

Notice of Shadow Poole Town Council



Date: Wednesday, 21 January 2026 at 6.00 pm

Venue: The Guildhall, Market Street, Poole BH15 1NF

Membership:

Chair:

To be elected

Vice Chair:

To be elected

Cllr S Aitkenhead
Cllr M Andrews
Cllr J Bagwell
Cllr D Brown
Cllr R Burton
Cllr J J Butt
Cllr J Challinor
Cllr A Chapmanlaw
Cllr J Clements
Cllr P Cooper
Cllr M Earl

Cllr M Gillett
Cllr C Goodall
Cllr A Hadley
Cllr E Harman
Cllr B Hitchcock
Cllr M Howell
Cllr M Le Poidevin
Cllr D Logan
Cllr S Mackrow
Cllr C Matthews
Cllr P Miles

Cllr S Moore
Cllr R Pattinson-West
Cllr K Rampton
Cllr Dr F Rice
Cllr P Slade
Cllr T Trent
Cllr O Walters
Cllr C Weight
Cllr G Wright

All Members of the Shadow Poole Town Council are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting.

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services or email democratic.services@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 454668 or email press.office@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

AIDAN DUNN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

13 January 2026

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

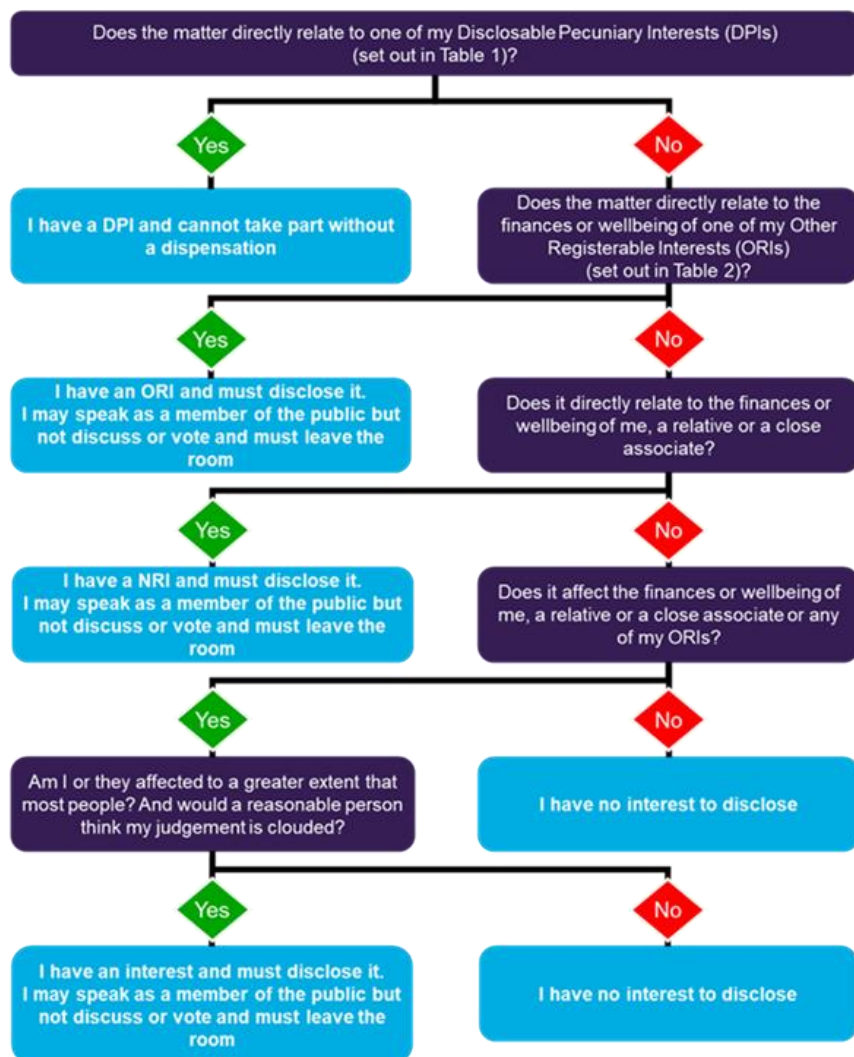


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Election of Chair

To elect a Chair of the Shadow Council for the period up to 31 March 2026.

2. Election of Vice-Chair

To elect a Vice-Chair of the Shadow Council for the period up to 31 March 2026.

3. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

4. Declarations of Interests

Members are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

5. Adoption of Procedure Rules

5 - 14

Although the Shadow Council is not a meeting of the principal council, it would be appropriate to adopt meeting procedure rules similar to the meeting procedure rules which apply to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. An extracted version of the existing Part 4D Procedure Rules have been reproduced including the relevant provisions applicable to meetings of the Shadow Council.

It is RECOMMENDED that the Procedure Rules, as set out in the appended document, be adopted as the Meeting Procedure Rules for the Shadow Council.

6. Establishing the New Town Council

15 - 22

This report updates the Shadow Poole Town Council on progress towards establishing Poole Town Council ahead of its vesting date on 1 April 2026. Key milestones have been achieved, including the approval of the Reorganisation Order, confirmation of parish and ward boundaries, and commencement of recruitment for the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Several priority issues raised by councillors and stakeholders, such as asset transfers, allotment management, civic arrangements, election preparations, and neighbourhood forum transitions, are being addressed through a structured implementation plan. Statutory allotment sites within the new parish area will transfer to the Town Council, and historic and civic ceremonial assets will be formally transferred before 31 March 2026.

Workstreams covering governance, finance, assets, staffing, elections, and communications are underway, supported by an officer working group. A

proposed election timetable for 7 May 2026 has been published to support prospective candidates.

The report seeks nominations for an appointments panel of three to six shadow councillors, with delegated authority to complete the recruitment and appointment of the Town Clerk to avoid delay.

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chair decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

SHADOW COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURE RULES

A. Meeting Procedure Rules

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

- 1.1. At the first meeting, the Shadow Council will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair.
- 1.2. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair (who will have the same powers and duties as the Chair), will preside at meetings. Where both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent, the meeting will appoint another Councillor to chair the meeting, who will have the same powers and duties as the Chair.
- 1.3. The Chair of BCP Council, or in their absence the Vice-Chair of BCP Council, shall preside over the election of Chair. Where both the Chair and Vice-Chair of BCP Council are absent, the membership shall agree, prior to the commencement of the formal meeting, another Councillor from the membership to preside over the election of Chair. The person presiding over the election of Chair shall be entitled to a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes.
- 1.4. The meeting may elect, from among the voting members, a councillor to the office of Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Records of Attendance

The Monitoring Officer will keep a record of Councillors attending any meeting of the Shadow Council.

3. Quorum

- 3.1. No business shall be dealt with at the Shadow Council meeting if there are fewer than one quarter of Councillors who are members of that body present at the meeting. Where the meeting has started, and the number of Councillors present is fewer than one quarter of the number of Councillors, the Chair will adjourn the meeting. Where the Chair does not give a date and/or time for the consideration of the remaining business, all business not completed will be considered at the next meeting.

4. Order of business

Business shall be dealt with in the order in which it is set out in the agenda unless the Chair or the meeting decides otherwise.

5. Duration of meetings

- 5.1. Upon a meeting duration reaching two hours without a previous adjournment, the Chair shall, unless in their opinion it is expedient to continue to the end of remaining business, adjourn the meeting at the end of the item under discussion for a short adjournment the duration of which is at the Chair's discretion but must not exceed 30 minutes.
- 5.2. Rule 5.1 does not preclude a Motion without Notice being moved under Procedure Rule 9 to adjourn a meeting.

6. Urgent Business

- 6.1. Business cannot be dealt with at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and made available for public inspection at least five clear working days before the meeting or, where the meeting is convened at short notice, from the time the meeting is convened.
- 6.2. The Chair of the meeting may agree to deal with an item of business at the meeting if, in their opinion, the matter is urgent given the circumstances requiring a decision. The Chair's ruling and the reasons for urgency will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7. Confirmation of Minutes

- 7.1. Minutes of the last meeting must be confirmed at the next ordinary meeting.
- 7.2. Only matters relating to the accuracy of the minutes can be raised, which must be done by way of a motion which is proposed, seconded and voted upon. Where no issues are raised, or after the motion has been dealt with, the Chair shall sign the minutes.
- 7.3. Councillors may ask a question or comment on any minute. The Chair of the meeting will then reply. There will be no debate on any question or comment raised under this procedure and no further motions can be moved.
- 7.4. Where a Councillor has a question or comment on an Exempt or Confidential minute, the question or comment must be given in writing to the Monitoring Officer or their nominee at least one hour before the start of the meeting.
- 7.5. Any question about the accuracy of any minute of a body must be considered and determined by that body at its next meeting.

8. Matters for decision by the Shadow Council

- 8.1. All matters for decision by the Shadow Council (except any urgent items) shall be included with the Agenda.

9. Motions moved without notice

- 9.1. Only the following motions and amendments can be moved at a meeting without notice:
 - 9.1.1. appointment of a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is made;
 - 9.1.2. motions relating to the accuracy of the minutes;
 - 9.1.3. that an item of business specified in the summons should have precedence;
 - 9.1.4. receipt of reports of officers and any consequent resolutions;
 - 9.1.5. extending the time limit for speeches;

- 9.1.6. amendment to motions;
- 9.1.7. that the meeting proceed to the next business;
- 9.1.8. that the question be now put;
- 9.1.9. that the debate be now adjourned;
- 9.1.10. that the meeting do now adjourn;
- 9.1.11. suspending Procedure Rules, in accordance with Procedure Rule 14;
- 9.1.12. motion under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public;
- 9.1.13. that a Councillor named under Procedure Rule 16 should not be heard further;
- 9.1.14. by the Chair under Procedure Rule 16, that a Councillor do leave the meeting; and
- 9.1.15. giving consent of the Shadow Council where consent of the Shadow Council is required by these Procedure Rules.

10. Rules of Debate

Motions and Amendments

- 10.1. The Chair of the meeting may, at their discretion, allow a motion or amendment to be put which is not in writing, provided that the Chair has concluded that the wording of the motion or amendment is understood by all members of the body concerned.

Seconders's Speech

- 10.2. When seconding a motion or amendment a Councillor may advise the Chair that they will reserve their right to speak until a later period in the debate.

Only One Councillor to Stand at a Time

- 10.3. When speaking at the Shadow Council meeting a Councillor shall stand if they are able and address the Chair. While a Councillor is speaking the other Councillors will remain seated, unless rising on a point of order or in personal explanation.

Content and Length of Speeches

- 10.4. A Councillor will confine their speech to the question under discussion, a personal explanation or a point of order. No speech, question or response to a question will exceed three minutes.

When a Councillor may speak again

- 10.5. At the Shadow Council meeting a Councillor who has spoken on any motion shall not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

- 10.5.1. to speak once on an amendment moved by another Councillor;
- 10.5.2. if the motion has been amended since they last spoke, to move a further amendment;
- 10.5.3. if their first speech was on an amendment moved by another Councillor, to speak on the main issue, whether or not the amendment on which they spoke was carried;
- 10.5.4. in exercise of a right of reply;
- 10.5.5. on a point of order referring to the specific Procedure Rule;
- 10.5.6. by way of personal explanation; or
- 10.5.7. to move one of the motions specified in Rule 10.12 when the procedure in those paragraphs shall be followed.

Amendments to Motions

10.6. An amendment must be relevant to the motion and shall propose to do one of the following:

- 10.6.1. to leave out words;
- 10.6.2. to leave out words and add others; and/or
- 10.6.3. to insert or add words,

but such amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Shadow Council.

Number of Amendments

10.7. Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at a time. No further amendment shall be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.

Status of Amendments

10.8. If an amendment is lost, another amendment may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

Withdrawal of Motion

10.9. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover provided the seconder and the meeting, without discussion, agree. Once the mover has asked for permission to withdraw, there should be no further discussion, unless the meeting refuses to agree to the request.

Right of Reply

10.10. The mover of the motion shall have a right to reply at the close of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.

10.11. If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment but shall not otherwise speak on it. The mover of the amendment shall have the right of reply to the debate on their amendment immediately before the mover of the original motion.

Closure Motions

10.12. A Councillor may move, without comment, at the conclusion of a speech of another Councillor, "That the meeting proceed to the next business", "That the question be now put", "That the debate be now adjourned", or "That the meeting do now adjourn". When one of these Motions has been seconded the Chair shall proceed as follows:

- 10.12.1. on a motion to proceed to next business - unless in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, they shall first give the mover of the original motion the right of reply, and then put to the vote the motion to proceed to next business;
- 10.12.2. on a motion that the question be now put - unless in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, they shall put to the vote the closure motion that the question be now put and, if it is passed, give the mover of the original motion the right of reply before putting the motion to the vote; and
- 10.12.3. on a motion to adjourn the debate or the meeting - if in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed on that occasion they shall put the adjournment motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply on that occasion.

Points of Order

10.13. A member of the meeting may rise on a Point of Order and shall be entitled to be heard immediately. A Point of Order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a Procedure Rule or statutory provision and the Councillor shall specify the Procedure Rule or statutory provision and the way in which they consider it has been breached. The ruling of the Chair of the meeting on a Point of Order shall not be open to discussion and shall be final.

Personal Explanation

10.14. A member of the meeting may rise in Personal Explanation and shall be entitled to be heard immediately. A Personal Explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by them which may appear to have been misunderstood in the current debate. The ruling of the Chair of the meeting on a Personal Explanation shall not be open to discussion and shall be final.

Respect for the Chair

10.15. At the Shadow Council meeting whenever the Chair rises during a debate a Councillor then standing shall sit down and the Shadow Council shall be silent.

11. Disclosure of Confidential/Exempt Matters

- 11.1. No Councillor shall disclose to any person the whole or any part of the contents of any agenda, report or other document which is marked “confidential” or “not for publication” unless and until the document has been made available to the public or the press by or on behalf of the Shadow Council.
- 11.2. No Councillor shall disclose to any person other than a member of the Shadow Council any matter arising during the proceedings of the Shadow Council, and which comes to their knowledge by virtue of their office as a Shadow Councillor where such disclosure would prejudice the interest of the Shadow Council or would be contrary to law.
- 11.3. No Councillor shall disclose to any person any decision or proceedings of that body except when one of the following applies (provided that nothing in this paragraph shall authorise disclosure which would contravene Rule 11.1 or Rule 11.2):
- 11.3.1. a report on the matter has been circulated to the Shadow Council by that body;
 - 11.3.2. the decision has become public knowledge; or
 - 11.3.3. the matter comes within the powers of that body and a final decision has been made upon it.

12. Voting

- 12.1. It is the responsibility of each councillor to properly inform themselves and ensure that they are sufficiently appraised of any matter before voting.
- 12.2. Voting will be by a show of hands or where practical and the means are available to those present, by electronic means. Where there is a clear majority in favour of a proposal the person presiding will ask if any Councillor wishes to vote against or abstain from a proposal.
- 12.3. When a Councillor asks for a recorded vote to be taken, and one quarter of Councillors present support the request, the vote will be recorded to show whether each Councillor voted for or against the motion or abstained.
- 12.4. A recorded vote will not be taken if the vote has already begun to be taken.
- 12.5. A Councillor may require, after a vote is completed, that the minutes of the meeting record how they voted or abstained.
- 12.6. Where there are equal votes cast for a motion or amendment the Chair or the person presiding will have a second or casting vote.

13. Offices and Appointments

- 13.1. A secret ballot will be held to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Shadow Council to any office or position where more than one person is nominated.

13.2. If a secret ballot is held and no person receives more than half of the votes cast, the name of the person with the least number of votes will be withdrawn. Further ballots will be held until one person receives a clear majority.

13.3. The Chair, or person presiding, will have a second or casting vote where the votes are equal.

14. Suspension of Procedure Rules

14.1. Any of the Procedure Rules may be suspended to the extent permitted within the Rules and the law in respect of any business at a meeting of the Shadow Council where its suspension is moved.

14.2. A motion to suspend Procedure Rules shall not be moved without notice (that is under Procedure Rule 9) unless there shall be present at least one-half of the Members of the Shadow Council. The extent and duration of the suspension will be proportionate to the result to be achieved.

15. Interpretation of Procedure Rules

Subject to taking advice from the Monitoring Officer or their nominated representative, the ruling of the person presiding as to the construction or application of any of these Procedure Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Shadow Council, shall not be challenged at any meeting.

16. Disorderly conduct by Councillors

16.1. If at a meeting any Councillor, in the opinion of the person presiding, misconducts themselves in any way, the person presiding shall warn them. If the misconduct continues, the person presiding or any other Councillor may move "That the Councillor be not further heard for the item being debated" or "That the Councillor be not further heard for the remainder of the meeting". The motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.

16.2. If the Councillor continues the misconduct after a motion under the Rule 16.1 has been carried, the person presiding may: either move "That the Councillor do leave the meeting" (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or adjourn the meeting.

16.3. In the event of general disturbance by Councillors at any meeting which, in the opinion of the person presiding, renders the due and orderly dispatch of business impossible, the person presiding, will have the power to adjourn the meeting.

17. Disturbance by members of the Public

If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting the person presiding shall warn them. If they continue, the person presiding shall order their removal from the meeting. In cases of general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the person presiding shall order that part to be cleared.

18. Submission of Notices by Councillors – Electronic Means

A Councillor may communicate, by electronic means, any notice under any of the Council's Procedural Rules to initiate any process or procedure provided it is clear that the notice has been originated by that Councillor.

Public Access to Meeting Documentation following the meeting

- 18.1. Members of the public may access minutes, decisions and other relevant documents through the following website <https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk>
Requests for access to the list of background papers and other relevant documents should be by email to the relevant officers.

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SHADOW POOLE TOWN COUNCIL

Report subject	Establishing the New Town Council
Meeting date	21 January 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report updates the Shadow Poole Town Council on progress towards establishing Poole Town Council ahead of its vesting date on 1 April 2026. Key milestones have been achieved, including the approval of the Reorganisation Order, confirmation of parish and ward boundaries, and commencement of recruitment for the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.</p> <p>Several priority issues raised by councillors and stakeholders, such as asset transfers, allotment management, civic arrangements, election preparations, and neighbourhood forum transitions, are being addressed through a structured implementation plan. Statutory allotment sites within the new parish area will transfer to the Town Council, and historic and civic ceremonial assets will be formally transferred before 31 March 2026.</p> <p>Workstreams covering governance, finance, assets, staffing, elections, and communications are underway, supported by an officer working group. A proposed election timetable for 7 May 2026 has been published to support prospective candidates.</p> <p>The report seeks nominations for an appointments panel of three to six shadow councillors, with delegated authority to complete the recruitment and appointment of the Town Clerk to avoid delay.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>(a) the Shadow Council nominate between three and six Shadow Council members to serve on the Appointments Panel to shortlist, interview and appoint a Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer for Poole Town Council;</p> <p>(b) the appointments panel be delegated authority to undertake all necessary activities in the recruitment process and to appoint the preferred candidate.</p>
Reason for recommendations	It is important to recruit and appoint a Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer as soon as possible. The recommendations seek to delegate authority to the appointments panel to appoint the preferred candidate to avoid unnecessary delays.
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive

Report Authors	Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. Members will be aware that Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, at its meeting held on 14 October 2025, approved the establishment of Poole Town Council. At the subsequent Council meeting held on 9 December 2025, the commencement of the recruitment process was authorised and the anticipated precept amounts approved for the first year of the Town Council. A Reorganisation Order was subsequently made on 23 December 2025.
2. The Order stated the establishment date, warding arrangements, the number of councillors and election dates. In addition, the Order made provision for transitional arrangements for the period until the elections in May 2026 (including securing the role of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Sheriff), the anticipated precept amount and further stated that supplementary Orders would be made to deal with the transfer of assets.

Key Issues

3. Councillors, Charter Trustees of Poole and other parties have raised a several key issues over recent months regarding the establishment of the new Town Council. Although not an exhaustive list of issues, these have included the recruitment of the Town Clerk, the transfer of allotment sites, the desire to enter into a Service Level Agreement for the provision of allotments services and civic support, the transfer of historic and ceremonial property held by the Charter Trustees (including the armorial bearings), elections timetables, impact on neighbourhood forums and the anticipated precepts for 2026/27.
4. Some of these issues have been debated formally and decisions reached, however, the remainder are included on a project plan and being addressed on a priority basis. For instance, it was critically important to finalise the formal Reorganisation Orders which were dependent upon the definitive parish and ward boundaries being plotted accurately and provided to relevant government departments and agencies. Other priority activities included the remodelling of council tax data to calculate the Tax Base, updating electoral registration data and warding arrangements in preparation for the elections.
5. It was also time-critical to commence the recruitment process for the Town Clerk. This is dealt with further in this report.

Transfer of Land and Property Assets

6. The Council resolved on 9 October 2025 to limit the transfer of land and property to include only the allotment sites falling with the respective parish boundary which are

required by legislation to be transferred. The table below includes the allotment sites which must therefore be transferred to Poole Town Council.

Site	Managed or Self-Managed	Receiving Council
Alder Farm, Alderney & Bourne Valley	Managed	Poole
Blake Dene, Penn Hill	Managed	Poole
Bushell Mill, Oakdale	Managed	Poole
Hamworthy	Managed	Poole
Tatnam Farm, Oakdale	Managed	Poole
Tatnam Organic Patch, Oakdale	Self-managed	Poole
Whitecliff, Parkstone	Managed	Poole
Widdicombe, Parkstone	Managed	Poole

Transfer of Historic and Civic Ceremonial Assets

7. Since 1 April 2019, the Charter Trustees for Poole have been custodians of the historic property and armorial bearings. "Historic property" is defined as including "any charter, insignia, plate, or other property which is of an historic and ceremonial nature".
8. Upon the establishment of the new town councils, the Charter Trustees will cease to exist and it is therefore critical that the historic property is secured through a formal transfer to the new councils in a Supplementary Order which will be completed before 31 March 2026. This will include a full inventory of the historic property.
9. Members will be aware that a full inventory of all historic and civic ceremonial assets already exists which has been maintained and reviewed by the Charter Trustees. The inventory includes a photograph (where available) and description of each item together with the current storage location. Appropriate insurance cover is to be sought on behalf of the Town Council.
10. The College of Arms is to be supplied with a copy of the Reorganisation Order establishing the Town Council and will be requested to draft a petition to secure the transfer of the Armorial Bearings from the Charter Trustees to Poole Town Council. A further update will be provided as and when a more detailed timeline is known.

Property Management and Mayoralty Support

11. There are no recommendations to transfer the ownership or responsibility for any other land or buildings to Poole Town Council. The council will of course need to operate from premises and to meet in local venues. Officers will be exploring interim options in this regard, potentially with the new Town Clerk following the recruitment process.
12. Members will recall that for continuity purposes, the budget provision for the Town Council included continued use of shared space for the storage of historic and ceremonial assets (including a strongroom). The space being commissioned in the Guildhall in Poole for the use of the current Mayor could potentially be used by the Town Council post-implementation if that is their desire.

13. Other public facilities and community halls could be used for formal meetings for the Town Council and these options will be explored further ahead of vesting day. It is anticipated that an interim committee structure, schedule of meetings and venues will be brought to a future meeting of the Shadow Council for consideration.

Operating Arrangements of Allotments and Civic Support for Year 1

14. It is crucial that as with all new Councils risks are managed and mitigations put in place to minimise likelihood and impact. To this end, it is common practice to put in place arrangements, such as service level agreements to ease the transition period and to allow the new council to focus on putting in place appropriate policies and procedures. This approach will provide continuity of service from 1 April 2026 without any obvious detriment to service delivery. This approach was adopted in 2019 when Christchurch Town Council and Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council were established, and in 2021 for the establishment of Throop and Holdenhurst Parish Council.
15. A service level agreement will be brought to a future meeting of the Shadow Council for both the management of the allotments and civic chauffeuring and mace-bearing support.

Organisational Establishment

16. Work is progressing for the other organisational and governance arrangements. Where possible national models will be drafted and brought to a future Shadow Council meeting for adoption. This approach is again common practice and will allow the Town Council to operate initial and provide time to undertake a review when appropriate.
17. These models are likely to include standing orders, financial regulations, scheme of delegation, codes of conduct, etc.

Implementation Workstreams

18. The implementation of the three new councils is a complex project and work must focus on activities on a priority basis. As stated above, to date this has included the approval of reorganisation orders, calculation of council tax bases, drawing of definitive GIS maps, electoral registration changes, the modelling of anticipated budget requirements and the commencement of the recruitment process for the Town Clerks. Listed below are a series of workstreams identifying associated actions. Many of the actions will require completion prior to 1 April 2026, others will be for the new councils to implement. An officer working group is being established to ensure the required tasks are completed before 1 April.
19. The list is not exhaustive and has been presented in this format for ease of reference for Members.

Legal & Governance
Draft Reorganisation Orders; Submit Orders to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE); Notify Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC); Application to College of Arms; Draft Standing Orders; Draft Financial Regulations; Model Code of Conduct; Draft Scheme of Delegation; Draft committee structure and schedule
Finance & Taxation
Calculate Tax Base; Set anticipated budget and precept requirements; Establish bank accounts; Arrange external audit provision; Procure Insurance provision; Determine cost of operating allotments; Creation of ledgers
Assets & Property
Identify & Transfer Assets; Determine extent of allotment sites to be transferred; Finalise asset registers; Valuation of assets update; Confirm insurance cover for transferred assets
Staffing & Operations
Appoint Interim or Permanent Staff; Interim payroll services; Secure interim office accommodation and meeting venues; Procure IT Equipment, telephony and software; Set up email and website domains; Launch websites and social media channels; Clarify and provide advice on transition from Neighbourhood Forums to Town Council; Draft service level agreements; Data migration of key operational information
Elections & Democratic Services
Election date; Define warding arrangements and polling stations; Update registers to reflect new boundaries and wards; Publish Notice of Election; Prepare induction packs and training for new councillors; Set date for first Annual Town Council meetings
Mapping & Data
Finalise definitive GIS boundary mapping; Update LLPG (Local Land and Property Gazetteer); Notify Ordnance Survey (provide Shape Files); Update Council Tax System for new parishes; Identify other systems requiring updates (planning, highways, licensing, etc)
Communications & Engagement
Development communication plan; Promote governance arrangements with residents; Organise community welcome events;
Registrations and Notifications
Register with HMRC; Register with Information Commissioners Officer (ICO); Register VAT office (if applicable); Register with Pensions Regulator (if applicable); Notify / remind local MP's, Departments, Local Partners and other Stakeholders

Election Timetable

20. Following several requests, the ward maps are now available on the Council's democracy web pages and will shortly be published as interactive maps within the online mapping system. There has been further interest in the election timetable and to assist anyone interested in standing as a councillor on the Town Council, a copy of the proposed election timetable has been reproduced below. Further details for prospective candidates will be published in due course.

Election Timetable – 7 May 2026

Proceeding	Day/Time
Deadline for applications to be included in the register of electors to be used for nominations	Friday 6 February
Publication of Notice of Election	Monday 30 March
Delivery of nomination papers	By appointment, during office hours on any working day from Tuesday 31 March until deadline for delivery
Deadline for delivery of nomination papers	4pm on Thursday 9 April
Deadline for withdrawals of candidature	4pm on Thursday 9 April
Publication of Statement as to persons nominated	4pm on Friday 10 April
Deadline for applications to be included in the register of electors to be used for the election	Monday 20 April
Deadline for receiving new postal vote and postal proxy applications, and for changes to existing postal votes or proxy votes	5pm on Tuesday 21 April
Deadline for receiving new applications to vote by proxy (not postal proxy or emergency proxies)	5pm on Tuesday 28 April
Deadline for applications for a Voter Authority Certificate	5pm on Tuesday 28 April
Publication of Notice of poll and situation of polling stations	Tuesday 28 April
Deadline for the appointment of polling and counting agents	Wednesday 29 April
First day to re-issue ballot papers in response to requests to replace lost postal ballot papers	Thursday 30 April
Polling day	Thursday 7 May (Polling hours: 7am to 10pm)

Proceeding	Day/Time
Last day to issue replacement spoilt or lost postal ballot papers	5pm Thursday 7 May
Last day for new applications to vote by emergency proxy	5pm Thursday 7 May
Last day to make alterations to the register to correct a clerical error or to implement a court (registration appeal) decision	9pm Thursday 7 May
Last day for the receipt of return of election expenses	Thursday 4 June

Recruitment of Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

21. Council on 9 December 2025 approved the commencement of the recruitment of the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officers for each of the respective Town Councils.
22. The remuneration was considered by the Cross-Party Task and Finish Group, benchmarked against the NJC scales and reflect the level of responsibility for this critical role. This formed the basis of the calculations of the anticipated budget requirements which were approved by Council.
23. The position of Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer has been advertised both locally and nationally with a closing date for applications of 26 January 2026.
24. It is important that a Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer is appointed as soon as practicably possible and Members are requested to nominate Shadow Councillors to serve on an appointments panel. The panel should comprise no fewer than three and, it is suggested, no more than six. To avoid unnecessary delays, it is further recommended that the panel is delegated authority to undertake all necessary activities in the recruitment process and to appoint the preferred candidate.
25. Once the nominated members are known, arrangements will be put in place to identify interview dates.

Next Steps

26. It will be necessary to schedule at least one, possibly two additional meetings of the Shadow Council before the end of March. It is not possible to provide dates at this stage but officers will liaise with the Chair and Vice-Chair on possible options and will seek to provide as much advance notice as possible.

Conclusion

27. The Shadow Council is asked to note the content of this report and to appoint members from its membership to serve on the appointments panel with delegated authority to appoint the preferred candidate.

Summary of financial implications

28. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

29. There will be a requirement for officers from various service areas to support the proposed Shadow Councils and the activities identified within the various workstreams.

Summary of legal implications

30. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Part 4) devolved power from the Secretary of State to principal councils to carry out community governance reviews and put in place or make changes to local community governance arrangements. The Community Governance Review was undertaken in accordance with this Act.
31. Formal Community Governance Re-organisation Orders have been signed and sealed formally establishing the new parishes and councils.

Summary of human resources implications

32. There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report. The report is seeking to establish an appointments panel of members to conclude the recruitment of the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Summary of sustainability impact

33. There are no direct sustainability impacts arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

34. There are no direct public health impacts arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

35. There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

36. There is a risk that the actions required for 1 April 2026 may not be completed in time or that the appointments panel may fail to select and appoint a successful candidate. To mitigate these risks, the implementation plan will focus on priority activities, deferring, if necessary, actions that can be undertaken after 1 April 2026.
37. If the recruitment process fails to select a suitable candidate, it may be necessary to appoint an interim clerk on a short-term contract.

Background papers

Published works

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.