EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

THE DORSET (STRUCTURAL CHANGES) (MODIFICATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007) REGULATIONS 2018

2018 No. [XXXX]

AND

THE BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET AND POOLE (STRUCTURAL CHANGES) ORDER 2018

2018 No. [XXXX]

1. Introduction

1.1 This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

1.2 This memorandum contains information for the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments.

1.3 Attached to this memorandum is a report required by section 15(12) and (13) of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 on The Dorset (Structural Changes) (Modification of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2018.

2. Purpose of the instrument

2.1 These instruments provide for the creation of a single tier of local government for Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole with effect from 1 April 2019. The existing areas are abolished and the councils for those areas are to be wound up and dissolved. A new non-metropolitan county and a new non-metropolitan district, each to be known as Dorset, are established for the same area as the districts of East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset, and the borough of Weymouth and Portland, and a new district council – Dorset Council – is established for the area. A new non-metropolitan county and a new non-metropolitan district, each to be known as Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, are established for the same area as the county and borough of Bournemouth, the borough of Christchurch, and the county and borough of Poole, and a new district council – Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council - is established for the area. On and after 1 April 2019, the two new councils will be the sole local authorities[1] for their respective districts.

3. Matters of special interest to Parliament

Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

3.1 This is the first use of powers conferred on the Secretary of State under section 15 of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 to vary the provisions for

[1] For these purposes 'local authority' does not include a parish council.

implementing structural change in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act"). Regulations under section 15 were laid on 19 March 2018 to modify provisions related to boundary changes in the 2007 Act as they apply to East Suffolk[2] and West Suffolk[3].

3.2 Prior to the laying of these instruments, the Borough of Weymouth and Portland (Change to Year of Election) Order 2018 was made on 27 February 2018 (S.I. 2018/256), coming into force on 27 March 2018. That Order changed the year of the scheduled elections of councillors in the Borough of Weymouth and Portland.[4]

3.3 These instruments deal with the essential elements of the new single tier local government structures; the abolition of the existing local government areas and the winding up and dissolution of the existing county, district and unitary councils, the creation of new local government areas and new councils for those areas, and the making of arrangements for preparation for transition to single tier local government.

Other matters of interest to the House of Commons

3.4 These instruments apply only to England.

3.5 These instruments apply only to England as they are entirely concerned with local government areas in England. The instrument does not give rise to minor or consequential effects outside England.

3.6 In the view of the Department, for the purposes of House of Commons Standing Order 83P the subject-matter of these entire instruments would be within the devolved legislative competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly if equivalent provision in relation to Northern Ireland were included in an Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly as a transferred matter; or the Scottish Parliament if equivalent provision in relation to Scotland were included in an Act of the Scottish Parliament; or the National Assembly for Wales if equivalent provision in relation to Wales were included in an Act of the National Assembly for Wales.

3.7 The Department has reached this view because it considers that the primary purposes of the provisions in these instruments relate to local government which is within the devolved legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the National Assembly for Wales.

4. Legislative Context

4.1 This memorandum details two statutory instruments which are being laid before Parliament which, if approved and made, would implement the locally led proposal, submitted in February 2017 to the Secretary of State by the councils of Bournemouth, Dorset, North Dorset, Poole, West Dorset, and Weymouth and Portland, for the creation of two unitary authorities across Dorset. The first instrument, the Dorset (Structural Changes) (Modification of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2018 ("the Regulations"), varies the 2007 Act in its application to the Dorset councils. The second instrument, the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (Structural Changes) Order 2018 ("the Order") implements the proposal for local government reorganisation in Dorset made under the 2007 Act as modified by the Regulations.

[2] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111167557/contents
[3] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111167571/contents
[4] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/256/memorandum/contents

The Dorset (Structural Changes) (Modification of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2018

4.2 Part 1 of the 2007 Act provides for structural and boundary change of local government areas in England. Chapter 1 provides for structural change from two tiers of local government in an area to a single tier (from a county council and district councils for an area to a single unitary authority – commonly known as "unitarisation"). Section 2 of the 2007 Act provides that the Secretary of State may invite[5] any principal authority to make one of three types of proposal for structural change, or a combined proposal. The types of proposal which may be made are for a single tier of local government for:

- the area of the county concerned (a "Type A proposal");
- an area which is one or more districts in the county concerned (a "Type B proposal");
- an area which consists of the county concerned or one or more districts in that county, and one or more adjoining counties or districts (a "Type C proposal");
- two or more Type B or Type C proposals, or one or more Type B and one or more Type C proposals ("a combined proposal").

Such a combined proposal has been made by a number of the principal authorities in the administrative county of Dorset and by the existing unitary authorities of Bournemouth and Poole.[6] The proposal is a combination of: a Type B proposal - for unitarisation of five of the six districts in the existing administrative county of Dorset; and a Type C proposal - for unitarisation of the county and borough of Bournemouth with the adjoining borough of Christchurch and county and borough of Poole.

4.3 Section 4 provides that the Secretary of State may request the advice of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England ("the Commission") where a proposal has been received in response to an invitation under section 2. Sections 5 and 6 set out the powers and procedure to be followed by the Commission.[7]

4.4 Section 7 confers a power on the Secretary of State to implement by order a proposal for unitarisation of an area which has been made by one or more of the principal councils in the area in response to an invitation under section 2. The proposal may be implemented with or without modification. An order may not be made unless the Secretary of State has consulted every authority affected by the proposal (except any authority which has made the proposal) and such other persons as are considered appropriate.

4.5 The detail of what a section 7 order can include is set out in sections 11 and 12. A section 7 order can, for example, create a new local government area or abolish an existing one; move the boundary of any local government area; create a new council for the area or abolish an existing one and provide for a new name. A section 7 order

[5] Section 2 also provides that the Secretary of State may direct a council to make a proposal, however section 3 provides that such a direction may not be given after 25th January 2008.

[6] The proposal was made on 9 February 2017 by Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, North Dorset District Council, Poole Borough Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, acting jointly.

[7] Sections 4 to 6 have been amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 c. 20, Schedule 4, to substitute references to the Boundary Committee of the Electoral Commission for references to the Local Government Boundary Commission.

can also make provision for "electoral matters" which, for example, includes the total number of members (councillors) of the authority; the number and boundaries of electoral areas and the number of councillors to be returned by each area. A section 7 order can also include transitional provision allowing, for example, for the appointment by the Secretary of State of members of an existing local authority to be members of a new local authority for a transitional period.

4.6 Section 15 of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 confers a power on the Secretary of State to make regulations (subject to the affirmative parliamentary procedure) which may disapply or vary the application of the 2007 Act provisions in relation to structural and boundary change. In particular, by making provision as to how Part 1 of the 2007 Act is to apply in relation to particular cases (including by removing the application of certain provisions in Part 1 or applying it subject to any variations that are specified in the regulations).

4.7 Regulations under this section, so far as including structural or boundary provision in relation to a non-unitary district council area, may be made if at least one relevant local authority consents (i.e. one of the councils whose area falls within the area concerned). This consent requirement expires at the end of 31st March 2019 (but without affecting any regulations already made under this section). After that date, the exercise of powers under section 15 will require the consent of all relevant authorities in the area in question. Consent is required from all unitary authorities (both before and after the expiry of the above non-unitary district consent requirement) to regulations which make structural or boundary change in relation to their areas. In relation to the Dorset proposal, at a minimum, consent is required from Bournemouth Borough Council, Poole Borough Council and one of the seven councils in the county area (Dorset County Council or one of its six district councils.)

4.8 These Regulations made under section 15 of the 2016 Act would provide that Part 1 of the 2007 Act is to be varied in its application to the case of the Dorset councils so that those councils can make proposals for structural change in their area to the Secretary of State without an invitation having been received and allowing the Secretary of State to implement those proposals by order under section 7 of the 2007 Act. As such a proposal would not be made in response to an invitation and the discretion to request the advice of the Commission or the requirement to consult all affected authorities does not apply.

The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (Structural Changes) Order 2018

4.9 This Order is made in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 7, 11, 12 and 13 of the 2007 Act. It implements the proposal made under the 2007 Act that there should be two new unitary authorities for the area of Dorset.

4.10 Section 14 of the 2007 Act enables the Secretary of State, by regulations of general application, to make incidental, consequential, transitional and supplementary provision to give full effect to these local government changes. The Secretary of State intends to make provision for, among other things, transferring functions, property, rights and liabilities to the new council, and transitional provisions relating to financial matters and staffing, in subsequent generic regulations.

5. Extent and Territorial Application

5.1 This instrument extends to England and Wales as the relevant powers being exercised extend to England and Wales.

5.2 The territorial application of this instrument is set out in Section 3 under "Other matters of interest to the House of Commons".

6. European Convention on Human Rights

6.1 Rishi Sunak, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, has made the following statement regarding Human Rights:

In my view the provisions of the Dorset (Structural Changes) (Modification of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2018 and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (Structural Changes) Order 2018 are compatible with the Convention rights.

7. Policy background

What is being done and why

7.1 The Government made a manifesto commitment to support those authorities that wish to combine to serve their communities better, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is committed to consider locally led proposals for unitarisation and mergers between councils where requested.

7.2 On 28 February 2017, in response to a Parliamentary Question from Christopher Chope MP (PQN 65271)[8], the then Minister for Local Government Marcus Jones MP stated the criteria against which proposals for local government reorganisation would be assessed: namely that any proposal made by one or more councils in an area for reorganising that area's local government will be considered, and a judgement in the round will be reached "as to whether the proposal, if implemented, is likely to improve the area's local government, commands a good deal of local support in the area, and whether the area itself is a credible geography for the proposed new structures."

7.3 Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset County Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Poole Borough Council, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council developed and consulted on a proposal ("the proposal") to reorganise local government in the area. Six of these councils: Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, North Dorset District Council, Poole Borough Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council then submitted the proposal to the Secretary of State on 9 February 2017. In the Dorset area, there are currently two small unitary councils, Bournemouth and Poole, surrounded by a two-tier structure of Dorset County Council and the district councils of Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset, and Weymouth and Portland. The proposal is for the existing nine councils to be replaced by a single council for the areas of Bournemouth, Poole and the part of the county of Dorset currently comprising the Borough of Christchurch, and by a single council for the remainder of the Dorset county area.

[8] http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-02-23/65271/

7.4 On 7 November 2017, the Secretary of State announced[9] that, having carefully considered all the material and representations he had received, he was "minded to" implement the proposal. There then followed a period until 8 January 2018 for interested parties to make representations, including for the proposal to be implemented with suggested modifications, and for councils to come forward with an alternative proposal.

7.5 Following the end of the period for representations, the Secretary of State has considered the proposal and, having had regard to the representations he received and all information available to him, decided that the proposal meets the stated criteria and, subject to Parliamentary approval, should be implemented without modification. The Secretary of State announced this decision to Parliament on 26 February 2018.[10]

The Dorset (Structural Changes) (Modification of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2018

7.6 The Regulations modify provisions relating to unitarisation in the 2007 Act as they apply to the authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole to enable the Secretary of State to implement the Dorset councils' proposal.

7.7 Regulations under section 15 of the 2016 Act relating to structural and boundary changes may be made with the consent of the relevant local authorities until 31 March 2019. For a two tier area consent is required from at least one of the relevant authorities ie. councils in that area. For the purposes of these Regulations, statute requires as a minimum that there is consent from Bournemouth Borough Council, Poole Borough Council, and from one authority within the Dorset county area. Consent was sought from all councils affected by the Regulations and the following eight councils gave consent to the making of these Regulations: Bournemouth Borough Council; Dorset County Council; East Dorset District Council; North Dorset District Council; Poole Borough Council; Purbeck District Council; West Dorset District Council; and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council; which is significantly above the minimum level of consent required by statute.

7.8 Regulation 3 provides that Part 1 of the 2007 Act is varied in relation to Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole so that:

- the requirement for unitary proposals to be "invited" by the Secretary of State is disapplied; proposals may be made by any principal authority in Dorset;
- any unitary proposal received by the Secretary of State from Dorset councils (not just proposals received in response to an invitation) may be implemented with or without modification by order;
- the discretion for the Secretary of State to request advice from the Local Government Boundary Commission does not apply as the proposal has not been made in response to an invitation or direction. In any event, such advice is not required in this case, as the proposal has been made by the majority of councils in the area (following extensive local consultation) and the Secretary of State has decided to implement the proposal without modification;

[9] HCWS232 https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2017-11-07/HCWS232/
[10] HCWS486 http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2018-02-26/HCWS486/

- the requirement for the Secretary of State to consult the councils affected by that proposal and other persons about the proposal does not apply (reflecting the extensive consultation undertaken by councils in Dorset and the period of representation following the Secretary of State's initial announcement).

7.9 Regulation 4 provides for the relevant provisions of the 2007 Act as modified by these Regulations to apply to the implementation of a proposal (such as the proposal submitted by the Dorset councils in February 2017) made before the coming into force of these Regulations.

7.10 Regulation 5 provides that the Regulations expire at the end of March 2020. This is to allow sufficient time, should the need arise for a further Order under sections 7, 11,12 or 13 of the 2007 Act to be made, in order to give full effect to the proposal.

The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (Structural Changes) Order 2018

7.11 This Order implements the proposal made under section 2 of the 2007 Act as modified by the Regulations. The Order establishes the new local government structures and provides for the making of arrangements in preparation of the transition to the new councils.

7.12 Part 2 of the Order provides for the establishment of a new non-metropolitan county and a new non-metropolitan district, each to be known as Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, for the same area as the county and borough of Bournemouth, the borough of Christchurch, and the county and borough of Poole, and a new district council – Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council - is established for the area. On 1 April 2019 the existing local government areas and councils are to be wound up and dissolved.

7.13 Part 3 of the Order provides for the establishment of a new non-metropolitan county and a new non-metropolitan district, each to be known as Dorset, for the same area as the districts of East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset, and the borough of Weymouth and Portland, and a new district council – Dorset Council – is established for the area. On 1 April 2019 the existing local government areas and councils are to be wound up and dissolved.

7.14 Parts 4 and 6 provide that Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council are shadow authorities from the day the Order comes into force until 1 April 2019. On 1 April 2019 each shadow authority will become the sole local authority for its district. The main function of each shadow authority will be to make all necessary preparations in advance of 1st April 2019 (including preparing and keeping under review an implementation plan and appointment of key officers).

7.15 The members of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Shadow Authority will comprise all existing members of Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, Poole Borough Council and those members of Dorset County Council representing the Christchurch electoral divisions. The members of the Dorset Shadow Authority will comprise all existing members of each district council within its area and all members of Dorset County Council excluding the councillors representing the Christchurch electoral divisions. Each shadow authority will appoint a Leader and Cabinet executive known as a "shadow executive committee" representative of the councils in its area, at its first meeting. The costs of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole shadow authorities will be met by Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, Poole Borough Council and Dorset County Council in such proportion as agreed between those

councils. The costs of the Dorset shadow authority will be met by Dorset County Council and the district councils in the area of that shadow authority in such proportion as agreed between those councils.

7.16 The Order provides for the key powers and arrangements for staffing resources necessary for the shadow authorities to ensure that there is a smooth transition on 1 April 2019 to the new unitary authorities, which can begin work on the delivery of the long-term outcomes envisaged in the proposal. The shadow authorities are therefore enabled to take all such practicable steps as are necessary or expedient to prepare for the assumption of full local government functions and powers on 1 April 2019 and to ensure continuity of public service delivery on and after this date.

7.17 The Order also provides that all affected local authorities are required to co-operate in achieving structural change and generally to exercise their functions in such a way as to further the economic, efficient, effective and timely transfer of functions to the new unitary authorities.

7.18 Parts 5 and 7 of the Order make provision for the elections of councillors to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and Dorset councils. Whole council elections to both councils will take place on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2019 (2 May 2019). Elections to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council will take place in every fourth year thereafter. Elections to Dorset Council will take place in 2019, 2024, 2029 and in every fourth year thereafter as the local area have requested. Once the Order is made, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would be invited to review the wards in time for the elections in 2019. This would supersede the electoral arrangements in the Order.

7.19 The Schedules to the Order provide for the electoral wards and number of councillors to be elected to each ward for each new council. The wards and number of councillors elected to each have been set out with the aim of delivering as close as possible electoral equality, no more than 3 members to any ward and providing for a total of 76 members for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, and 82 members for Dorset Council.

8. Consultation outcome

Consultation before initial decision

8.1 The nine councils in Dorset began developing proposals to reorganise local government in the area in 2016. Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned to consult on different options for reorganisation, including to retain all nine councils (option 1) or to change from the nine councils to two unitaries (options 2a-2c). [11] The findings of ORS were published in December 2016.[12]

8.2 The consultation period ran from 30 August 2016 until 25 October 2016 and residents and stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on all options through a variety of means to ensure all residents and stakeholders were able to share their views:

- an open consultation questionnaire for all residents, stakeholders and organisations;

[11] Page 9 of the ORS Reshaping Your Councils Consultation 2016, Final Report https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/218499/Full-report-final-2016/pdf/2016_12_05b_Full_Report_FINAL.compressed.pdf

[12] https://news.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/reshapingyourcouncils/

- a representative household survey based upon 20,000 randomly selected households;
- a survey of all parish and town councils;
- 15 deliberative workshops: 8 were held with members of the public; 3 with parish and town councillors; 2 with representatives of the voluntary and community sector; and 2 with members of the business community;
- 9 in-depth telephone interviews were also conducted with representatives of some of Dorset's largest companies;
- written submissions: residents, stakeholders and organisations were able to provide their views by writing to Dorset's councils or ORS.

8.3 The consultation received over 17,000 responses, broken down as follows:

- 12,542 open questionnaire responses;
- 120 responses to the parish and town council survey;
- 4,258 responses from the randomly selected representative households;
- 158 residents, 117 parish and town councillors, 57 voluntary/community sector representatives and 53 business representatives attended workshops and in-depth interviews;
- 82 written submissions.

8.4 The conclusion reached by ORS was that "across both the quantitative and deliberative means of consultation, there was clear and even emphatic support for moving to two councils." Almost three quarters (73%) of those responding to the representative household survey agreed with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two new councils, with 65% supporting the two council approach that was submitted in the proposal to the Secretary of State and is provided for in this Order. The ORS report also identified significant support from local businesses and the Dorset Local Economic Partnership.

Representations received after initial decision

8.5 Following the research from ORS, six of the nine Dorset councils formally submitted for the Secretary of State's consideration a proposal for two unitary authorities. On 7 November 2017 the Secretary of State announced that he was 'minded to' implement the locally-led proposal for two unitary authorities. He also announced that before making his final decision, there would be a period until 8 January 2018 during which those interested could make further representations, including that if the proposal is implemented it is with suggested modifications. It was also open to any council in the area to come forward with an alternative proposal.

8.6 When announcing his "minded to" decision, the Secretary of State also noted that further steps were needed to secure local consent. When the proposal was submitted in February 2017 it was supported by six of the nine councils in the Dorset area. Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council and Purbeck District Council were not supportive of the proposal. Following the Secretary of State's "minded to" decision, East Dorset and Purbeck made representations[13] to the Secretary of State - East Dorset District Council now support the proposal, and Purbeck District Council have withdrawn their opposition to the proposal. Christchurch Borough Council remains in opposition to the proposal.

[13] Letter of 18 December 2017 from Cllr Flower, Leader of East Dorset District Council, to the Secretary of State and letter of 5 January 2017 from Cllr Suttle, Leader of Purbeck District Council, to the Secretary of State.

8.7 During the period of representation, 210 representations were received from members of the public, local councillors, businesses and community organisations. Submissions from members of the public were more likely to be opposed to the proposal, town and parish councillors were more likely to be in favour of the proposal, the submissions from county and district councillors were evenly split, while businesses and public bodies were predominantly supportive. Overall, the representations received were evenly split between positive and negative with 96 representations in favour, 12 neutral and 99 opposed. 3 representations were received which did not express views about the proposal.

8.8 During the period of representations, Christchurch Borough Council held a local advisory poll[14] to inform the Council's representation to the Secretary of State, declaring the result on 14 December 2017. The poll had a 54% turnout, of which 84% voted No to the question "Do you support the current proposal for a single Council covering Christchurch, Bournemouth and Poole?" Following the results of this poll, Christchurch Borough Council made a representation[15] to the Secretary of State containing an alternative proposal which the Secretary of State did not consider to be implementable.

8.9 Having had regard to all the evidence - the proposal, the representations received, the Christchurch advisory poll (which related to 6% of the total area population), representations about the poll, and all information available to him - the Secretary of State is satisfied that in the round across the Dorset area the criteria for local government reorganisation is met and the proposal is likely to improve the area's local government, commands a good deal of local support and is a credible geography.

9. Guidance

9.1 No guidance is necessary to accompany these instruments. The Government continues to work with colleagues in the local areas to support their implementation of the new authorities.

10. Impact

10.1 There is no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

10.2 In terms of impact on the public sector, a number of local public bodies, such as NHS providers, housing associations and third sector organisations, have made representations that implementing the proposal would improve local partnership working and remove duplication.

10.3 The establishment of the two new councils across Dorset would improve the sustainability of the services that are currently carried out by the existing councils. Estimated savings over the first six years would be at least £108 million and if the full transformation programme could be achieved there is the potential to save over £170 million over that period. Annual savings as a result of the restructuring are estimated to be £28m per year.

10.4 An Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument as there is no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

[14] https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch/local-poll
[15] https://news.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/2018/01/05/christchurch-council-makes-representation/

11. Regulating small business

11.1 The legislation does not apply to activities that are undertaken by small businesses.

12. Monitoring & review

12.1 These instruments provide for new governance arrangements in the areas of Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. The new councils will be democratically accountable for their performance to the local electorate, and subject to the audit and accountability regimes applicable to the generality of local government.

13. Contact

13.1 Nicola Chissell, telephone: 0303 444 1941, and Louise Beckingham, telephone: 0303 444 4336, or email: jobshare.beckingham-chissell@communities.gsi.gov.uk at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, can answer any queries regarding these instruments.