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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S CIRCULAR

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Transfer of assets to town and parish councils – principles

Statement by DAPTC Chairman to Shadow Dorset Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Shadow Dorset Executive Committee has decided principles for transfer of assets to local councils. Details are in draft minute 18 at

<http://shadowcouncil.dorset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=134&Ver=4>

The Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 31 July and as part of its work, discussed the principles. At the request of the Committee Chairman, the DAPTC Chairman John Parker was invited to speak to the Committee. As he was unable to attend due to a delayed flight, DAPTC Chief Executive Hilary Trevorah gave a statement on his behalf which included the following points:

- The establishment of a new unitary council is an enormous task. It is in everyone's interests that every effort is made to provide effective services to the people of Dorset. Cooperation between the unitary tiers of local government and the parish and town council tier has never been so essential.
- With the budgetary challenges facing the new unitary, it is even more important to use local councils as a way of connecting with individual communities. Our members have the knowledge and understanding of their residents' needs. Let us help you shape future services in innovative and responsive ways.
- Devolution is a fundamental issue which requires adequate resources and massive cooperation. There are some items which are clearly out of our league and we have to be mindful of council tax payers facing increases through tax harmonisation. Please let us have the opportunity to work as partners with this brand new authority to find ways to help our communities – a goal that we all have in common.

Councillor Adrian Hibberd, a member of DAPTC Executive Committee and Chairman of DAPTC Eastern Area Committee spoke of the need for improved communication about plans for the new unitary council.

Swanage Town Clerk Martin Ayres reminded the Committee of the recommendations of the Working Together Project. (The project had been led by officers from Dorset County Council, DAPTC and several Clerks, including Martin. The recommendations had received broad support from DAPTC members in December 2015 when DAPTC consulted all town and parish councils on the report's recommendations for closer working arrangements with principal authorities).