

COUNTDOWN TO 1 APRIL 2019

133 DAYS TO GO

We hope you find this newsletter useful. If you have any questions or feedback, please email shapingdorsetcouncil@dorsetcc.gov.uk

SHADOW EXEC UPDATES

The Shadow Executive Committee met on Monday 12 November. Here's a summary of some of the key decisions:

Visual identity

Members agreed the new logo for Dorset Council. You should have received a newsletter with more detail on this.

Leisure facilities

Members agreed for a specialist company to be appointed to begin developing a business case, including options for future delivery of services, as well as a building condition survey of all leisure centre assets where we have contracts we are paying for. This will enable Dorset Council to have a good understanding of all sports and leisure facilities and make decisions about their future operation.

Peninsula Redevelopment Scheme

Members agreed to support the business case and funding for the Weymouth Peninsula Redevelopment Scheme. This endorsed the decision made by Weymouth & Portland Borough Council to progress with phase one of the scheme. The outline planning application is due to be received by Weymouth & Portland Borough Council's Planning Committee on November 28. Read the full article here: <https://bit.ly/2qLm2um>.

View the papers for the meeting [here](#).

DATE FOR THE DIARY: PURDAH



'Purdah' is the word used to describe the period immediately before elections and referendums when local authority officers need to consider what they say and how they say it during this time of heightened sensitivity. The purdah period for the election on 2 May 2019 will commence with the publication of the Notice of Election on 15 March 2019.

DORSET FOR YOU

The Dorset For You team are working hard to get the website ready for when we become Dorset Council. It currently covers all areas of Dorset Council plus Christchurch, but any content relating to Christchurch will be moved over to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council's website. The team are working with services to find out what changes are needed on their pages before 1 April 2019. The programme of website updates is scheduled to start in December. This will ensure that the website is up to date and the public can find the information they need when we become Dorset Council.

You can view the current website at dorsetforyou.gov.uk.

RECHARGING PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS FOR ELECTIONS

A report was submitted to the Shadow Executive Committee on 15 October 2018 seeking adoption of an approach for recharging parish and town councils for their elections and by-elections to be implemented by the new Dorset Council.

It was stated at paragraph 3.4 that “Any recharge will be made in the same financial year as the election or by-election.” Consequently, the report was submitted to the Committee as early as possible to provide local councils with as much information to inform their budget-setting process for 2019/20.

The Shadow Executive Committee agreed to the adoption of the proposed approach.

It is worth making the following points:-

- This recharging structure supersedes any approach previously agreed by the current sovereign councils that would be in effect from 1 April 2019, some of which stated that any recharges would be made in the following financial year.
- For May 2019 and scheduled elections thereafter, if a parish or town council does not have a contested election there will be no recharge. Historically, the elections for the majority of smaller local councils have not been contested and it is not anticipated that there will be any change to this trend. However, parish/town clerks and councillors will be best placed to predict whether there will be sufficient local interest to trigger a contested election and therefore whether their council needs to budget for this.
- Shared costs for a combined election (such as polling stations and staff) will be split 50/50 but full costs of elements specifically relating to the parish election (e.g. ballot papers) will be recharged to the parish or town council.

Officers understand that, arising from the adoption of this approach to recharging, local councils would like some clarity about the actual cost of an election for council. It is not possible to provide individual forecasts for all 163 local councils in the Dorset area, particularly as the cost of some items will depend on such variables as the number of candidates seeking election.

However, all clerks have now been sent a spreadsheet which can be used as a ‘calculator’ to give an indication of the approximate cost of a contested election for their area in May 2019. Whilst there will still remain variables that officers cannot forecast at this stage of planning for the elections, this calculator should give local councils an approximate cost on which they can base their budget assumptions for 2019/20 and inform their decision on the level of precept.

The feedback received from clerks to date has been very positive. However, officers are more than happy to answer any questions about this. Please email KirstyRiglar@purbeck-dc.gov.uk if you have any questions.



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