

APPENDICES

A. Resolution of Scrutiny and Policy Review Committee, April 2016

RESOLVED that

1) Scrutiny and Policy Review Committee accepts in principle the argument for preparing and analysing a business case regarding the adoption or otherwise of unitary authorities in Dorset.

however, the Committee notes with concern:

- i. The lack of evidence or discussion on the non-tangible costs and benefits of such reorganisation;
- ii. The brevity of the proposed timetable;
- iii. The lack of investigation of other options, particularly that of a “Shire Dorset” single-tier principal authority;
- iv. The very limited references to service delivery;

2) The Committee believes it essential that all the communities of Christchurch be involved in this process from the outset, that the fullest possible information be provided to the public and that the final proposals must accord with the wishes of the Borough citizens;

3) This Committee therefore expects a report from its Officers into:

- i. Possible alternatives to reorganisation, giving outlines of their costs, benefits and feasibility;
- ii. The ways in which public opinion and views of other interested parties might be best ascertained;
- iii. How, specifically, the residents of the Borough would benefit or suffer from these reorganisation proposals; and
- iv. How improvements in the delivery of services might be achieved under the three options in consideration;

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APPENDIX B

Attached separately

Report of Focus Group meeting by Miss Emma Rickard

Reshaping Your Council Meeting

Connaught Hotel

29th September 2016 9.30 am

Meeting run by Dale Hall ORS

Guests: Jan Furgood - Strategic Director, covering Bournemouth & Poole

Jane Portman - Executive Director & Department Chief Executive Bournemouth

(Male) Manager - Bournemouth Borough Council

Around 40 attendees invited from community groups and third sector organisations

(From what I could gauge 4 x East Dorset, 2 x Christchurch the rest Bournemouth & Poole).

Dale Hall (DH) opened by explaining his company ORS and the work they do gathering information and researching for social resources.

An early question asked by an attendee from Poole

"Why reserach this way and not hold a referendum?"

Answer by DH: "This doesn't just concern a particular local area - It is typical not to hold a referendum, this is not mere numbers - but initially elected members making a decision. The difficulty with a referendum is that it would take the decisions away from elected members and a more in depth examination of the opinions".

DH went on to explain the consultaion process and that there is a broad range of people invited to workshops and mailed the questionnaire. Young people are being reached by youth workers, although trying to engage with people aged 17-14, most are uninterested and some people are intimidated. As of today Bournemouth Learning have made access available to people with learning difficulties.

Finance changes of what comes from central Government explained and that leadders and senior officers are thinking about radical change, reduction in middle managers and Councillors this is driven by financial pressure.

A presentation explaining the options available:

DH "Option 1 IS on the table - then 2a, b and c"

The fifth option of one large unitary was discarded.

There will be difficulties in council tax equalisation over 5- 20 years, this will be a demanding exercise.

Option 1 - Figures show that Christchurch is most financially favourable - Christchurch gets adult & childrens social services from County, Bournemouth and Poole have a £10 million deficit because they are administering adult and childrens social services.

"In retaining 9 councils there will be deficits. Yes a positive familiar local structure - and keeping 330 Councillors for district and Borough and this would favour duplication. Savings of £108 million would cost redundancies for senior and middle management with a one of cost of £25 million".

"Fewer Councillors is an option - this is for you alone to decide - half of the current 330 - office staff and buildings would reduce, although no choices have been made yet - Parishes and Town's could well be sustained and Mayors."

"A challenge would be Council Tax - would need to be the same amount for all areas.

Options 2a, b and c explained focusing a lot on population of the proposed area groupings.

We were able to work in groups on our tables to fill in a group opinion sheet and debate among ourselves. (The gentleman to my left was very clearly not holding any similar opinions to myself - he had the pen to do the writing - and none of my comments were entered - just a tally chart for our over all votes included my input)

A question "What would effect Childrens Services the most?"

DH "2a is less likely to look under pressure, 2 b and c would be likely very considerably under pressure".

A question asking the best proposal for and who would decide service delivery?

DH "Officers decision, 2b, as risk of remoteness for Christchurch with 2c".

A question - how much savings would there be by reducing Councillors?

DH - turns to male member of staff from Bournemouth Council - who replies "Councillors receive £10,000 a year each"

Comment from the floor "Christchurch Borough Councillors are in receipt of £3000 per year each and Bournemouth around £12,000 per year each - which leads to my question - each Councillor in the new proposals for Dorset would be covering a vastly wider area - so surely as well as being far too busy due to less other Councillors, would require higher remuneration quite rightly - so in essence this would not be a saving? How will this work?" BBC worker - "We have not thought about that yet".

To a vote from the room (seven attendees have already left)

All those Against Option 1 - 22

All those for Option 1 - 9

Any abstain voting for Option 1 - 2

Onto the Options 2 a,b and c - if these were the only options available and not option 1:

Option 2a - 0

Option 2 b - 12

Option 2 c - 5

Abstain - 8

DH - "A few evenings ago I drove through from Poole to Christchurch and on driving along I really could not see or feel a difference from Poole to Bournemouth to Christchurch".

DH - "Just a couple of last questions I ask - where is the main Bournemouth University? It is in Poole, and where is Bournemouth Airport? It is in Christchurch"

A thank you for attending.