

Lytchett Matravers Parish Council

Notes of a DAPTC Town & Large Parish Meeting Held in Lyme Regis on 31st August 2018

Attended by Councillor Norris & Councillor Watts

Background

The DAPTC Town & Large Parish meeting is held quarterly. The Chairman is Councillor Turner from Beaminster, the Vice Chairman is Councillor Johnson from Colehill, and the minutes secretary is Kirsty Riglar from PDC. The venue is hosted by one of the councils represented at the meeting.

In addition to Councillors from the various Town & Parish Councils which are represented, the meetings are attended by an officer from the Dorset Councils Partnership.

I get no sense that the meeting has any role in the management or policy making of DAPTC itself. Hilary Trevorrah (DAPTC CEO) is invited to attend, but has not done so for some time.

Much of the time at the meeting on 31st August was taken up by Councillors all round the table making statements on the importance that Town & Parish Councils should be consulted on the Dorset Local Government Restructuring, and should be involved in the decision making on future service delivery. There were also many comments about the lack of information being made available on the new Unitary Authorities.

Key Points

1. The officer from the Dorset Councils Partnership made the following points:
 - The process to select the CEO for the Dorset Council is well advanced, and it is expected that an offer will be made to the preferred candidate in October.
 - The budget for the Dorset Council will be set in February 2019. Until that point, there will continue to be a degree of uncertainty on the new organization, and the levels of service that will be delivered. However, the current intent is that the focus of the restructuring is to ensure that the new council is safe and legal when it becomes operational in April 2019.
 - It is currently intended that there will be Area Committees established for Planning. The number of such committees and their areas of jurisdiction has not yet been decided. However, the constitution for the Dorset Council will need to have written in to it the delegation arrangements, so that this may be the document which sets out the Area Committee structure.
2. Following continuing erosion of the local commercial bus service, Beaminster have implemented their own volunteer operated bus scheme, which covers Bridport as well. It took about 9 months to develop and implement, and has ~ 6 drivers and 4 clippers. The scheme has costs of about £174 per day, and is expected to break even. The scheme receives income both through the sale of tickets, and donations from users (eg those over 60 who are entitled to a free bus service).
3. NALC have issued advice that Data Protection Officers are not required by Town & Parish Councils under GDPR.
4. Lyme Regis and Swanage both have Development Trusts which own various assets used by their respective communities, including the Swanage Youth Centre, the Lyme Regis Hub (formerly the Boys Club).
5. Many if not all of the Councils represented are in discussions with either DCC or their District Council to secure the transfer of assets within their communities. The assets to be transferred include Public Toilets, the Swanage Heritage Centre, Scout Huts, etc. There are two key features of these transfers, firstly the assets being transferred tend to be properties which do not generate much income (eg car parks are generally being retained by DCC), and secondly the transfers are not being accompanied by any funds to cover future maintenance costs.
6. Ferndown and Corfe Mullen Councils have each secured significant grants from a Heathland Mitigation Fund to pay for Wheel Parks (apparently the modern term for Skateboard Parks).