

Verwood County Council Report –September 2018 **Cllrs. Toni Coombs and Spencer Flower**

New Shadow Dorset Council – At the Full Council on Thursday 27 September the appointment of Matt Prosser as Chief Executive Designate was overwhelmingly approved by those members present. This followed a rigorous recruitment process involving external applicants.

Matt was heavily involved in the original LGR submission to the MHCLG Secretary of State so is well aware of the challenge we face in achieving the stated objectives of the new Dorset Unitary Council

New Shadow Dorset Council – The new Dorset Council Wards are expected to be announced by the Local Government Boundary Commission during the third week in October. MHCLG will then prepare an Order to be laid before Parliament at the end of October and become law following the expiry of a statutory 40 days.

The new warding arrangements will be used on Thursday 2 May 2019 for the first all-out elections to the 82 seats of the new Dorset Unitary Council. Assuming there are no further changes this will mean Verwood having a three member ward serving the whole town [excluding Three Legged Cross].

Budget Task and Finish Group – the Shadow Council has set up a member led group to help with the drafting of the first budget for the new Dorset Council, which will be presented for Member approval at Full Shadow Council in February 2019.

The two key pieces of work being undertaken is identifying the savings that can be harvested from Convergence [bring all existing council structures into one] and Transformation [redesigning services and gaining the economies of scale]

Cycleway Verwood-Ringwood – Cyclists in Verwood have lobbied, via the Local Action Group, for a cycleway between the towns, as close to the B3081 as possible. Cllr. Spencer Flower has agreed to take up the issues with Dorset County officers and establish a dialogue with his counterpart in Hampshire.

A meeting with an officer at County Hall has taken place regarding possible routes discussing how the project could be funded and permission sought from the landowner. Early days yet, but some opportunities may be available, subject to a number of key aspects involved in such projects. Further update will hopefully be available by the end of the month. Arrangements are also being made to have a conversation with the local Hampshire County Councillor. This is because the majority of the route is in Hampshire, with just the two ends in Dorset.

Campaigning for Road Maintenance – Following complaints from local resident's action has been requested to deal with a number of poor surfaces in residential roads in the Town. Site visits with Highways Officers have taken place and following the intervention of local members many of these roads have been placed on the schedule of works for 2018/19