

Bournemouth-Christchurch-Poole Joint Committee

Notes on meeting of 15th January 2018

1. I attended this third meeting of the Joint Committee at Poole Council Offices along with Cllr Sue Spittle. Once again acoustics were not ideal with no microphones in use.
2. All the papers referred to can be found at <https://bcpjointcommittee.wordpress.com/meetings/>
3. A man from the Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils introduced his organisation. He stated that all existing Town and Parish Councils will exist in the new structure. How he knew that wasn't explained. He mentioned the Christchurch Review so presumably he intends to participate in some way
4. Cllr Lesley Dedman (CBC) asked a question about Town Councils and the preservation of the mayoralty, particularly in Bournemouth and Poole on the assumption that Christchurch will have both a Council and a local mayor. She was referred to a Task and Finish Group that is due to meet in February when "*all potential options will be considered*"
5. Very little happened at this meeting. Each project reported some progress with much still to do and little scope for managing the unexpected
6. **The first paper** reported progress on the critical path items and indicated that no risks need to be escalated at this stage. The paper was passed unanimously
7. **The second paper** concerned the structural change order. A recommendation for establishing the Chair and the Executive of the Shadow Authority was accepted by majority 13-3. CBC voted against – not sure why as I couldn't hear what they said in the meeting. A request that the Electoral Arrangements Task and Finish Group consider issues concerning the Electoral Order was passed unanimously. An unscheduled meeting of the Joint Committee was agreed to, set for 30th January in Bournemouth to consider electoral arrangements.
8. **The third paper** concerned disaggregation (the process of moving Christchurch out of Dorchester and splitting it from East Dorset). The pilot exercise that involving library services was judged a success. They have discovered a lot of cross-subsidy. I'm not sure why they appeared to be surprised as it's likely that Christchurch will come in below average on things like highways and above average on care for the elderly. They now have 3 officers working full time on this with costs shared by all 9 councils. The fact that it's so difficult to tease the figures out is in my opinion a good reason for scrapping the structure – no sensible business could run this way with diverse types of expenditure apparently not properly related to the income meant to fund them! The report, which told us nothing, was accepted unanimously
9. **The fourth paper** concerned Council Tax Harmonisation. They're now stalled because HMG has changed the rules and Councils have not yet decided what rates of tax they will set for 2018-19. They will continue to focus on the preferred option of a freeze in Christchurch and harmonisation within 7 years
10. The next meeting is at Bournemouth on 30th January 2018

Jim Biggin

15th January 2018