



Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils

(Affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils)

Colliton Annexe
Colliton Park
DORCHESTER
Dorset
DT1 1XJ

Tel: **01305 260972**

email: **daptc@dorsetcc.gov.uk**

www.dorset-aptc.gov.uk

To all Chairman and Clerks
DAPTC Member councils
Central Area

30 April 2018

Dear Chairman/Clerk

DAPTC survey on LGR matters

You will be aware by now that Dorset is moving to a new unitary authority for our area (with a separate authority to cover Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole). This means that as of April 2019 the County Council and our District and Borough Councils will no longer exist.

The DAPTC is aware that this is causing concern for some of our members, particularly about the prospect of town and parish councils taking on services previously provided by the current principal councils. Given the very limited time available to create the new authority it is almost certain that the devolution of services (possibly together with assets) to parish and town councils will not occur by April 2019. The priority for establishing the new authority will be to make sure it is legally constituted and able to deliver safely its statutory responsibilities such as education and social care from day one.

As this is a new authority it will have new ways of operating and it will need, over its first couple of years existence, to decide how its discretionary services could be delivered and who by. It will also need to consider some form of local decision making given the large and diverse area it will cover. What is certain is that parish and town councils will still exist as the tier of local government closest to communities.

DAPTC believe it is important for its members that the association be involved at an early stage in the design of how and by who, services should be delivered and of the structure of local decision making. To this end the executive committee are working towards a vision of what town and parish councils would like to see in these areas under the new authority. One member is researching the local decision making in already established unitaries and others are attending the Dorset Area Joint Committee meetings and making sure that DAPTC are seen as important and willing partners in the process of establishing the new authority.

The purpose of this letter is threefold. Firstly, to re-assure you that you will not suddenly be expected to take on responsibilities handed down to you when the new unitary comes into being next year. Secondly, to update you on what your executive committee is doing to obtain the best possible outcome for its members – town and parish councils across Dorset. Thirdly, to ask you to identify what services you would like to see retained without worrying at this stage about who by and how they are financed – a realistic wish list - and also any views your council might have on how local decision making should operate under the new authority. From this information, the executive committee will formulate the basis of a vision of how life would look under the new authority and use this to make proposals during the design and construction of the new authority.

It would be really helpful, if your council could respond by 20 May giving the DAPTC office its views on:

- (a) What services you feel should realistically be retained – again no need to identify who would provide and pay for them**
- (b) How your council would like to see local decision making operate, including communications.**

There will clearly be some diversity in (a), for example town centre street cleaning would be mainly a concern for towns but your parish communities use the town facilities and shops. Feel free to include any services whether or not they affect your area directly.

As far as (b) is concerned, please give your council's views on what decisions, IF ANY, will need to be taken on an area basis. Your council may wish to comment on how the areas for local decision making could be chosen and/or whether a local decision-making body should have an annual budget to for local purposes or perhaps whether local decision-making bodies might be able to bid by way of a business case to the unitary authority for development or service provision funds. Also where would DAPTC area committees sit in local decision making and would they be the same areas as present?

Your council's first thoughts on these areas would really help us develop a coherent proposal to put before the body given responsibility for the development of the new authority.

I would be very grateful if you could let DAPTC have your council's views on the two questions as early as possible on the forms provided and preferably by Wednesday 20 May in time for the DAPTC Executive Committee meeting on 2 June. If that is not possible then as soon as you are able would be appreciated.

I will report on the responses to this letter to the DAPTC area committee meeting following the Executive Committee. Please ensure that your council has appointed up to two representatives to attend.

Two forms are included for your replies:

1. A form showing a list of local government services
2. A form for views on local decision making

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR ALAN THACKER

Chairman
DAPTC Central Area Committee

RESPONSE TO DAPTC SURVEY - WHAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES SHOULD BE REALISTICALLY RETAINED?

NAME OF COUNCIL:

Please put your Council's views by marking each service as follows:

A = Essential to retain B = Preferable to retain C = Not to be provided by the public sector

	A/B/C		A/B/C
1 Allotments		32 Museum and arts	
2 Beaches and moorings		33 Maintenance of public rights of way	
3 Bus shelters		34 Parks and open spaces - sports grounds	
4 By-laws		35 Protecting and enhancing Dorset's environment	
5 Car parks		36 Public and community transport support	
6 Care and protection of children		37 Public conveniences	
7 Care for elderly people		38 Recycling	
8 Care for people with a disability		39 Refuse collection	
9 Cemeteries		40 Registration of births, marriages and deaths	
10 Coast protection		41 Road clearance - fly tipping	
11 Community safety		42 Road safety	
12 Concessionary travel and public transport support		43 Schools, school transport, adult education	
13 Conservation / listed buildings		44 Strategic planning for Dorset	
14 Council tax and business rate collection		45 Street cleaning and litter	
15 Country parks and countryside management		46 Street lighting and furniture	
16 Cycle routes		47 Theatres	
17 Electoral register		48 Tourism	
18 Emergency planning		49 Trading standards & consumer protection	
19 Environmental health - pest control, dog fouling		50 Traffic management and transport planning	
20 Estate management		51 Tree protection	
21 Highways maintenance		52 Village halls and community facilities	
22 Housing and housing benefit		53 Voluntary organisations - support	
23 Industrial and crafts units		54 War memorials	
24 Leisure centres and pools		55 Water courses	
25 Libraries and archives		56 Waste disposal and recycling	
26 Licensing - pubs, halls, entertainment, markets, taxis		57 Youth clubs	
27 Local economy support and development control		58 Any additional services (please put details in the box below)	
28 Local planning, building and development control			
29 Local land charges and searches			
30 Meals on wheels			

31	Minerals and quarries - planning	
----	----------------------------------	--

RESPONSE TO DAPTC SURVEY – How would your council like to see local decision making operate?

Name of Council.....

Please give a maximum of 5 brief points
