

### **Principles**

When I attended an early meeting discussing the principles for transfer to lower tier authorities it was stated very clearly that the unitary authority should not be taking on assets that did not contribute to its statutory functions. Functions that are clearly only applicable to a particular town or parish should be left to that particular town or parish.

In Weymouth we have a crematorium which clearly provides a need for a much wider area than Weymouth and so I would see this asset becoming one for the unitary council. I cannot see how the seafront hotels and b and b properties in Weymouth owned by the Borough Council, and Weymouth and Melcombe council before that, can be remotely seen as meeting these principles for transfer. I am not aware that it is a statutory responsibility for a unitary council to run sea front hotels. The only possible reason for these to be transferred is for their capital value as they are not likely to be included in any strategic development plans for the Borough pertinent to unitary business. However a town council may wish to change these assets into different assets for the benefit of the town, eg selling one property to provide different resources beneficial to the town's needs, such as quality toilets.

A slightly more controversial discussion might be held regarding the ownership of car parks. In the case for change it suggested that LGR offers the chance to enhance the relationship between councils, their members and the community with a strong platform of towns and parishes. The proposed asset transfer to Weymouth encourages us as a town to provide beautiful parks, gardens and open spaces, all of which cost money. It also allows us to provide events on the beach and other areas of Weymouth to help promote the town and encourage visitors. Getting road closures, clearing up the rubbish left by visitors, promoting the events all cost money, some of which are payments to the DWP and Dorset Council. Income from such events comes from tourists parking in the town, all of which presently would go to Dorset Council. If a growth of visitors stimulates the business community the rates from Businesses goes to Dorset Council. Where is the encouragement for the town to engage in stimulating this sort of activity in partnership with Dorset Council? Swanage has its own car parks, Lyme Regis owns some of its car parking space, and the other tourist parking at places such as Kimmeridge and Lulworth Cove are in private hands. As a town I believe we should be allowed to manage and have the income from the two main tourist car parks, Lodmoor and the Swannery so that we can benefit from the activities we might wish to provide. We could then work in partnership with the Dorset council in their plans to reduce traffic in our town centre, by using the income from these car parks to provide a free electric bus service around the town centre, esplanade and harbour side, using the car park income as it should be used and not to subsidise the rates.

That is the sort of relationships I thought that the LGR plans were meant to develop and presently the shadow executive seems to have interpreted this in a very narrow and unacceptable way for the largest town in the Council area.