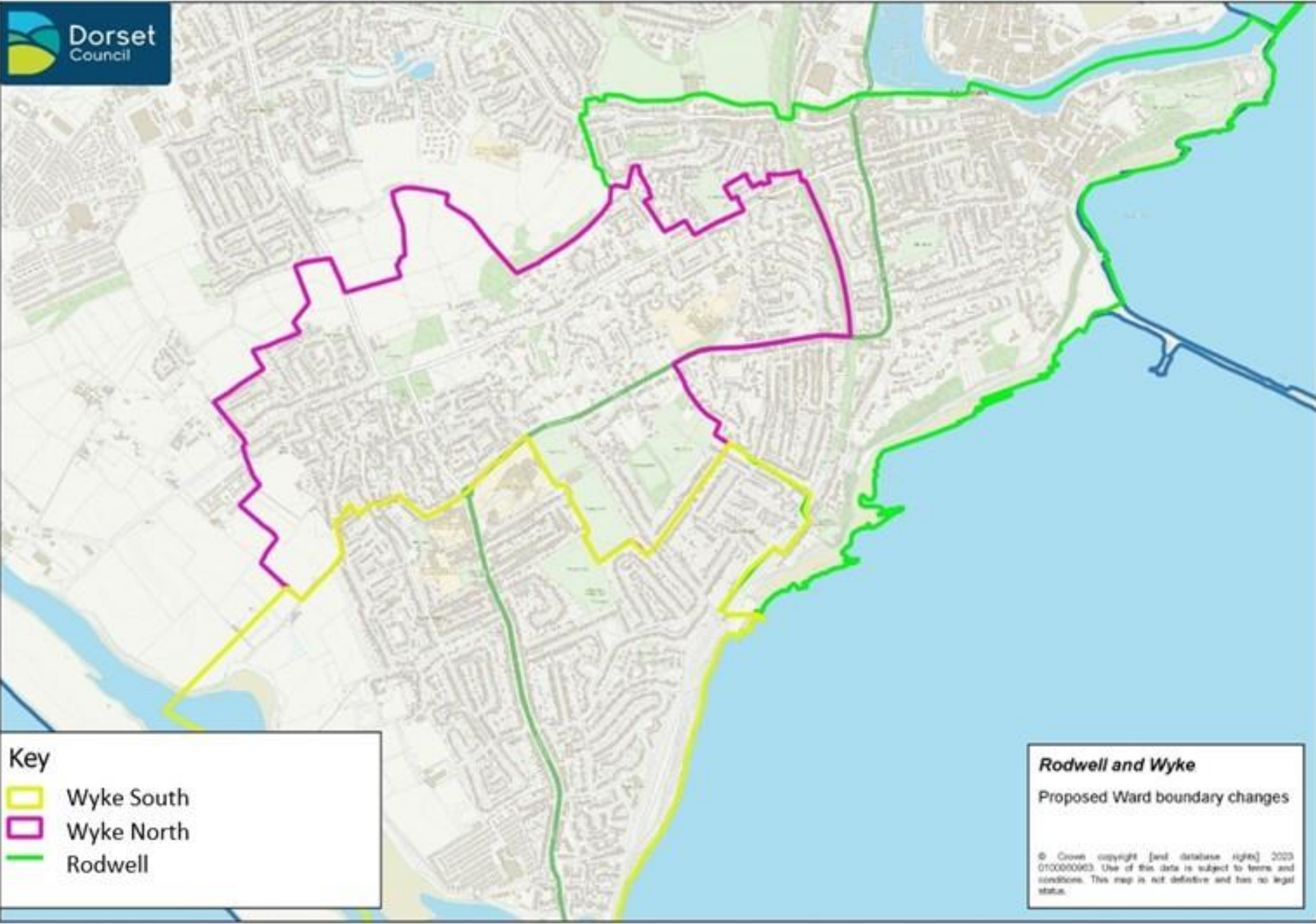
**Key**

-  Preston
-  Littlemoor

**Littlemoor and Preston**  
Proposed Ward boundary changes

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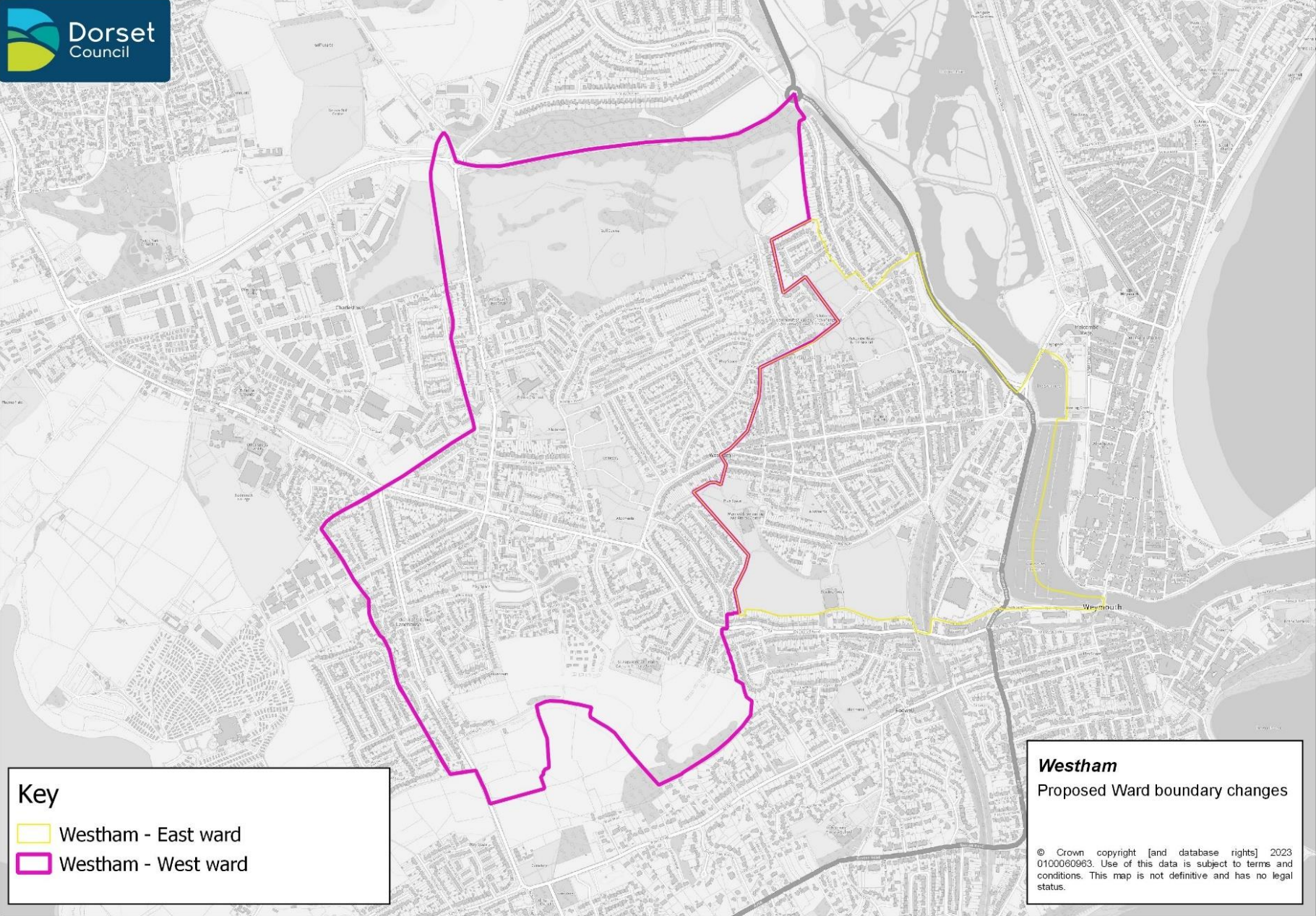


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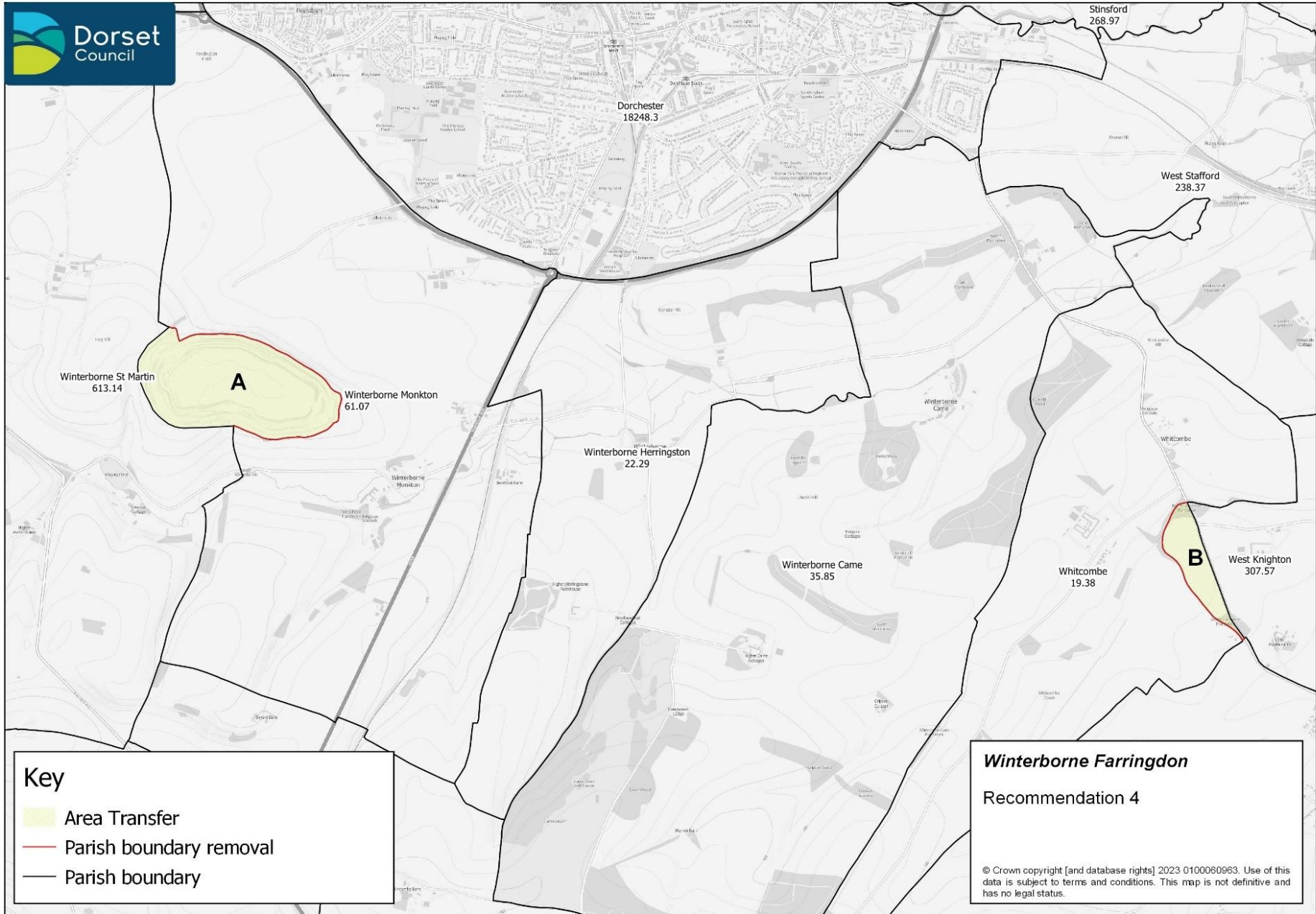
-  Wyke South
-  Wyke North
-  Rodwell

**Rodwell and Wyke**  
Proposed Ward boundary changes

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## CGR AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY CLLR LOUIE O'LEARY

I would like to make the below recommendation as an alternative community governance review proposal. This map is amendment to a proposal myself and Cllr Luke Wakeling of Weymouth council tried to come up with as a compromise. Sadly Weymouth council did not support the proposal. Therefor I would like to propose the below plan as alternative to their recommendation and also to Dorset council plan.

The numbers for all the wards are below. The variation in electors/seat is 1400-1900 (mean 1723) Just two wards with a var over 200.

Ward Name	No. of Councillors	Electorate	Electorate per Cllr
Broadway Upwey and Wey Valley	3	5202	1734
Littlemoor	2	3728	1864
Preston and Sutton Poyntz	3	4301	1433
Radipole	2	3747	1873
Lodmoor	2	3529	1764
Melcombe Regis	2	3970	1985
Westham West	3	5385	1795
Westham East	2	3316	1658
Rodwell	2	4221	2110
Chapplehay and Harbourside	2	3932	1966
Wyke Regis	2	3462	1731

Total Seats: 25

Average electors/seat: 1723

### **This alternative does key things**

- Cuts the number of Weymouth councillors from 29 to 25
- Keep Weymouth town council ward within the same Parliamentary boundary so no ward is stretched over two constituencies.
- Only breaks Dorset council ward boundaries twice (both times in order to keep within Parliamentary boundaries and to achieve good electoral equality and keep good community cohesion)
- Listens to the concerns of Littlemoor and Chickerell residents and delivers for them and doesn't split communities and therefor achieves cohesion
- Gives communities such as Sutton Poyntz and Southill name recognition
- Has better electoral equality than the Dorset council option one as seen below and eliminates anomalies like Nottingham ward.

## CGR AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY CLLR LOUIE O'LEARY

Dorset council ward options numbers. There are nine wards with a variance over 130 and six with a variance over 200.

n	seats	n/seat	var	name
3619	2	1809	60	Littlemoor
4515	2	2257	508	Preston
3848	2	1924	175	Upwey and Broadway
3513	2	1756	7	Melcombe Regis
176	1	176	-1572	Nottingham
3424	2	1712	-36	Lodmoor
4049	2	2024	275	Radipole
4249	2	2124	375	Rodwell
3231	2	1615	-133	Westham East
3670	2	1835	86	Westham West
2803	2	1401	-347	Wyke North
1005	1	1005	-743	Lanehouse
3852	2	1926	177	Wyke South

Total Seats: 24

Average electors/seat: 1748

### **Difference with Dorset council's proposal**

What this plan does as opposed to Dorset council's is moves the 500 houses North of Littlemoor and the area around Nightingale drive out of the parish of Winterbourne Faringdon into the Weymouth parish and into the ward of Upwey and Broadway as per the wishes of people in the consultation as they will share more similarities both in terms of community and representational circumstances. This gives Littlemoor good electoral equality as opposed to DC and Weymouth's plan. It also moves the Nottingham ward (which is the Chickerell DC ward) into the Upwey and Broadway ward to make a three member ward which would have far better electoral equality. It does cross DC border but keeps it in the same parliamentary boundary. It would keep Chickerell's border the same as DC recommends but move the Weymouth part of the Lanehouse ward into the Westham West ward. The rest of the plan largely keeps to Weymouth town councils wishes.

Electoral equality by variation from average number per councillor which is around 1725

**CGR AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY CLLR LOUIE O'LEARY**

Ward	DC plan 24 Cllrs	My plan 25 Cllrs	WTC plan 1 24 Cllrs	WTC plan 2 24 Cllrs
Littlemoor	60	139	146	146
Preston	508	-292	-258	-258
Upwey	175	-9	289	289
Melcombe	7	148	32	32
Lodmoor	N/A	39	38	38
Radipole	275	148	93	93
Pye/Rodwell	-347	385	55	N/A
Rodwell/Nothe	375	241	70	70
Westham East	-133	70	158	-151
Westham West	86	-67	261	-6
Wyke regis	177	6	157	157
Nottingham	-1572	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lanehouse	-734	N/A	N/A	N/A
Highest var dif	2080	385	547	547

**Difference with WTC proposal**

My submission is different from WTC's because it also put a focus on community cohesion which is ignored in their submission. My plan realises that while electoral equality is important so are natural boundaries, community boundaries, and cohesion of neighbourhoods. WTC's plan is designed for good equality but it doesn't even deliver that. It argues that the north side of Weymouth is over represented while the south side of Weymouth is under represented. But their plan would see Littlemoor and Upwey both area's that will see most of the future development under represented to offset overrepresentation in Preston which is an easily definable community that will grow. This is unfair as they are separate communities and should not just be lumped together. The difference in representation from wards in my plan is minimal the biggest difference is between Upwey with -264 and Lodmoor (which is central not Southern Weymouth or north by central or even East) which is 196 this is a difference of 460 which is small in the main scheme of things. Lodmoor is highly unlikely to expand while Upwey, Broadway, and Nottingham are likely to and already are. Weymouth's own plan has far worse differences between the largest and smaller variation from average. Weymouth's objection to the north of Weymouth being over represented by claiming that anything south of Upwey Broadway, Littlemoor and Preston is south Weymouth while ignoring their being a north south, east west and central area of the town. This would be like claiming that everything south of Newcastle is the south. While it is southern to Newcastle it is not the South of England there are midlands, west and Eastern areas. Weymouth's plan claims to include future developments and take them into consideration. However several developments in Littlemoor and Preston including a new housing estate have been missed and ignores the planned development in the Sutton Poyntz neighbourhood plan. I fear Weymouth's plan that will leave areas of Weymouth's northern side under represented (A fact they have tried to hide by offsetting this against Preston's

numbers) is part of further evidence that they have a negative attitude to this part of the town. Each ward should be looked at on its own merit.

**As said below it does cross Dorset council boundaries twice.**

1. It cuts the Winterbourne and Broadmayne ward and Upwey and Broadway ward by merging the Nightingale drive area and the development North of Littlemoor into the Upwey and Broadway town council ward. This area would still be split over two DC wards in the current DC proposal but would cut the same area by putting in the Littlemoor and Preston ward. This proposal though at least means that they share the same MP (As Upwey and Broadway is due to go into West Dorset), and town councillor as opposed to just a town councillor.
2. The second place is the Upwey and Broadway ward and Nottingham are by merging Nottingham (which is in the Chickerell DC ward) to the rest of the proposed Upwey and Broadway ward. This achieves far better electoral equality than the current proposal and also ensures that they are all within West Dorset.

**Community cohesion boundary's and names**

Weymouth unlike most towns in Dorset council but similar to Poole and Bournemouth is a collection of smaller communities, estates, villages, and suburbs. This means we must do what we can to keep those communities sovereign and separate but withing Weymouth councils area.

Historically certain smaller communities in Weymouth have been overlooked and swallowed up. Southill with is a growing suburb has been part of Westham North since 1979 despite the fact it is a separate community and has more in common with the Radipole area. Sutton Poyntz is a village which is on the north side of Preston and has always been in both borough and county council and now town and unitary wards part of the same ward as Preston. This makes sense but it would be beneficial to ensure its name is included in the ward name.

The North side of Weymouth has easily definable communities. Littlemoor, Upwey and Broadway and Preston and Sutton Poyntz with Radipole on the edges. These communities make up under half of Weymouths population but will be where most of the large scale development will come from. It is crucial that

1. These communities have separate representation to protect their interests and ensure they have a voice on issues
2. These communities aren't at the mercy at the rest of the town by ensuring it has fair community based representation.
3. As these communities spill out into other administrative and electoral domains (parliamentary, unitary wards and currently other parish's) they need to keep within the same domain
4. These communities are different. On the north side Littlemoor is the second most deprived area in Weymouth while Preston and Upwey and Broadway

are the most affluent. It is key to ensure Littlemoor has separate representation.

### **Conclusion**

This plan delivers a plan that balances borders, numbers and communities. It cuts the number of councillors, achieves good electoral equality, keeps town council wards within Dorset council wards where it can and keeps them entirely within the same constituency. It listens to the voice of residents in ensuring that communities are protected are cohesive. I hope you look at this as an alternative when making your final decision.

### **My objections to Littlemoor being merged with the area to our north**

-The official government guidance on community governance review states in paragraph 163 that "no parish ward should be split by such a boundary" this proposal cuts the Littlemoor ward across the Winterbourne and Broadmayne ward and the Littlemoor and Preston ward. If you move these borders you will render my unitary ward name mute as I would instead be the councillor for "some of Littlemoor and Preston". This will add confusion to the already confusion borders that are not congruent with DC boundaries.

-While guidance has been stated that certain circumstances may warrant expectations I still have not been informed why an exception were made for Nottingham (which at the next election would have 1 Councillor elected by 177 and only increase to 498 in 5 years' time while Littlemoor would have 1864 per one 1 Councillor) but not the 500 houses north of Littlemoor and the existing area around Nightingale drive

-Issues have been raised around the viability of neighbouring parish council and of the importance of local borders. But if the Nightingale drive area is taken into Weymouth Winterbourne and Faringdon parish council W&FPC they claim they will become unviable. If the area of 500 houses is kept in their area they say they will become unviable surely the two answers would be to either bring in the area up to the natural border of the Ridgeway into Weymouth town council. Or W&FPC need to adapt to new housing in order to remain viable. Surely people cannot just pick and choose what they want and don't want. Littlemoor is arguing only to retain what it already has which is sovereign separate community representation at a town council level based on its historic identify and borders.

-Littlemoor has had separate representation on the lower tier authority since 2004. Prior to that it was part of the North central ward. This ward was split into Wey Valley and Littlemoor because it was felt that both given their differences should have separate representation. Merging Littlemoor with a housing development in another area would go against this

## **CGR AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY CLLR LOUIE O'LEARY**

-In paragraph 161 it says "In urban areas community identity tends to focus on a locality, whether this be a housing estate, a shopping centre or community facilities. Each locality is likely to have its own sense of identity. Again, principal councils should consider each case on its merits having regard to information and evidence generated during the review." This can easily be said of the Littlemoor. It is built around the community centre and shopping precinct at its middle and kept separate from Preston by fields to its East, a large nature reserve to its south, either the A354 relief road or main railway line depending on where you class Littlemoor. To its north it is separated by Winterbourne Faringdon by the A353 Littlemoor road.

-Paragraph 162. States "In reaching conclusions on the boundaries between parish wards the principal council should take account of community identity and interests in the area, and consider whether any particular ties or linkages might be broken by the drawing of particular ward boundaries. Principal councils should seek views on such matters during the course of a review. They will, however, be mindful that proposals which are intended to reflect community identity and local linkages should be justified in terms of sound and demonstrable evidence of those identities and linkages." Littlemoor residents through their own voice, the view of myself as one of their Dorset councillors, in their attendance at a public meeting where they unanimously agreed and through their community group and community safety group have shown they feel they are a distinct community separate from the area to their north. This is due to historic boundaries, differences in representation both and past and present and demographic.

-Paragraph 159 It states that "In considering whether or not a parish should be divided into wards, the 2007 Act requires that consideration be given to whether:

a) the number, or distribution of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and

b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented"

As stated above these proposals create the ward of Nottingham in order to keep within Dorset council boundaries and to ensure the area/community of a parish is separately represented. Why can this not be done for the area north of us within Winterbourne and Farringdon?

-The rest of the guidance continually brings up the issue of cohesion 31 times in 54 pages, it also brings up identity 14 times, yet there seems to be little attention paid to the potential breaking of community and neighbourhood cohesion in regards to Littlemoor due to the feeling that the rules, guidance and attention paid to responses are not being treated fairly compared to other areas. Nor does it address concerns raised that Littlemoor's identity could be threatened.

-The arguments for or against various aspects of these proposals seem to be based on finance and precept monies. This is despite the guidance stating otherwise. The arguments against the Littlemoor ward gaining this new development seem to be the only ones being made based on the guidance and spirit of the rules and guidance not on money.



## **CGR AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY CLLR LOUIE O'LEARY**

-Littlemoor is semi-rural. It is largely housing with some community facilities and some shops. The area to the north will contain housing but also a hotel, car show room and large industrial units this will upset the balance and makeup of the area.

-While some groundwork has been done of this site the 500 homes have not yet been built. Cllr Flower did mention at a public meeting that petitions on specific areas could be brought forward at any time and the guidance does allow it surely it should make sense to keep the status quo and wait to see this development pan out and give the residents of that area a say on what area they live in? This approach is more in keeping with the spirit of the purpose of the community governance review.

-In the original submission of the community governance review Littlemoor's border remained unchanged. Why has this now been changed especially as it is changing the status quo and also breaking important guidelines against the wishes of the community.

-Littlemoor as it currently known sits in the ecclesiastical parish of Littlemoor serviced by St Francis church which for a modern congregation is a healthy number. The 500 houses sits in the ecclesiastical parish of Bincombe serviced by the village church at Holy Trinity which has a small congregation. Keeping these 500 houses linked to Bincombe may help bolster numbers here. The churches of Bincombe, Upwey and Brodaway share the same Vicar as well and are in the same grouping. The banner in St Nicholas church Broadway is emabnnered "Broadway cum Bincombe" showing a long term connection to the two communities.

-Littlemoor residents tend to socialise and congregate at Littlemoor community centre and the Top Club. There are no pubs or cafes on the estate so these venues along with the church tend to be more used for these activities. While residents in the Nightingale drive area tend to socialise at the Standard pub in Upwey and Broadway or the Reynolds institute in Upwey and Broadway. The community to the North will also have its own community centre.

-When discussing issues relating to our community Littlemoor residents use one of the buildings on the estate to hold their residents meetings at either the community centre, the church or the Top Club. The residents in the Nightingale drive area have always tended to use the Reynolds hall or the Memorial Hall in Upwey where their parish council also meets.

-The guidance around community governance talks a lot around cohesion and also brings up the fact reviews should not break up cohesive communities. The resentment against the development of 500 houses to our north and the impact that will have on our community and it's infrastructure is already fomenting. Forcibly merging the two area's against the settled area's will is likely to only increase this resentment.



## Annual Meeting of Council

11 May 2023

## Appointments to Committees, Joint Panels/Boards and Election of Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Susan Dallison  
Title: Team Leader, Democratic Services  
Tel: 01305 252216  
Email: [susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Public

### Brief Summary:

Full Council is asked to review the allocation of committee seats in line with political balance rules and, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, make appointments to committees, joint panels and boards at the Annual Meeting of Council in line with the nominations from the Political Group Leaders. Full Council will also elect the Chairmen and Vice-chairmen of the ordinary committees for the forthcoming municipal year.

Full Council is also asked to delegate authority to the Director of Legal & Democratic, in consultation with the Political Group Leaders, to make in-year changes to committee appointments as and when required.

### Recommendation:

- (a) That the allocation of committee seats in accordance with political balance rules, the appointments to ordinary committees and appointments to joint panels and boards, as nominated by the Political Group Leaders, be approved for 2023/24 as set out in Appendices 1, 2 & 3 respectively:
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Legal & Democratic in consultation with the appropriate Political Group Leader to make in-

year changes to committee, joint panels and board appointments;

- (c) That Full Council appoints committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen for the 2023/24 municipal year (nominations set out at Appendix 4).

**Reason for Recommendation:**

To comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Dorset Council Procedure Rules (as set out in the Constitution).

**1. Political Groups and Percentage Entitlement**

1.1 Where membership of Dorset Council is divided into political groups the Council is required to review and allocate the total number of seats on ordinary committees in accordance with the strength of each political group.

1.2 The number of members of each political group and the percentage entitlement to the overall number of committee seats on ordinary committees is as follows:

Conservative Group – 43 members (52.44% entitlement)

Liberal Democrat Group - 27 members (33% entitlement)

Green Group – 5 members (6.09% entitlement)

ALL – 4 members (4.88% entitlement)

In addition committee seats are allocated to unaligned members:

Cllr Paul Kimber, Labour & Co-operative

Cllr Kate Wheller, Independent

Cllr David Gray, Independent

**2. Allocation of Committee Seats and Appointments to Committees**

2.1 The number of seats on ordinary committees (Appendix 1) are allocated to each political group in the same proportion as the overall size of each political group, as far as is practicable. This excludes appointments to the Cabinet, which are made by the Leader of Council, and any other panel or board where the political balance rules do not apply such as the Health and Well Being Board. In addition to appointments to Cabinet the Leader of Council is also entitled to appoint up to 6 members of the controlling group as Executive Lead members and these appointments will be reported to members at the Annual Meeting.

2.2 Where a political group has the majority of seats on the Council, it must also have, where practicable, a majority of on each individual committee to which appointments are made. This means that the Conservative Group, with 52.44% of seats on the Council is entitled to the majority of seats on all ordinary committees, where this is not possible to achieve a pragmatic approach has to be taken, for example

on the allocation of committee seats to the area planning committees and the Licensing Committee.

2.3 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the 4 principles to be followed, as far as reasonably practicable, when working out political proportionality:

(a) Preventing domination by a single group: That not all the seats on a committee should be allocated to the same political group:

(b) Ensuring a majority group enjoys a majority on all committees: If one political group has a majority in the Full Council, that political group should have a majority on each committee:

(c) Aggregating all committee places and allocating fair shares: Subject to (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the ordinary committees of an authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total number of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and

(d) Ensuring as far as practicable fairness on each committee: Subject to (a) and (c) above, the number of the committee seats which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that committee as is borne by the number of members of the group to the membership of the authority.

2.4 Full Council may waive the political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Council wishes to appoint an alternative number of members from political groups. In order for political balance to be waived no member must vote against the motion, an objection by a single member would make it necessary to apply strict proportionality. This report assumes that the Council does not want an alternative arrangement to that prescribed in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

### 3. **Nominations to Joint Committees, Panels and Boards**

3.1 In addition to making appointments to the Council's ordinary committees there are a number of joint committees, panels and boards to which Dorset Councillors are appointed, including the Pension Fund Committee, Joint Public Health Board, Dorchester Markets Joint Panel and Joint Archives Advisory Board. Details are set out in Appendix 3 and Full Council is asked to approve the allocation of seats in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups.

4. **Appointment of Committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen**

- 4.1 In accordance with committee terms of reference as set out in the Constitution the appointment of committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen will take place at the Annual Meeting of Council unless Full Council agrees alternative arrangements. Under the current governance arrangements set out in the Constitution the Leader of Council will be the Chairman of Cabinet and the Deputy Leader of Council will be the Vice-chairman of Cabinet. The list of nominations for Committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen is set out in Appendix 4, where more than one nomination is put forward a vote will be taken.

5. **Financial Implications**

Chairmen of committees receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in accordance with the Dorset Council Scheme of Members' Allowances.

6. **Environmental Implications** – No direct implications

7. **Well-being and Health Implications** – No direct implications

8. **Other Implications** - None

9. **Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk: LOW

10. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

11. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Allocation of committee seats in accordance with political balance rules

Appendix 2 – Nominations to Committees 2023/24

Appendix 3- Nominations to Joint Committees, Panels and Boards 2023/24

Appendix 4 – Nominations for Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen 2023/24

12. **Background Papers** - None

	<b>Conservative Group</b> <b>43 Members</b> 52.44% of seats	<b>Liberal Democrat</b> <b>Group</b> <b>27 Members</b> 33% of seats	<b>Green Group</b> <b>5 Members</b> 6.09% of seats	<b>ALL Group</b> <b>4 Members</b> 4.88% of seats	<b>Un-aligned</b> <b>3 Members</b> 3.65%
<b>Committee</b>	No. of seats	No. of seats	No. of seats	No. of seats	No. of seats
People & Health Overview (10)	6	4	0	0	0
People & Health Scrutiny (10)	6	3	1	0	0
Place & Resources Overview (10)	6	4	0	0	0
Place & Resources Scrutiny (10)	6	4	0	0	0
Audit & Governance (10)	6	2	1	0	1
Appeals (15)	7	5	1	1	1
Licensing (15)	7	5	1	1	1
Pension Fund (5)	3	2	0	0	0
Strategic & Tech Planning (12)	6	4	1	1	0
Northern Area Planning (12)	6	4	1	1	0
Eastern Area Planning (12)	6	4	1	1	0
Western & Southern Planning (12)	6	4	1	1	0
<b>Total seats</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

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**ALLOCATION OF ORDINARY COMMITTEE SEATS  
POLITICAL GROUP NOMINATIONS - 2023/24**

**PEOPLE & HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Committee size: 10**

**Allocation of seats: Cons 6, Lib Dem 4**

***No member of this committee shall also be appointed to Cabinet***

***No member of this committee shall also be appointed to the People & Health Scrutiny Committee***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Mike Parkes
Conservative	Pauline Batstone
Conservative	Cathy Lugg
Conservative	Tony Alford
Conservative	Jean Dunseith
Conservative	Rebecca Knox
Liberal Democrat	Ryan Holloway
Liberal Democrat	Beryl Ezzard
Liberal Democrat	Stella Jones
Liberal Democrat	Howard Legg

**PEOPLE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Committee size: 10**

**Allocation of seats: Cons 6, Lib Dem 3, Green 1**

***No member of this committee shall also be appointed to Cabinet***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Robin Cook
Conservative	Paul Kimber (Lab)
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Conservative	Louie O'Leary
Conservative	Piers Brown
Conservative	Belinda Ridout
Liberal Democrat	Gill Taylor
Liberal Democrat	Molly Rennie
Liberal Democrat	Nick Ireland
Green	Jon Orrell

**PLACE & RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE****Committee size: 10****Allocation of seats: Cons 6, Lib Dem 4*****No member of this committee shall also be appointed to Cabinet******No member of this committee shall also be appointed to the Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Carole Jones
Conservative	Toni Coombs
Conservative	Val Potheary
Conservative	Sherry Jespersen
Conservative	Tony Alford
Conservative	Les Fry (ALL)
Liberal Democrat	Maria Roe
Liberal Democrat	Roland Tarr
Liberal Democrat	Ryan Hope
Liberal Democrat	Andrew Starr

**PLACE & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****Committee size: 10****Allocation of seats: Cons 6, Lib Dem 4*****No member of this committee shall also be appointed to Cabinet***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Rod Adkins
Conservative	Piers Brown
Conservative	Bill Trite
Conservative	David Shortell
Conservative	Brian Heatley (Green)
Conservative	Barry Goringe
Liberal Democrat	Shane Bartlett
Liberal Democrat	Jon Andrews
Liberal Democrat	David Tooke
Liberal Democrat	Andy Canning

**JOINT OVERVIEW COMMITTEE****Committee size: 10****Allocation of seats: Cons 6, Lib Dem 4: *No member of this committee shall also be appointed to Cabinet*****Re-appointment of membership is sought in order for the Joint Committee to finalise the review of the Libraries Strategy**

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Tony Alford
Conservative	Carole Jones
Conservative	Mike Parkes
Conservative	Cathy Lugg
Conservative	Sherry Jespersen
Conservative	Rebecca Knox
Liberal Democrat	Beryl Ezzard
Liberal Democrat	Stella Jones
Liberal Democrat	Andrew Starr
Liberal Democrat	Howard Legg

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE****Committee size: 10****Allocation of seats: Cons 6; Lib Dem 2; Green 1, Ind 1*****No member of this committee shall also be appointed to Cabinet***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Simon Christopher
Conservative	Rod Adkins
Conservative	Barry Goringe
Conservative	Bill Trite
Conservative	Pauline Batstone
Conservative	Susan Cocking (ALL)
Liberal Democrat	Richard Biggs
Liberal Democrat	Robin Legg
Green	Belinda Bawden
Independent	David Gray

**APPEALS COMMITTEE****Committee size: 15****Allocation of seats: Cons 7; Lib Dem 5; Green 1, ALL 1, Lab 1**

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Val Potheary
Conservative	Barry Goringe
Conservative	Paul Harrison
Conservative	Emma Parker
Conservative	Julie Robinson
Conservative	Louie O'Leary
Conservative	Tony Ferrari
Liberal Democrat	Howard Legg
Liberal Democrat	Molly Rennie
Liberal Democrat	Dave Bolwell
Liberal Democrat	David Morgan
Liberal Democrat	Tim Cook
Green	Belinda Bawden
ALL	John Worth
Lab	Paul Kimber

**LICENSING COMMITTEE****Committee size: 15****Allocation of seats: Cons 7; Lib Dem 5; Green 1, ALL 1, Independent 1**

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Emma Parker
Conservative	Cathy Lugg
Conservative	Paul Harrison
Conservative	Mike Barron
Conservative	Julie Robinson
Conservative	Mike Dyer
Conservative	Susan Cocking (ALL)
Liberal Democrat	Jon Andrews
Liberal Democrat	Derek Beer
Liberal Democrat	Andrew Starr
Liberal Democrat	David Morgan
Liberal Democrat	Sarah Williams
Green	Brian Heatley
ALL	Les Fry
Independent	Kate Wheller

**STRATEGIC AND TECHNICAL PLANNING COMMITTEE****Committee size: 12****Allocation of seats: Cons 6; Lib Dem 4; Green 1, ALL 1,*****This committee will be made up of 4 members from each of the 3 Planning Area Committees (unless political balance requirements necessitate otherwise)***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Robin Cook
Conservative	Sherry Jespersen
Conservative	Toni Coombs
Conservative	Belinda Ridout
Conservative	Jean Dunseith
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Liberal Democrat	Shane Bartlett
Liberal Democrat	David Tooke
Liberal Democrat	Alex Brenton
Liberal Democrat	Dave Bolwell
Green	Kelvin Clayton
ALL	John Worth

**NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE****Committee size: 12****Allocation of seats: Cons 6; Lib Dem 4; Green 1, ALL 1**

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Sherry Jespersen
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Conservative	Belinda Ridout
Conservative	Carole Jones
Conservative	Val Potheary
Conservative	Emma Parker
Liberal Democrat	Stella Jones
Liberal Democrat	David Taylor
Liberal Democrat	Tim Cook
Liberal Democrat	Jon Andrews
Green	Brian Heatley
ALL	Les Fry

**EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE****Committee size: 12****Allocation of seats: Cons 6; Lib Dem 4; Green 1, ALL 1**

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Toni Coombs
Conservative	Mike Dyer
Conservative	Barry Goringe
Conservative	Bill Trite
Conservative	Julie Robinson
Conservative	Robin Cook
Liberal Democrat	Shane Bartlett
Liberal Democrat	Alex Brenton
Liberal Democrat	David Tooke
Liberal Democrat	David Morgan
Green	Mike Barron (Cons)
ALL	John Worth

**WESTERN & SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE****Committee size: 12****Allocation of seats: Cons 6; Lib Dem 4; Green 1, ALL 1**

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	David Shortell
Conservative	Jean Dunseith
Conservative	Louie O'Leary
Conservative	John Worth (ALL)
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Conservative	Kate Wheller (Ind)
Liberal Democrat	Nick Ireland
Liberal Democrat	Dave Bolwell
Liberal Democrat	Sarah Williams
Liberal Democrat	Paul Kimber (Lab)
Green	Kelvin Clayton
ALL	Susan Cocking

**PENSION FUND COMMITTEE****Committee size: 5****Allocation of seats: Cons 3; Lib Dem 2*****Not more than 2 members being also appointed to the Cabinet***

<b>Political Group</b>	<b>Nomination</b>
Conservative	Mark Roberts
Conservative	Peter Wharf
Conservative	Simon Christopher
Liberal Democrat	Andy Canning
Liberal Democrat	Howard Legg

## Final - Appointments to Joint Committees/Panels & Boards - Appendix 3

<b>Shared Lives (2)</b>	<b>Nominations</b>
Conservative	Carole Jones
Liberal Democrat	Beryl Ezzard

<b>Corporate Parenting Board (7)</b>	
Conservative	Kate Wheller (Ind)
Conservative	Carole Jones
Conservative	Mark Roberts
Conservative	Cathy Lugg
Liberal Democrat	Stella Jones
Liberal Democrat	Richard Biggs
Liberal Democrat	Ryan Holloway

<b>Dorchester Markets Joint Panel (8)</b>	
Conservative	Simon Gibson
Conservative	Laura Beddow
Conservative	Simon Christopher
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Liberal Democrat	Roland Tarr
Liberal Democrat	Nick Ireland
Liberal Democrat	David Bolwell
ALL or Green	John Worth

<b>Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (4)</b>	
Conservative	Rebecca Knox
Conservative	Bryon Quayle
Liberal Democrat	Peter Barrow
Liberal Democrat	Richard Biggs

<b>Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Board (2)</b>	
Conservative	Piers Brown
Liberal Democrat	Roland Tarr

<b>Dorset Coast Forum (2)</b>	
Conservative	Mark Roberts
Liberal Democrat	David Bolwell

<b>Dorset Farms Liaison Panel (6)</b>	
Conservative	Mark Roberts
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Conservative	Pauline Batstone
Liberal Democrat	Alex Brenton
Liberal Democrat	Ryan Holloway
ALL	Les Fry

## Final - Appointments to Joint Committees/Panels & Boards - Appendix 3

<b>Dorset Fostering Agency Panel (2)</b>	
Conservative	Cathy Lugg
Liberal Democrat	Stella Jones

<b>Dorset Local Access Forum (1)</b>	
Conservative	Simon Christopher

<b>Dorset Police and Crime Panel (5)</b>	
Conservative	Sherry Jespersen
Conservative	Andrew Kerby
Conservative	Graham Carr-Jones
Liberal Democrat	Peter Barrow
Liberal Democrat	Les Fry (ALL)

<b>Health &amp; Well Being Board (3)</b>	
Conservative - Leader of Council	Spencer Flower
Conservative - Portfolio Holder for People – Adult Social Care & Housing	Jane Somper
Conservative – Portfolio Holder for Children – Educations and Early Help	Byron Quayle
Conservative (substitute)	Cherry Brooks
Conservative (substitute)	Ray Bryan

<b>Harbours Advisory Committee (6)</b>	
Conservative	Mark Roberts
Conservative	Louie O’Leary
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Liberal Democrat	Sarah Williams
Liberal Democrat	Dave Bolwell
ALL	Rob Hughes

<b>Joint Archives Board (3)</b>	
Conservative – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Communities, and Customer Services	Laura Beddow
Conservative	Simon Christopher
Liberal Democrat	Richard Biggs

<b>Learning Disability Partnership Board (2 + 2 Subs)</b>	
Conservative	Cathy Lugg
Liberal Democrat	Maria Roe
Conservative (substitute)	Pauline Batstone
Liberal Democrat (substitute)	Molly Rennie



## Final - Appointments to Joint Committees/Panels & Boards - Appendix 3

<b>Minerals and Waste Policy Joint Advisory Committee (4 + 4 Subs)</b>	
Conservative	David Shortell
Conservative	Belinda Ridout
Liberal Democrat	Shane Bartlett
Liberal Democrat	David Tooke
Conservative (substitute)	Toni Coombs
Conservative (substitute)	Val Potheary
Liberal Democrat (substitute)	Roland Tarr
Liberal Democrat (substitute)	Beryl Ezzard

<b>Pension Board (1)</b>	
Conservative	David Shortell

<b>Schools Forum (2)</b>	
Conservative	Byron Quayle
Liberal Democrat	David Morgan

<b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (3)</b>	
Conservative	Pauline Batstone
Conservative	Mary Penfold
Liberal Democrat	Robin Legg

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## ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL – 11 MAY 2023

## NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN

<b>People &amp; Health Overview Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Mike Parkes	Cathy Lugg
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>People &amp; Health Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b> The Chairman shall be a member of the largest opposition group that is different to that of the Leader	<b>Vice-chairman</b> The Vice-chairman shall not be a member of the same political group as the Leader
Conservative Nominations		
Liberal Democrat Nominations	Gill Taylor	Molly Rennie
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Place &amp; Resources Overview Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Carole Jones	
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		Les Fry

<b>Place &amp; Resources Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b> The Chairman shall be a member of the largest opposition group that is different to that of the Leader	<b>Vice-chairman</b> The Vice-chairman shall not be a member of the same political group as the Leader
Conservative Nominations		
Liberal Democrat Nominations	Shane Bartlett	Andy Canning
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Audit &amp; Governance Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b> The Chairman shall be from the largest political group that is different to the Leader	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations		
Liberal Democrat Nominations	Richard Biggs	
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		Susan Cocking

<b>Appeals Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Barry Goringe	Paul Harrison
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Harbours Advisory Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b> No Co-optee shall be appointed as either Chairman or Vice-chairman	<b>Vice-chairman</b> No Co-optee shall be appointed as either Chairman or Vice-chairman
Conservative Nominations	Mark Roberts	
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		Rob Hughes

<b>Licensing Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Emma Parker	
Liberal Democrat Nominations		Jon Andrews
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Strategic &amp; Technical Planning Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Robin Cook	
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		John Worth

<b>Northern Area Planning Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Sherry Jespersen	Mary Penfold
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Eastern Area Planning Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	Toni Coombs	
Liberal Democrat Nominations		Shane Bartlett
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Western &amp; Southern Area Planning Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations	David Shortell	Jean Dunseith
Liberal Democrat Nominations		
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

<b>Pension Fund Committee</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Vice-chairman</b>
Conservative Nominations		Peter Wharf
Liberal Democrat Nominations	Andy Canning	
Green Nominations		
ALL Nominations		

# Recommendation to Full Council

11 May 2023

## Review of Public Participation Rules

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Susan Dallison  
Title: Team Leader, Democratic Services  
Tel: 01305 252216  
Email: susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

### Recommendation:

That the Procedure Rules for Public Participation be amended as follows:

(a) That the Council accepts the first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each Full Council meeting on a first come first served basis in accordance with the current deadline for receipt of questions and statements;

(b) That in exceptional circumstances the Chairman of Council has discretion to allow more than 8 questions;

(c) That any questions received over the first 8 questions, the resident or organisation will be asked if they wish to receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder;

(d) That members of the public or organisations can submit a maximum of 1 question or 1 statement at each meeting of the Full Council;

(e) That each question or statement submitted be up to a word count of 450 and the response from the Portfolio holder be a maximum of 300 words;

(f) That statements received by residents or organisations be published, in full, before the Full Council meeting as a supplement to the agenda and published, in full, as an appendix to the minutes but will not be read out at the Full Council meeting to allow more time for questions and responses.

### **Appendices**

Report to the Audit & Governance Committee 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

### **Background papers**

Link to the Procedure Rules in the current Constitution: Constitution Procedure Rules

[Part 2 Rules of Procedure - Council and Committee Procedure Rules.pdf \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/~/media/2022/07/2022-07-20-Part-2-Rules-of-Procedure-Council-and-Committee-Procedure-Rules.pdf)



# **Audit & Governance Committee**

## **27 February 2023**

### **Review of Public Participation Rules**

#### **For Recommendation to Council**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Susan Dallison  
Title: Team Leader, Democratic Services  
Tel: 01305 252216  
Email: susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

#### **Brief Summary:**

In November 2022 the Monitoring Officer received a request from the Chairman of Council to review the current public participation procedure rules. The request was prompted by the Full Council meeting held in October 2022 when the council received a total of 18 questions and 2 statements from residents and organisations for the public participation period. The time provided in the Constitution for public participation is 30 minutes. To provide equity and to enable all of the questions to be out at the meeting the Chairman requested each person to read out the question only and not the preamble. The receipt of such a large number of questions from the public made the management of the public participation difficult for the Chairman of Council as it was unsatisfactory for residents who had submitted a question with a long preamble who were then unable to put the question into context at the meeting. The Chairman of Council subsequently made a request to the Monitoring Officer to review the current procedure rules to see if improvements could be made to make the process more manageable whilst giving the public the opportunity to read out their questions in full, including the preamble, within the half hour public participation period. At the meeting of the Audit & Governance on 14th November 2022 members agreed to establish an informal Task and Finish Group to undertake the review with a report back to the Audit & Governance Committee with any recommendations.

**Recommendation:**

That the Procedure Rules for Public Participation be amended as follows:

- (a) That the Council accepts the first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each Full Council meeting on a first come first served basis in accordance with the current deadline for receipt of questions and statements;
- (b) That any questions received over the first 8 questions, the resident or organisation will be asked if they wish to receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder;
- (c) That members of the public or organisations can submit a maximum of 1 question or 1 statement at each meeting of the Full Council;
- (d) That each question or statement submitted be up to a word count of 450 and the response from the Portfolio holder be a maximum of 300 words;
- (e) That statements received by residents or organisations be published, in full, before the Full Council meeting as a supplement to the agenda and published, in full, as an appendix to the minutes but will not be read out at the Full Council meeting to allow more time for questions and responses.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

To enable the Chairman of Council to manage the half hour public participation period effectively and allow each person who submits a question to read out the question in full and receive a response.

**1. Report**

- 1.1 Following the agreement of the Audit & Governance Committee a politically balanced informal member task and finish group was established and the following members were nominated by Political Group Leaders:

Cllr Val Potheary (Chairman of Council)

Cllr Richard Biggs (Chairman of Audit & Governance Committee)

Cllr Barry Goringe (Vice-chairman of Council & member of Audit & Governance Committee)

Cllr Bill Pipe (Member of Audit & Governance Committee)

Cllr Belinda Bawden (Member of Audit & Governance Committee)

- 1.2 A meeting of the Task and Finish Group was held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023 with the following members and officers in attendance:  
Cllr B Bawden, Cllr R Biggs, Cllr B Pipe and Cllr V Potheary (on-line), J Andrews and S Dallison. Cllr B Goringe sent his apologies.
- 1.3 The Chairman of Council outlined the difficulties of managing the public participation period when such large numbers of questions were received

and the unsatisfactory position of having to ask the public to read out the question only without the preamble that put the question into context. The Group discussed the various options for effectively managing the public participation element of the Full Council meeting. Members considered moving the public participation period to the end of the agenda, to allow for the council's decision making to take place first, however the Group felt that this would have a detrimental effect on public participation as it may put off residents from attending the meeting if they had to wait until the end of the agenda. The Group also considered whether the 30-minute public participation period should be extended to a longer timeframe but felt overall that this would not be practical as it would give less time for the formal decision making on the council's strategic policies which should be the main focus of the meeting. The Group did however feel that there were a number of alterations that could assist the Chairman of Council with managing the public participation period and these suggestions for amending the current procedure rules are set out in the Recommendations (a) to (e) above.

1.4 The rationale for each of the recommendations is set out below:

**(a) That the Council accepts the first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received by members of the public or organisation for each Full Council meeting on a first come first served basis and in accordance with the current deadline for receipt of questions and statements.** In the current Procedure Rules, there is no limit to the number of questions or statements that will be accepted for each public participation period. The Chairman of Council therefore finds herself in a position of trying to squeeze all questions into the 30-minute period no matter how many questions are submitted. The Group felt that a maximum of 8 questions was a reasonable and practical number to deal with within the 30-minute public participation period. A limit of 8 would ensure that the resident would be assured of being able to ask their question in full and receive the response from the appropriate Portfolio Holder without feeling rushed or being denied the opportunity to read out the preamble to their question.

**(b) That any questions received over the first 8 questions, the resident or organisation will be asked if they wish to receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder.** To ensure that all residents or organisations that submit a question receive a response the Group considered it important that all those over the first 8 questions received and accepted will be offered a formal written response from the Portfolio Holder. This arrangement would mirror the current procedure rule that any question not read out within the 30-

minute period would receive a written response from the appropriate Portfolio Holder. The Group was also supportive of a suggestion from officers that when corresponding with the resident the Democratic Services Officer could signpost the resident to other options that might be helpful, for example if the answer to a question could be found online or the option of submitting a question to one of the monthly Cabinet meetings.

- (c) That members of the public or residents can submit a maximum of 1 question or 1 statement at each meeting of the Full Council;** The current Procedure Rules enable a resident to submit up to 2 questions or 2 statements or 1 question and 1 statement at each Full Council meeting. By adjusting this to 1 question or 1 statement per resident or organisation would allow for up to 8 members of the public to speak at each meeting. If this rule was not adjusted as proposed, it could restrict the number of people speaking to just 4 at each meeting if the current full entitlement was applied.
- (d) That each question or statement submitted be up to a word count of 450 and the response from the Portfolio holder be a maximum of 300 words;** Under the current Procedure Rules each resident asking a question has up to 3 minutes to read out each question, which includes time for the preamble to put a question into context. The Task and Finish Group are not proposing to change the time allowed but have asked that it be expressed by the number of words allowed i.e. 450, this enables the person submitting the question to easily check via a word count and to encourage the resident to read the question as submitted rather than read out alternative wording at the meeting. The Task and Finish Group also felt that responses from Portfolio Holders could be more direct and succinct and therefore are suggesting that the response to each question be a maximum of 300 words or 2 minutes.
- (e) That statements received from residents or organisations be published, in full, before the Full Council meeting as a supplement to the agenda and published, in full, as an appendix to the minutes but will not be read out at the Full Council meeting to allow more time for questions and responses.** The Task and Finish Group are proposing that the Procedure Rules be amended so that statements submitted for the Full Council meeting are not read out during the public participation period. In line with the current set of procedure rules statements do not receive a response and this change would enable more questions to be put and answered at the meeting. The statements, as now, would still be published with the agenda and appended to the minutes of the meeting as a matter of public record.

- 1.5 Although not forming part of the recommendations the Task and Finish Group wished to highlight the benefit to democracy of enabling members of the public to ask their questions via the hybrid MS Teams facility and thanked the Chairman of Council for introducing this as part of the arrangements for Full Council meetings. The Group also expressed support for any changes approved to the public participation procedures to be communicated with the public together with information on how to engage with the council as part of the democratic processes.

2. **Financial Implications**

None

3. **Environmental Implications**

None

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

None

**Other Implications**

None

**Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk: LOW

**Equalities Impact Assessment**

Not required

**Appendices**

None

**Background Papers**

Link to the Procedure Rules in the current Constitution:

[Constitution Procedure Rules](#)

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## Recommendation to Full Council

11 May 2023

## Appointment of Co-opted Committee Members - Audit and Governance Committee

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Marc Eyre  
Title: Service Manager for Assurance  
Tel: 01305 224358  
Email: marc.eyre@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

**Brief Summary:** CIPFA good practice suggests that local authority Audit Committees should include at least two co-opted committee members to supplement the expertise of existing membership. Currently the Council's Audit and Governance Committee's constitution is purely made up of elected councillors, based on the political balance.

The Audit and Governance Committee discussed the option of including co-opted members into the committee's membership at the [27 February 2023 meeting](#), with the following options:

- Option One – Do nothing.
- Option Two – Agree to include co-opted membership to the committee at the earliest opportunity, to supplement the experience of the current ten elected members.
- Option Three – Agree to include co-opted membership to the committee post May 2024 elections.

The decision of the committee was to support Option Two as a proposal to Full Council.

**Recommendation:** Full Council to:

- i) support the Audit and Governance Committee's proposal that the Committee's constitution is changed to incorporate two co-opted members, in advance of the September 2023 meeting; and
- ii) support the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendation that an annual allowance of £2,000 should be payable per co-opted member.

**Reason for Recommendation:** To ensure that the Audit and Governance Committee has the appropriate level of technical expertise to perform its role as set out in its terms of reference.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) issued a revised [position statement](#) for Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police during 2022. This proposes that it is good practice for Audit Committees for local authorities to include at least two co-opted members within its membership. There is no legislative direction to enforce this, but CIPFA recognise this practice to supplement and fill any gaps in a committee's technical expertise. Within Dorset Council, the role of the committee goes beyond that of an Audit Committee, to include a remit for governance and standards.
- 1.2 A number of other Dorset Council Committees and panels benefit from the external expertise provided by co-opted members. This includes the Harbours Committee and the Dorset Police and Crime Panel.
- 1.3 Currently the Audit and Governance Committee is made up of ten elected councillors, based on political balance. If two co-optees were added to the existing ten elected councillors the Conservative Group would be entitled to a majority, however as with the existing committee the Leader has agreed not to take up the full entitlement.
- 1.4 Co-opted members would be full voting members of the Committee whilst operating as an advisory committee (i.e. making recommendations rather than setting policy). There would be no voting rights where the Council has delegated decisions to the committee such as, for instance, Code of Conduct matters. Co-opted members would be treated equally to elected members in terms of access to support and information. Good practice suggests that the term of co-opted members should be for four years, and should generally not exceed two-terms, to ensure that fresh ideas,



perspectives and experience are injected into the committee on a semi-regular basis.

- 1.5 The skills that candidates should be able to demonstrate would include analytical skills, effective communication, scrutiny and challenge, open minded-ness and capable of developing good teamwork and effective relationships with other members of the committee. A draft job description has been included at Appendix A. The Independent Remuneration Panel met on three occasions (14, 17 and 18 April), and their findings are included at Appendix B, with a proposal that the allowance for each co-opted member, if approved, should be £2,000 per annum.

## **2. Options Considered by the Audit and Governance Committee**

- 2.1 There were three options considered by the Committee:
- 2.2 Option One – Do nothing. Whilst CIPFA guidance recognises that it is good practice for Audit Committees to include co-opted members, it is not dictated by legislation. This option assumes that the Committee may feel that it already has the skills and technical expertise to fully fulfil its terms of reference.
- 2.3 Option Two – Agree to include co-opted membership to the committee at the earliest opportunity, to supplement the experience of the current ten elected members. In addition to providing additional expertise, this may also provide some stability of membership following elections in May 2024.
- 2.4 Option Three – Agree to include co-opted membership to the committee post May 2024 elections.
- 2.5 The Audit and Governance Committee supported Option Two. The minutes can be viewed [here](#).
- 2.6 The following provides a guide timeline for recruitment, should Full Council support this change to the Audit and Governance Committee's constitution:

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>By When</b>
Proposal to Full Council	11 May 23
Publication of advertisements	31 May 23
Shortlisting and selection	31 July 23

Induction	Aug / Sep 23
First meeting with co-opted member attendance	25 September 23

- 2.7 The membership of the interview panel would need to be agreed, but good practice would suggest that this should be made up of a minimum of three councillors, one of which should be the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee. Officers would provide human resource and administrative support to the process. Recommendations for appointment would be made on merit and ability judged against a competency based framework of criteria.

### **3. Financial Implications**

The allowance payable to the co-opted member for the Audit and Governance Committee has been subject to review and assessment by the Independent Remuneration Panel. The findings are set out at Appendix B and propose that an allowance of £2,000 per co-opted member per annum (£4,000 in total per annum).

### **4. Environmental Implications**

None

### **5. Well-being and Health Implications**

None

### **6. Other Implications**

None

### **7. Risk Assessment**

- 7.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

### **8. Equalities Impact Assessment**

No issues identified

**9. Appendices**

Appendix A – Draft job description for co-opted member of the Audit and Governance Committee;

Appendix B – Findings of the Independent Remuneration Panel

**10. Background Papers**

[CIPFA's Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022](#)

[Minutes of Audit and Governance Committee 27 February 2023](#)

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## Job description

Job title: Co-opted Member – Audit and Governance Committee

### Purpose and impact

1. The Audit and Governance Committee is primarily responsible for:-
  - i. independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework including internal control and financial reporting.
  - ii. to promote and help maintain high standards of conduct of members, co-optees, Parish & Town councillors and any other relevant appointed representatives.
  - iii. recommend training in respect of conduct standards, determining allegations of any breach concerning the Members Code of Conduct; and
  - iv. support the Monitoring Officer in the discharge of his duties.
2. Within these terms of reference, the Committee has a wide range of focus, including consideration of internal and external audit reports; quarterly financial outturns; and treasury management.
3. Co-opted members of the Audit and Governance Committee have full voting rights for items relating to any advisory recommendations, as per 1i above. Co-opted members will not be engaged in Code of Conduct matters in relation to which the Committee is already supported by independent persons appointed under the Localism Act.

### Key responsibilities

The co-opted member will:

1. Attend Audit and Governance Committee meetings (approx. 8 per year).
2. Be fully conversant with all issued documentation in support of these meetings.
3. Support the Committee by offering independent and constructive challenge on reports being considered by the Committee, and support others to do the same.
4. Provide expertise related to finance, accounts or audit and corporate governance.
5. Act as a non-party-political voice for those who live and/or work in the Dorset Council area
6. Listen carefully and ask questions in a way which is non-judgemental, respects confidentiality and helps the Committee fulfil its purpose.
7. Keep informed of issues facing the Council and local authorities generally.
8. Help the Committee to review and monitor its own effectiveness.
9. Participate in training events related to the work of the committee
10. Establish good relations with other members, officers and co-optees and work effectively within a team.

### Other factors

Co-opted Members will:



## Job description

1. Reside or work in the Dorset Council area;
2. Serve a full term (or more) of four years, with a maximum of two terms
3. Not have been an elected Member, co-opted Member or officer of the Council (or of any of the Town or Parishes within it), or a relative or close friend of such a Member or officer, during the previous five years
4. Not be a member of a political party or have a public profile in relation to political activities
5. Be proficient in providing clear information in a sensitive, but assertive manner.
6. Be able to travel to committee meetings, which are generally held at County Hall, Dorchester.
7. Be subject to the same Constitution and Code of Conduct as Local Authority Councillors and will be required to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **Our behaviours**

Dorset Council has developed and embedded a set of behaviours that will form part of everything you do and you will need to be able to demonstrate them through the way you work, regardless of your role or grade within the organisation. Full details can be found on the job website under '[Working for Dorset Council](#)'.



## Person specification

Applicants will be shortlisted on the basis of demonstrating that they fulfil the following criteria in their application form and should include clear examples of how they meet these criteria. You will be assessed in some or all of the specific areas over the course of the selection process.

Essential criteria are the minimum requirement for the role.

Desirable criteria will only be used in the event of a large number of applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements.

### Essential

<b>Qualifications/ training/registrations</b>
Required by law, and/or essential to the performance of the role
1. A relevant degree, equivalent qualification or considerable relevant experience in relation to the role set out in this role description
<b>Experience</b>
2. Experience either a) as an accountant or auditor or working with statutory accounts, preferably at a senior level or b) significant experience as an Audit Committee Member or non-executive director in a large or complex organisation.
<b>Skills, abilities &amp; knowledge</b>
3. Understanding of finance or accounts, preferably in a public sector environment
4. Ability to be objective and impartial, and to exercise good judgement
5. Ability to digest and understand complex financial information
6. Ability to analyse evidence and ask the right questions to hold the organisation to account
7. Ability to influence others to provide appropriate challenge.
8. Effective interpersonal skills with strong influencing and communication skills
9. Demonstrate a keen and genuine interest in achieving improvements in public services for local people
10. The ability to problem-solve and look for innovative new ways of working that will achieve improvements in services
11. ICT skills, including the use of M365 applications
<b>Behaviours</b>
12. <a href="#">Respect</a>
13. <a href="#">Responsibility</a>
14. <a href="#">Recognition</a>
15. <a href="#">One Team: Collaboration</a>
<b>Other</b>
16. The ability to fulfil the travel requirements of the post

### Desirable



<b>Experience</b>
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1. Previous experience as a co-opted member in a public sector setting
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<b>Approval</b>			
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Manager	Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance	Date	4 April 2023
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# Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

## Scheme of Members' Allowances for Dorset Council

### 1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the **Panel**) for Dorset Council (the **Council**) comprising three individuals drawn from the community:

- (i) John Quinton (Chairman);
- (ii) Keith Broughton; and
- (iii) Martin Varley.

### 2. Legal Basis

- 2.1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the **Regulations**) apply to all local authorities.
- 2.2. The Regulations require a relevant authority to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance to each member of that authority.
- 2.3. Regulation 9 permits an authority to make allowances in respect of Co-Opted Members. Regulation 10(3) provides for the scheme to be amended at any time.
- 2.4. Before a relevant authority may make or amend a scheme of allowances it must have regard to recommendations made in relation to such a scheme by an independent remuneration panel.

### 3. Context of the Review

- 3.1. The Panel last reviewed the overall members' allowance scheme for Dorset Council (the **Scheme**) in 2020.
- 3.2. In 2022 the Panel undertook a limited review of the allowances paid to co-opted members of committees established by the Council (**2022 Review**).
- 3.3. After the 2022 Review was presented to the Council, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy issued guidance

(**Guidance**) recommending that local authorities should appoint two co-opted members to their audit and governance committees .

- 3.4. At its meeting on 27 February 2023, the Audit and Governance Committee of the Council (**Committee**) agreed to support the Guidance.
- 3.5. The Monitoring Officer has asked the Panel to consider whether to recommend to the Council that an allowance should be payable if the creation of the role of Co-Opted Member of the Committee (**Co-Opted Member**) is established by the Council. If such an allowance is to be recommended, the Panel was asked to consider the rate at which such an allowance might be paid.

#### 4. **Role of the Panel**

- 4.1. Regulation 20(2) requires that an independent remuneration panel shall consist of at least three members none of whom:
  - (i) is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority; or
  - (ii) is disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.
- 4.2. The three members of the Panel are individuals, none of whom is disqualified from being or becoming a member of a relevant authority.

#### 5. **Evidence**

- 5.1. To inform its recommendations, the Panel was provided with the following evidence:
  - (i) the Regulations;
  - (ii) the report to the Audit and Governance Committee on 27 February 2023;
  - (iii) the Guidance;
  - (iv) a job description and person specification prepared for the role of Co-Opted Member;
  - (v) the allowances payable to other co-opted members of committees established by the Council;
  - (vi) HM Government public appointments webpage of the Cabinet Office website; and

(vii) what allowances (if any) were reported as payable to co-opted members of audit and governance committees of certain other local authorities in the 2021/2022 financial period.

5.2. The Panel also had the opportunity to interview those individuals named at paragraphs 6.2 and 6.3.

## **6. Methodology for the review**

6.1. The Panel met on three occasions on 14, 17 and 18 April 2023.

6.2. The Panel interviewed the following Councillors:

- (i) Councillor Richard Biggs, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee;
- (ii) Councillor Susan Cocking, Vice Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee.

6.3. In addition, the Panel interviewed:

- (i) Jonathan Mair, Monitoring Officer, Dorset Council;
- (ii) Aidan Dunn, Executive Director of Corporate Development and Section 151 Officer, Dorset Council; and
- (iii) Marc Eyre, Service Manager for Assurance, Dorset Council.

6.4. The Panel wishes to record its thanks to those individuals who gave evidence.

## **7. Deliberations and Conclusions**

7.1 The Panel recognised that consideration of any allowance payable to a Co-Opted Member involved assessing the workload and time commitment required to fulfil this role. It was not about individual responsibilities, accountabilities or ability/experience.

7.2 The Panel noted that audit committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework. Their purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements.

7.3 The primary role of the Co-Opted Member would be to support the Committee by offering independent and constructive challenge on issues before the Committee, and to provide expertise related to finance, accounts or audit and corporate governance.

7.4 All the interviewees agreed that the technical expertise and experience that each Co-Opted Member is anticipated to bring would complement the existing skill set of the councillors on the Committee. This technical expertise and experience would also help add to the rigour of examining the finances of the Council. It would be anticipated that the

overall questioning and the holding to account of the officers reporting to the Committee would benefit from the knowledge and experience of Co-Opted Members.

- 7.5 It was intended that a Co-Opted Member would have full voting rights in respect of all audit matters considered by the Committee, but not in respect of matters concerning the standards of conduct of members. The Panel was told that voting rights would emphasise the significance of the role of Co-Opted Member. Furthermore, it was felt by interviewees that the payment of an allowance would help attract applicants and provide some recognition of the significance of the Co-Opted Member role.
- 7.6 The Panel concluded from the evidence received that the Co-Opted Member role could have a significant impact on the financial performance of the Council. Therefore, this is potentially an important role if it is created by the Council. It was also clear from the evidence received by the Panel that Co-Opted Members could provide some continuity in membership of the Committee during a time of changing membership, particularly following elections.
- 7.7 The Panel estimated that the role would require approximately two days per month to perform effectively. Based on the allowances payable to co-opted members of other committees of the Council within the current scheme, the allowance for each Co-Opted Member should be £2,000 per annum.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Panel recommends that, if the role of Co-Opted Member of the Audit and Governance Committee is created by the Council, that:**

- 8.1. **an allowance be payable to each Co-Opted Member of the Committee; and**
- 8.2. **that such allowance be £2,000 per annum.**

## **Full Council 30 March 2023 Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers and delegation to amend polling places**

### **For Decision**

**Portfolio Holder:** None as relates to electoral services functions.

**Local Councillor(s):** None as relates to electoral services functions.

**Executive Director:** M Prosser, Chief Executive

Report Author: Jacqui Andrews

Title: Service Manager, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

Tel: 01258 484325

Email: jacqui.andrews@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

**Brief Summary:** To appoint Deputy Electoral Registration Officers for the effective and efficient administration of the electoral service function including implementation of Election Act 2022 responsibilities, and to agree a delegation for temporary changes to polling places.

### **Recommendation:**

1. To appoint the following officers as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers with Full Powers: Director, Legal and Democratic Services, Service Manager, Democratic and Electoral Services and Team Leader, Electoral Services.
2. To appoint all Electoral Services Officers as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers for the purposes of issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates only.
3. To delegate the designation of temporary polling places to the Electoral Registration Officer.

## **Reason for Recommendation:**

To expedite the issuing of temporary Voter Authority Certificates, and ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the electoral service function if the Electoral Registration Officer is unable to act. Also, to enable a designation of an alternative polling place (polling station) if the place agreed by Full Council is temporarily unavailable for use.

### **1. Requirement to appoint deputy electoral registration officers (DEROs)**

- 1.1 Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) (“the Act”) requires every district council to appoint “an officer of the council to be [electoral] registration officer...”. Matt Prosser was appointed as Electoral Registration Officer for Dorset Council at a meeting of the Dorset Shadow Council on 13 December 2018. The electoral registration officer (ERO) has a duty to maintain a list of UK Parliamentary and local government electors. In essence, the ERO is responsible for the publication and maintenance of the Register of Electors and for facilitating the voter registration process.
- 1.2 Section 52(2) of the Act states that “any of the duties and powers of a registration officer may be performed and exercised by any deputy for the time being approved by the council which appointed the registration officer .....”. The appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers (“DEROs”) cannot be made by the ERO.
- 1.3 The Elections Act 2022 has introduced a number of new requirements including the need for voters to show photographic identification before voting in person at a polling station. The legislation sets out a list of photographic identification that can be used by a person wishing to vote in person at a polling station, and this includes expired documentation provided that the voter is easily recognisable. It will also be necessary for anyone acting as a proxy for a voter to show photographic identification prior to exercise their proxy vote.
- 1.4 The Act recognises that not all registered electors will have a form of photographic identification. In these cases, voters will be able to apply to the Council for a free Voter Authority Certificate. The deadline for a Voter Authority Certificate is 5pm, 6 working days ahead of a poll. Certificates will be issued by a central supplier provided the application is processed by the Council within 24 hours of the 6 working day deadline.
- 1.5 There are circumstances, after the deadline has passed for the Certificate to be issued from the central supplier, where the ERO or DERO may issue

a temporary Voter Authority which must have a wet ink signature of the ERO or any of their deputies.

- 1.6 In order to expedite the issue of temporary Voter Authority Certificates, Council is asked to appoint members of the Electoral Services Team as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers for this purpose only.
- 1.7 Council is also asked to appoint a number of officers as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers with Full Powers to ensure the effective and efficient administration of the electoral services function should the Electoral Registration Officer be unable to act.

## **2. Delegation of designation of polling places**

- 2.1 Under the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, the Council has a duty to carry out a review of polling arrangements every 5 years, and to designate polling places where polling stations are situated enabling people to cast their vote in person at an election or referendum. This designation is made by Full Council. From time to time, particularly for unscheduled elections, polling stations may be unavailable eg due to a prior booking, building works etc.
- 2.2 In order to expedite the use of an alternative suitable polling station in a polling place, Council is asked to agree a delegation to the ERO, or any of their deputies with Full Powers, to use an alternative polling place if that agreed by Full Council is unavailable. Any permanent change to a polling place would be brought to Full Council as part of the compulsory review process.

## **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **4. Environmental Implications**

- 4.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

## **5. Well-being and Health Implications**

- 5.1 There are no well-being and health implications associated with this report.

## **6. Other Implications**

- 6.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

7. **Risk Assessment**

7.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk: LOW

8. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

8.1 The delegations will ensure that there is no delay in issuing Voter Authority Certificates ensuring that any registered elector, without existing photographic identification, that wishes to exercise their right to vote in person at a polling station is able to do so. The delegation will also enable an alternative polling station to be used in the event of an agreed polling station becoming available ensuring that voters are able to cast their vote in person.

9. **Appendices**

None.

10. **Background Papers**

[Elections Act 2022](#)

[Representation of the People Act 1983](#)

[Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013](#)