

# Local Government restructuring in Dorset

Kate Ryan



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# Introduction

- Making the case
- Meeting our re-organisation challenge
- A delivery board approach
- Front-line service view
- Questions

# Context



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## Initial idea

- Proposal by six of the nine council Leaders to merge Dorset's existing councils into **two unitary authorities**
- Solution to reduce costs and improve public services
- Opportunity to stimulate growth through a global profile
- Chance to improve people's quality of life and prosperity



An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood with many houses, trees, and streets. The houses are mostly two-story buildings with brown roofs. There are green spaces and trees scattered throughout the area.

# 17,000

residents, businesses, partners, residents groups, voluntary sector, town and parish council representatives took part in the consultation



73%

residents support two councils instead of nine

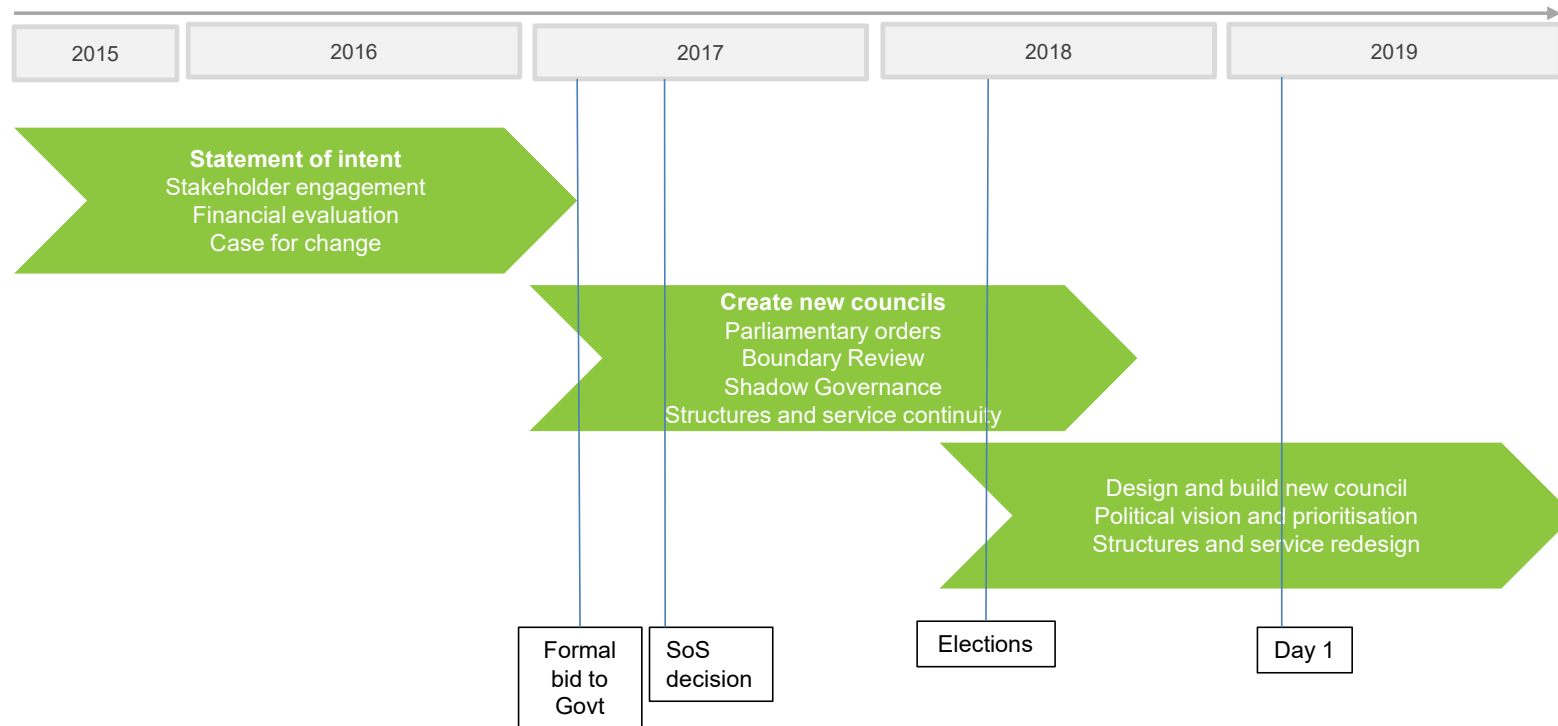
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# 89%

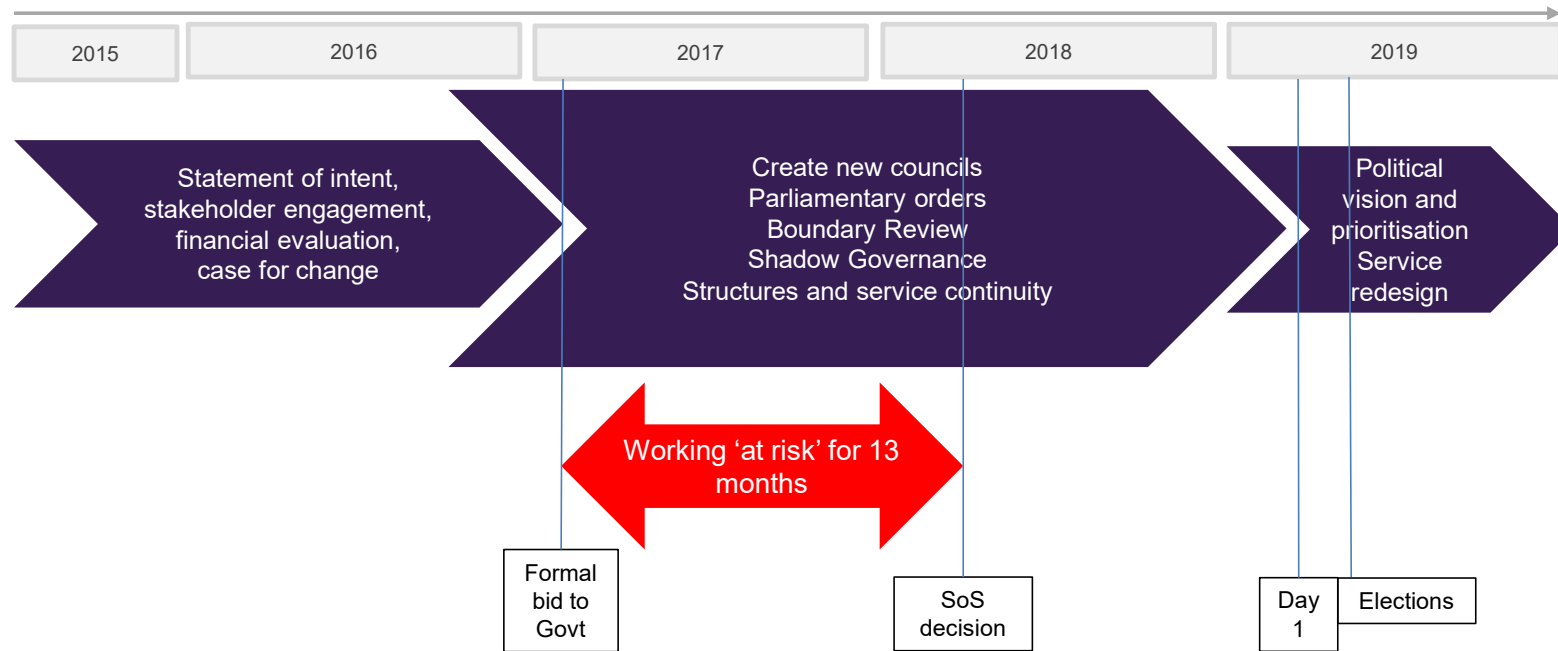
businesses support the change







Our timeline – expected .....



# Our timeline – actual

“

I am satisfied that these new councils are likely to improve local government and service delivery in their areas, generating savings, increasing financial resilience, facilitating a more strategic and holistic approach to planning and housing challenges, and sustaining good local services.

*Statement approving Future Dorset  
February 2018*

”



**The Rt. Hon Sajid Javid MP**  
Former Secretary of State for  
Housing, Communities  
and Local Government

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# Personal integrity and professional sacrifice





## New structure advantages



Better value  
for money



Better transport  
links



Consistent  
policies



One Council  
tax



Greater  
accountability



Better planning  
for housing

# New structure disadvantages



Tax increase



Loss of identity



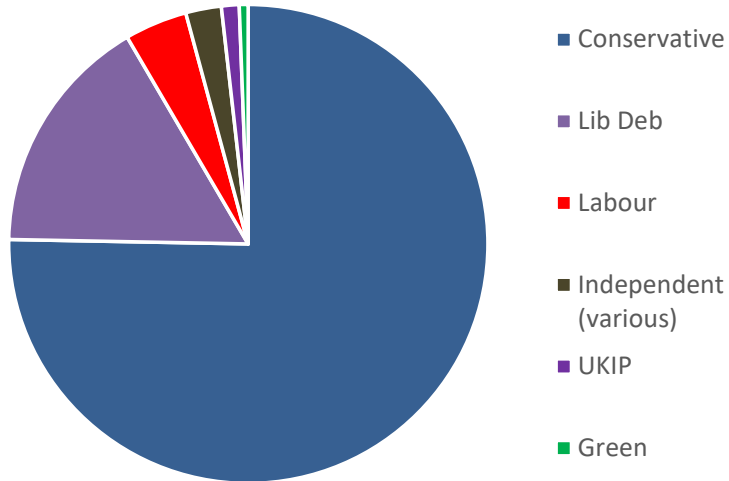
Perceived  
dominance



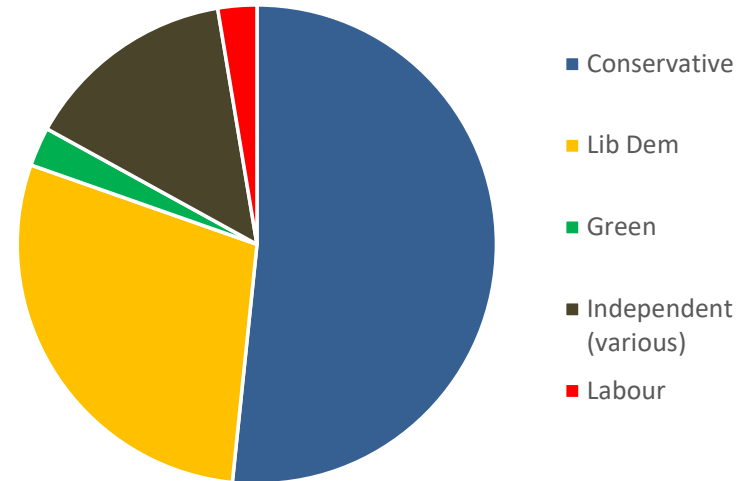
Redundancy

# Our county's political change

## Pre-May 2019 elections

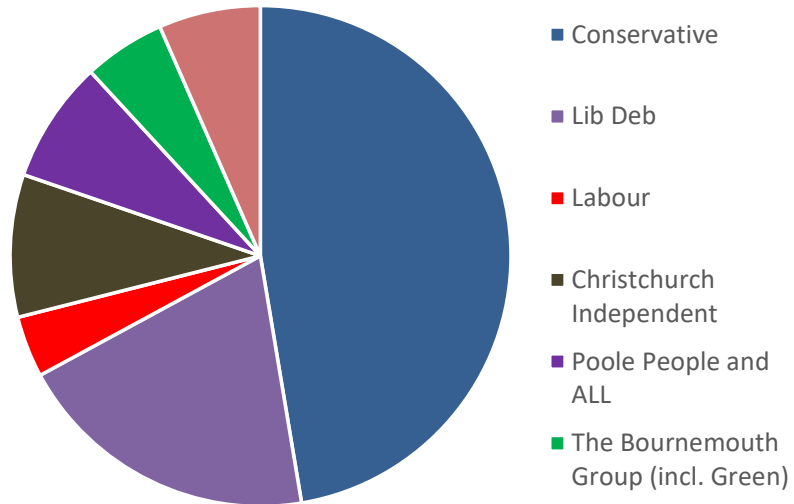


## After May 2019



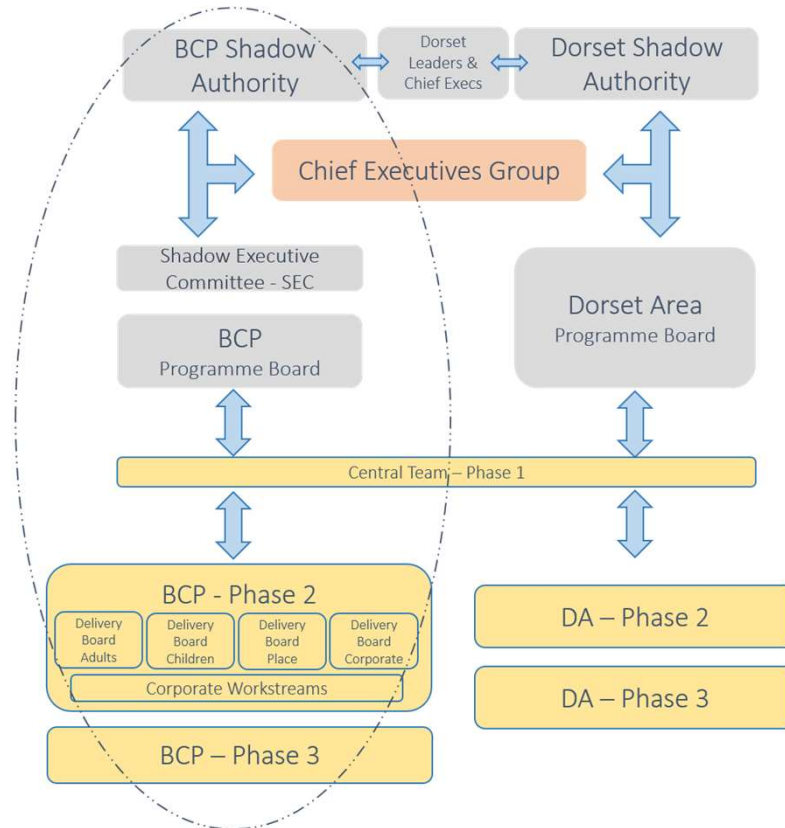


# BCP Council political composition



<b>Conservative</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Liberal Democrats</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Christchurch Independents</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Poole People and ALL</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Bournemouth Indpt &amp; Greens</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Labour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Unaligned</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>2</b>

July 2020



BCP Programme Governance consisted of:

- A member led Shadow Executive comprised of 16 elected members from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
- A Programme Board, led by Chief Executive SRO, attended by all Chief Executives, and Strategic and Executive Directors, Statutory Officers and Supporting Officers.

The Programme was designed around three key phases

1. Creation of the new Council
2. Delivering services on April 2019
3. Designing and Building the new Local Authority

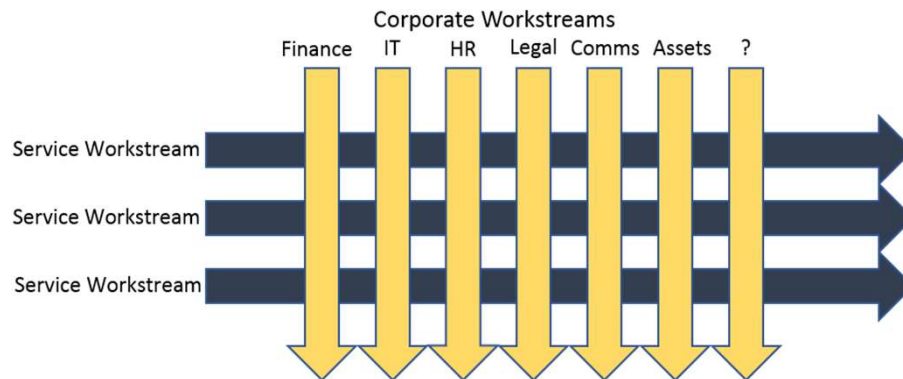
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# Phase 1

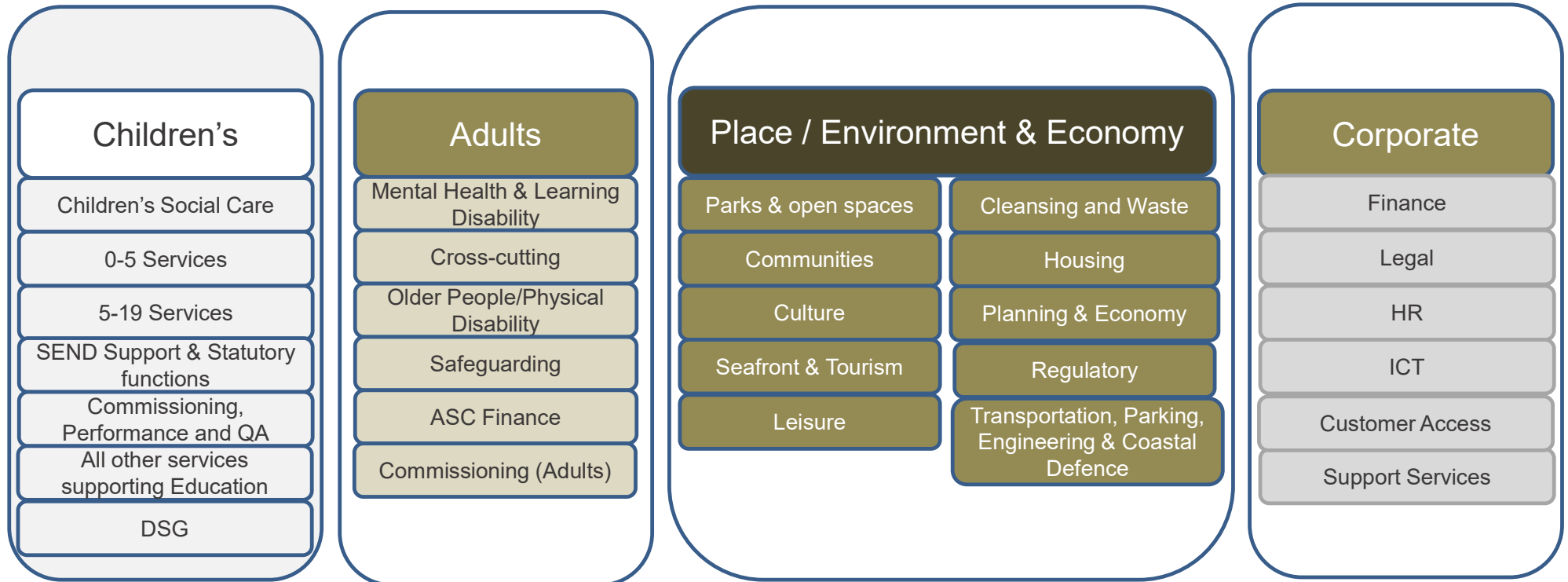
- Established programme governance, including Joint Committee
- Structural Change Order (SCO) – legal setup for New Council
- Boundary Commission
- Disaggregation of Christchurch Borough budget from Dorset County; assets and income
- Preparations for Shadow Authority completed
- Plans for key appointments and TUPE arrangements

# Phase 2

Phase Two focus on ensuring a smooth transition from the four preceding councils to the new Council on Day One – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.



- **Units of Service Workstreams (horizontal)** formed to cover each unit of service overseen by Phase 2 Delivery Boards.
- Four **Delivery Boards** covering 22 service workstreams.
- **Corporate Workstreams (verticals)** determined the principles or non-negotiables for all services to adopt from 1<sup>st</sup> April 19.
- The **BCP Programme Board** maintained overview of progress, resolved issues that escalated and allocated resources as appropriate.
- For consistency, the **Communications Workstream** supported BCP Programme and Portfolio Boards with finalising and issuing key messages.



## Place / Environment & Economy

Parks & open spaces

Cleansing and Waste

Communities

Housing

Culture

Planning & Economy

Seafront & Tourism

Regulatory

Leisure

Transportation, Parking,  
Engineering & Coastal  
Defence

Service Workstreams	Areas within Group (naming of services may be different across BCP preceding councils)
Parks, Open Spaces & Countryside	Parks, Open Spaces, Grounds Maintenance, Allotments, Countryside, Amenities Management, Bereavement and Crematorium
Communities	Community Development, community grants and SLAs, Community Safety, ASB, CCTV and Community Enforcement
Culture	Culture, Museums, Heritage and Arts and Libraries
Seafront & Tourism	Beaches, Foreshore, Seafront, Tourism and Events
Leisure	Leisure Centres, Recreation, Sports Development
Regulatory	Environmental Health, Licensing, Trading Standards and Port Health
Cleansing & Waste	Residential, Commercial, Partnerships and Fleet
Housing	Tenancy Management, Partnership (PHP), Strategies, Register, Homelessness, Careline, Voids & Maintenance, Housing Enforcement, HRA and Housing Enabling, Seascape and BBML, FM
Planning & Economy	Planning Policy, Transport Planning & Policy, Economic Development
	Development Management / Building Control / Land Charges searches
Highways, Transportation, Parking, Engineering & Coastal defence	Network Management, Highways, Passenger Transport
	Engineering and Coastal Defence
	Policy, Operational and Customer Permits & Fines

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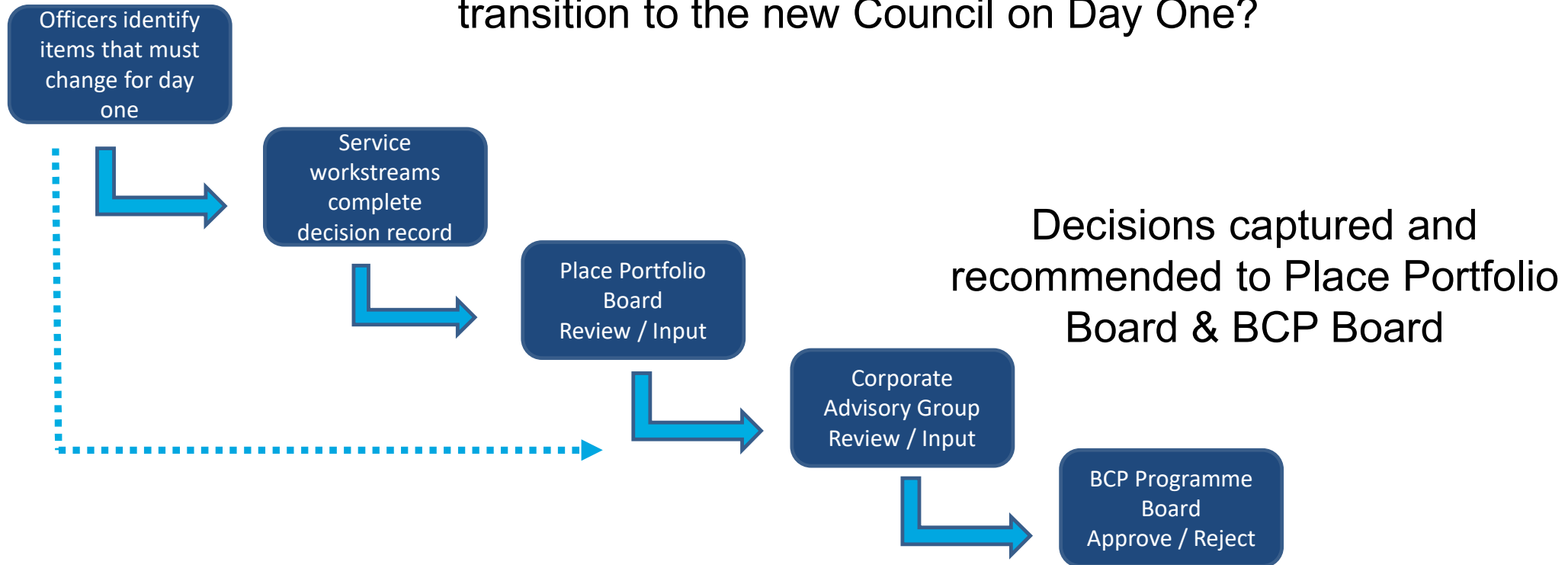
### **Place Board:**

- Place Board held every 2 weeks
- Chaired by Corporate Directors for Place across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, facilitated by LGR programme team
- Attendance from Finance, IT and Comms team
- Highlight report produced fortnightly for Board – with updates from each workstream and issues to be resolved. Feeds into overall Programme Board.
- Decision Records presented by officers for approval
- Forward plan, Action log and Decision log maintained

### **Member Briefings:**

- Member Briefings held every 2 weeks. Portfolio-holders/lead members.
- Chaired by Corporate Directors for Place across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, facilitated by LGR programme team
- Attendance from Finance
- Decision Records with political impact discussed
- Forward plan, Action log and Decision log maintained

What is **critical** to address for a smooth transition to the new Council on Day One?





BCP Service savings	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	Total £m
Staffing and organisation	5.3	2.9	8.2
Transformation		1.0	1.0
Democratic Representation	0.5		0.5
External Audit	0.2		0.2
Service Efficiencies			
- Adult Social Care	2.0	2.0	4.0
- Children Services	0.2	0.1	0.3
- Place Theme	0.7		0.7
- Regeneration & Economy		0.5	0.5
- Environment & Communities		0.2	0.2
- Corporate Services	0.7	0.3	1.0
Commercial Opportunities	0.7	0.3	1.0
Fees and Charge	0.9	2.1	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>20.6</b>

### Local Partnership Financial Model August 2016

- Estimated savings accruing across all Councils from LGR in Dorset = £18.1m net
- Estimated savings accruing to BCP Council from LGR in Dorset = £9.2m net

# Communication & engagement – finding the balance

**Formal** In person 06:00 sessions in the Depots  
Stick to the facts, figures and key meaningful timelines relevant to the workgroup.



**Informal** 700 bacon rolls cooked  
Lets get talking..... Small group/  
Individual impact discussions



# Frontline services

A large prominently in-house team (700) responsible for the direct delivery of our core universal services (waste & cleansing, highway & greenspace maintenance) that are valued by our residents, businesses and visitors alike.

BCP Council

We'll be looking after **15 MILES** of coastline from **day one**

#hereforyou

BCP Council

**161km<sup>2</sup>**  
the **AREA** that BCP Council covers

Providing services from **Hamworthy to Highcliffe** from **day one**

#hereforyou

**100+** large good vehicle fleet, **1300** vehicles and heavy plant fleet to maintain

BCP Council

We'll be looking after **129 PLAYGROUNDS** for happy children! from **day one**

#hereforyou

BCP Council

We'll be looking after **129 PLAYGROUNDS** for happy children! from **day one**

#hereforyou

**6,200 ACRES**  
open spaces, parks, gardens and countryside

**2,600**  
litter/recycling and dog waste bins

BCP Council

We'll be looking after **658 MILES** of roads from **day one**

#hereforyou

BCP Council

**12.7 MILLION**  
Bins emptied per year

Your bin collection dates **remain the same** from **day one**

#hereforyou

# #hereforyou from Day 1

## Emotion, energy and momentum

Together we did it - managing a very smooth conversion with no gaps in service delivery as far as we could tell!

Phase 2 of the reorganisation focussed on stabilising business as usual, which has left us with three different levels of service being provided across the BCP region a real challenge for frontline services and for our residents to understand.

### Lessons learnt

- Don't underestimate the investment needed to keep the team focused on delivery. Spotting, acknowledging and responding to nervousness, weariness and overload.
- Be aware of manager fatigue - supporting corporate change programme timelines whilst ensuring BAU services continued to be delivered to standard
- Work with Trade Unions and pick out those frontline individuals the teams trust/gravitate to - to champion the change and who will create a positive buzz.



# Transformational change is a long march

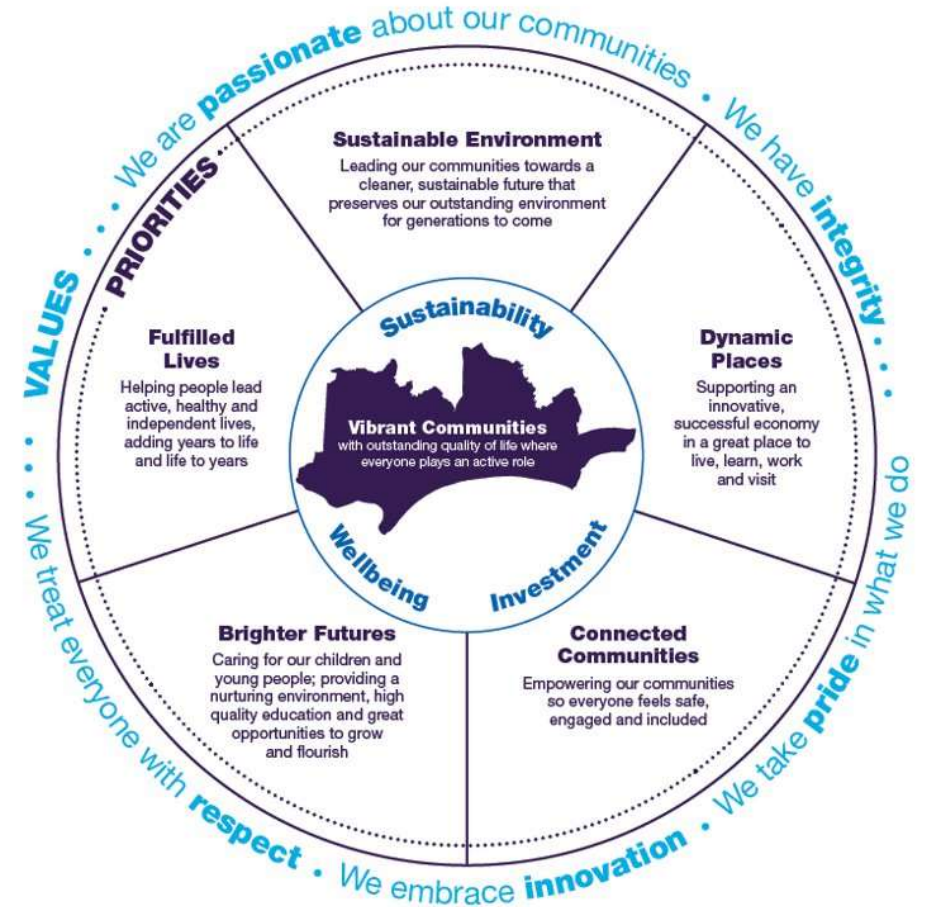
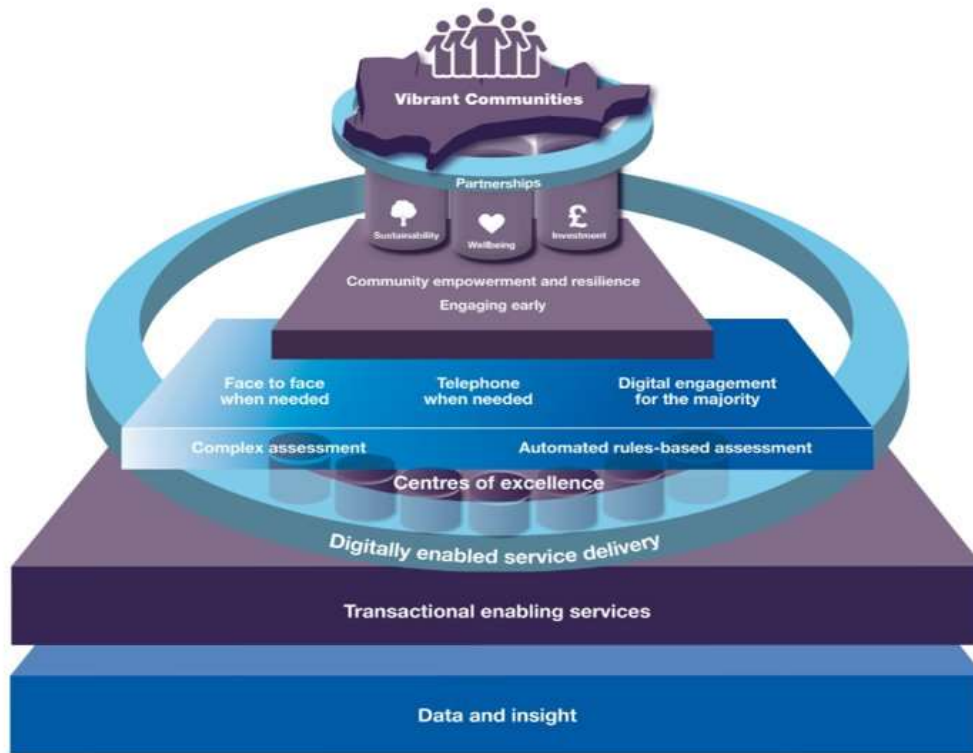
Phase 3 is all about deciding what level of service we want to provide for the long term. This is where the more detailed work starts.

Factors influencing frontline team transformation:

- Culture
- Operating from multiple Depot locations to separate policies
- Pay & Reward differences
- Training and development gaps
- Current unknowns of future Service Strategy decisions
- Declaration of Climate and Ecological Emergency
- Market place – Challenge to attract low paid manual workers



# Phase 3



A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The water is dark with some ripples. In the foreground, there are dark, out-of-focus branches or reeds. The overall mood is serene and peaceful.

**Any questions**