

APPENDIX A

CRITIQUE OF LEAFLETS ISSUED IN CHRISTCHURCH: REPRESENTATION TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, RT. HON. SAJID JAVID, MP

Prior to and during the Christchurch Borough local poll, several leaflets were circulated to households and made available in public places in Christchurch containing multiple inaccuracies. These were designed to stimulate participation in the local poll and, specifically, to encourage participants to respond 'no' to the question posed.

The persistent claim and overarching theme within all these leaflets is that Christchurch will be "ruled from / taken over by Bournemouth". This table captures a selection of inaccurate claims that were widely circulated, and sets out the factual position as is consistent with the Future Dorset proposal.

LEAFLET 1:

Content within leaflet circulated in May 2017. This included the Christchurch Borough Council logo and the Bournemouth Borough Council logo and was clearly designed to mislead readers to believe that it was jointly issued by these two local authorities, when in fact it was funded and produced by an individual based in Hampshire.

RETAIN YOUR INDEPENDENCE

Vote NO
to any proposed amalgamation with
Bournemouth and Poole

NO

YES

The True Facts of the Matter

Debt - Make no mistake about it, Bournemouth and Poole Councils are in **serious financial difficulty** and Bournemouth in particular, has a fifty year record of incompetent financial management, Members' conflicts of interest, allegations of dishonesty and concealment and secrecy in its dealings with its electorate.

If amalgamation were to take place Christchurch's assets would all be transferred to Bournemouth and used to help reduce Bournemouth's current debt burden.

Why would anyone in their right mind promote the idea that Christchurch should place itself under the total control of another Council which has such a long and appalling public service record?

Christchurch is debt free and by prudent financial management has £47 MILLION in assets.

Land - Bournemouth has almost NO building land left, in fact it has now commenced building all over its air parcel Christchurch or the other hand has a lot of Green Belt land which Bournemouth would own and control. Bournemouth would also control all planning matters.

Housing - Christchurch has a Waiting List of 600, Bournemouth and Poole have a Waiting List of 6,300. So we don't need to tell you why Bournemouth and Poole are interested in taking over our Green Belt and our land!

We wouldn't be able to control development on our Green Belt. We couldn't protect our sea front or Overcliff. We couldn't control the green spaces in the Town. We couldn't keep Christchurch homes for Christchurch people and we could find that we are forced to maintain a 'Gypsy and Traveller Site' for all three towns.

The Airport - the government has plans to allow business rates to be retained by local authorities. Bournemouth Airport is of course in Christchurch. It is a major employer and generates a considerable amount of money which would all go to Bournemouth.

Rates - Christchurch ratepayers pay more than ratepayers in Bournemouth and Poole and the Consultants, PwC, estimate that Christchurch ratepayers would continue to pay higher rates for the next 20 years with the 'surplus' going directly towards Bournemouth's debts.

So how does Christchurch benefit from this Proposed Amalgamation?

The simple answer is that it doesn't! It strips Christchurch of its thousand years of Sovereignty and its Mayoralty, its Royal Charter, its assets and its control over the management of its own affairs.

Vote NO
to any proposed amalgamation with Bournemouth and Poole

NO

YES

Statements and Facts

But first, a word about the Consultants PwC who handled the 'Amalgamation Consultation'

PwC are one of the UK's four main accounting firms but they do not enjoy a good reputation. An investigation into their activities in Luxembourg by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee in 2015 stated that PwC promoted tax avoidance schemes 'on an industrial scale' enabling private and corporate clients to avoid millions of pounds of taxes which should have gone to the Exchequer.

They are also currently in a dispute with the Regulator over auditing failures in respect of the collapsed social housing group Connaught and are attempting to avoid a fine of £6million. Just the type of organisation most sensible people would think twice about employing!

The Reports they produced to support the proposed amalgamation are totally flawed and elements of them veer on the edge of dishonesty. They failed to produce a Business Plan, basically because it would not have stood up to any form of scrutiny and simply described how reducing staff numbers in the nine Councils would lead to savings of 'between £28 and £65 million a year'. Take those figures to your Bank Manager and he would show you the door!

And now a few gems from PwC:

PwC: 'All services would be delivered by one Council rather than two which would make it more accountable to residents.'

How can one 'Super Council' covering 400,000 people be held more accountable by just 40 elected Councillors when there are currently 150 looking after their residents' interests? Christchurch would be lucky to have a maximum of two Councillors in the Cabinet of any new 'Super Council'!

PwC: 'A single Council would be more efficient and better able to maintain services across the conurbation'. Large Councils lose touch with their electorate, react too slowly, 'navel gaze' and become inefficient. Government research into Council management has shown this to be the case. Big is NOT beautiful.

PwC: 'One Council could better plan strategic services such as roads and traffic, coastal protection and economic development.'

A new Authority, with equal representation from all Councils is already being set up to plan these services. You DON'T need to give up control of your own Town to cooperate with others!

PwC: 'A larger Council would be more resilient in dealing with the challenges ... by maintaining larger service teams.'

A complete nonsense: Christchurch has demonstrated through its years of partnership with East Dorset District Council that it is able to have one Officer Teams successfully managing two Sovereign Councils.

VOTE TO KEEP CHRISTCHURCH SPECIAL **NO**

VOTE 'NO' TO AMALGAMATION **YES**

Published and Promoted by Dr Khalid Sweeney-Ford FRSA, ICM House, Norman Road, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3PA
Printed by Printmates, 84 Holmhouse Industrial Estate, Redhill, Surrey RH4 2NL

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LEAFLET 2:

Produced by the same individual as leaflet one, this was circulated to homes in Christchurch at the time of the referendum.

JUST SAY NO TO RULE FROM BOURNEMOUTH

JUST SAY NO TO RULE FROM BOURNEMOUTH

As part of local government changes in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole Councils want to merge and to incorporate Christchurch Borough Council.

Christchurch Council strongly objects to this proposal, which would mean the end of Christchurch as an independent Council. The Council wants to remain as it is, a small Council providing local services, and as it does now, to continue to 'buy in' services such as Social Care.

The good news is that the Government has stated that it wants to see **public support** for the current amalgamation proposal but that it is open to any Council to come forward with an alternative proposal.

One major concern is that in recent years, Bournemouth Council has lost millions of pounds as a result of poor financial management. They have also invested in projects, which as a result of very bad management, have cost their Council Tax payers serious and substantial sums of money.

Christchurch has the land and the money Bournemouth needs to help them resolve their financial and housing problems.

Christchurch Council wants to know YOUR views.

In December you'll receive a postal ballot paper.
When you get yours,
JUST SAY NO TO RULE FROM BOURNEMOUTH

Some Facts You Should Know

There are a number of issues associated with any merger between Christchurch, Bournemouth and Poole and these issues will affect you directly.

The Financial Situation

Bournemouth and Poole are **heavily in debt** but Christchurch is **debt free**.

Householders in Christchurch pay an average of £200.00 more in Council Tax than those in Bournemouth and Poole.

If a merger takes place this £200.00 'recess' from every Christchurch Council tax payer will be **set against the debts of Bournemouth and Poole**. This could go on for at least ten years until tax rates are harmonised. How do you feel about subsidising council tax payers in Bournemouth and Poole for the next ten years?

Prudent financial management by Christchurch Council has resulted in the Borough having £60,000,000 in assets and nearly £12,000,000 in cash.

These assets and cash reserves would all be given to Bournemouth.

Vote NO
to any proposed amalgamation with Bournemouth and Poole

NO	X
YES	

Land

Bournemouth has almost no land left for housing and is not going to be able to meet the Government's house building targets. They have also started building on their car parks. However, Christchurch has no shortage of Green Belt land all of which would be transferred to Bournemouth.

Bournemouth Airport and the Airport Business estate produce considerable business rates for Christchurch. The land and income would all be given to Bournemouth.

Planning. All planning decisions relating to Christchurch would be taken by the new Council in Bournemouth. The new Council would have 80 Councillors of which between five and eight would represent Christchurch.

Those representing Christchurch would be in a **minority** and would be **easily outvoted** on all matters relating to Planning for any new developments in Christchurch. This places our Green Belt and other land, our **sea** front and coastal areas at risk of development.

The Licensing of Nightclubs, bars and restaurants would also be administered by Bournemouth, not a happy prospect if you see how badly Bournemouth Council has managed the 'Club Scene' in its own Town Centre. Drunks, fights and very bad behaviour are normal at the weekends.

And what are the benefits for Christchurch if they amalgamate with Bournemouth?

ABSOLUTELY NONE!

**VOTE TO KEEP CHRISTCHURCH SPECIAL
VOTE 'NO' TO AMALGAMATION**

NO	X
YES	

LEAFLET 3:

Origin: Keep Christchurch Special group; address registered to Christchurch borough and Dorset County Councillor David Jones

KEEP Christchurch SPECIAL - JUST VOTE NO

BOURNEMOUTH and Poole Councils are backing a scheme called **Future Dorset** which would see Christchurch swallowed up in a big "Super-Council" for South-East Dorset. They say this is what people in Christchurch want.

To find out what Christchurch people really want a referendum (A "Local Poll") will be held. You will receive a postal ballot paper on or just after 1st December.

TO HELP KEEP CHRISTCHURCH SPECIAL. JUST VOTE NO!

YOUR SERVICES ARE SAFE, SAYS MP

It's very sad that some supporters of 'Future Dorset' are frightening voters by saying that Christchurch can't afford to pay for social services if we refuse a merger.

Our MP Chris Chope has condemned these tactics, pointing out that Christchurch Council does not provide schools or social care.

Whatever happens services will still be provided by the top-tier Authority for the area, whether that is a Unitary Council or a County Council. **AND MEDICAL SERVICES WILL BE UNAFFECTED BY ANY CHANGE.**

The Council Tax Freeze that isn't.

One of the strongest supporters of Future Dorset has said that if a merger takes place Christchurch's Council Tax will be frozen. He really has found, then, the magic money tree.

The net "savings" relied on by Future Dorset were based on a 20-year period when Christchurch Council tax payers would pay more than in Poole and Bournemouth; and a 4% annual Council tax rise.

Chris Chope MP has been told that there is a maximum **FIVE YEARS** transition period. And the tax increase without a public vote is 2%. **This budget shortfall is enough to wipe out most, if not all, of the alleged savings.** So where will the money come from to finance this "freeze"?

KEEP Christchurch SPECIAL JUST VOTE NO

What's going on?

Last March 6 of the 9 Dorset Councils (including Bournemouth, Poole and the County Council) asked the Government to replace all the existing Councils with two new huge "Super-Councils." Christchurch would be swallowed up by a new Council covering Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch, and the Council would inevitably be dominated by Councillors elected by Bournemouth. The plan is called "Future Dorset."

Why do Bournemouth and Poole want to take us over?

Bournemouth and Poole Councils both really need to raise their Council Tax enough in recent years. They are both heavily in debt while Christchurch is debt-free. Both are short of building land for the Government's required new homes programme. Bournemouth especially has run out of land (i.e. where and what type of new homes are built) leaving us with no choice but to build on the Green Belt. Christchurch has cash reserves, has plenty of open space and has the Airport.

Isn't it a done deal?

By no means. Our MP Chris Chope has persuaded the Government to let us submit alternatives. We can show our consent by showing that the people of Christchurch do not want rule from Bournemouth. There are also other alternatives - but basically the Council doesn't want change.

But surely Christchurch will continue to exist?

Yes, there will still be a place called "Christchurch". But people living there will no longer be able to decide on how that place is shaped. We will lose control over Planning, allocation of land (i.e. where and what type of new homes are built) leaving us with no choice but to build on the Green Belt. Christchurch has cash reserves, has plenty of open space and has the Airport.

Surely we'll have Councillors on the new Council. Won't they be able to protect us?

Their legal duty will be primarily to the new Council. In any event, the law says that Councillors are allocated in line with population. If there were 80 Councillors, Christchurch would have no more than 9. Bournemouth would have 39.

What exactly, then, would Christchurch get out of this?

Good question. Some Christchurch Councillors have been asking this for the whole period of this plan. And no-one, no one at all, has ever bothered to try to give an answer. Christchurch has provided high quality and efficient services to its residents and has kept Christchurch a place where "Time is Precious". **Will the new Council be able to do this?**

DON'T FORGET TO SEND YOUR BALLOT PAPER BACK!!

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LEAFLET FOUR:

Origin: unknown

DO YOU SUPPORT THE CURRENT PROPOSAL FOR A SINGLE COUNCIL COVERING CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE?

CHRISTCHURCH REFERENDUM -VOTE **NO**

- The proposal is for Christchurch Council to be abolished and joined as one large Council with Bournemouth and Poole Councils. This new Council would have a NEW NAME.
- Christchurch has 24 Councillors, of which, the majority of them have voted against Christchurch joining a Unitary Authority with Bournemouth and Poole.
- Christchurch has 5 Dorset County councillors, and all of them have voted against Christchurch joining a Unitary Authority with Bournemouth and Poole.
- Therefore Christchurch is represented within Dorset by 29 Councillor positions covering all services

A Unitary Authority would join together Christchurch, Bournemouth and Poole as one "City by the Sea", a brand new Statutory Authority.

Current populations:	Bournemouth 195,000	Poole 150,000	Christchurch 50,000
Current No. of Cllrs.:	Bournemouth 54	Poole 42	Christchurch 29

There will be a reduction of Councillors in the New Council - but with increased allowances.

No. of Cllrs. in New Unitary Authority, covering all services, calculated by proportion of population:	Bournemouth 38	Poole 29	Christchurch 9
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Therefore Christchurch would have very poor representation in the new Unitary Authority

SERVICES DEALT WITH BY CHRISTCHURCH'S 24 COUNCILLORS – WHERE IT HAS CONTROL

- Local Planning and Licencing - deciding what is in keeping with the Borough and if new licenced premises (alcohol, music, or dancing) are appropriate
- A Local Plan for Christchurch sets out policies on certain issues:
 - Allocation of future Land Supply for Housing
 - Location and amount of New Housing Development (Roehot Hill for instance);
 - Setting out Transport needs
 - Future Employment Areas including Bournemouth Airport and Business Park
 - Green Belt and Environment

CHRISTCHURCH WOULD LOSE CONTROL OF ALL OF THESE FUNCTIONS THEY WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THE NEW UNITARY AUTHORITY

WHERE CHRISTCHURCH WOULD HAVE APPROXIMATELY 9 COUNCILLORS OUT OF 76 THERE WOULD BE A COMPLETE LOSS OF LOCAL CONTROL

This means that Cllrs. from outside of Christchurch could dictate the location and amount of new housing development, the future of the green belt, whether to grant or refuse any planning application in Christchurch, and the location of licenced premises. It is worth noting that Bournemouth has very little land to accommodate new housing required by Government, so they would have to look to Christchurch and Poole for land.

SERVICES DEALT WITH BY DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL where Christchurch has 5 Councillors

- The County Council deals with Adult Services; Children's Services; Highway and Rights of Way Issues; Strategic Minerals and Waste Planning. Part of the Council Tax goes towards paying for these, and these services would be transferred to whichever new Authority Christchurch joins.
- Whatever happens, these services will continue to be provided by a top-tier Authority. Some may tell you they are at risk. They are not.

SIX GOOD REASONS FOR VOTING NO

in the Christchurch Council Referendum on a proposed Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch Unitary Council

- NO** To the abolition of Christchurch as a sovereign independent Borough
- NO** To loss of control over setting its level of Council tax and deciding how it is spent
- NO** To the compulsory takeover of Christchurch's valuable land and assets
- NO** To loss of control over housing allocations for local people
- NO** To loss of control over the Green Belt, local planning and licensing
- NO** To loss of control over our cliffs, beaches and treasured local amenities

By voting NO you will be:

joining thousands of others in sending a strong message to Parliament and to the Government that Christchurch does not consent to being abolished and forced into a merger with Bournemouth and Poole.

supporting your Borough Council, all your County Councillors, and Chris Chope, your MP, in their campaign to keep Christchurch sovereign, independent and in control of its own destiny.

ALTERNATIVES

- Christchurch Council voted against joining with Bournemouth and Poole. Christchurch was previously part of Hampshire. The Council is having discussions with them to see if it could rejoin Hampshire County, thus Christchurch would retain its independent status, local control, and continue to provide all local services. Hampshire County Council would provide the strategic services, just as Dorset County Council does at the moment. There are other options too.

COUNCIL TAX

- Christchurch Council Tax is higher than that of Bournemouth or Poole. In a new Unitary Authority, Council Tax should be equal. The proposal put to the Secretary of State was based on taking 20 years to harmonise the three Council Taxes and modelled on annual increases. Recently the 20 years has been drastically reduced to what might be 2 or 3 years. A Special Group is investigating what to do about this, and will report back on 15th December. It has been stated that Christchurch Council Tax could be frozen or reduced while the other two catch up. This scenario was not modelled into the figures put to the Secretary of State, therefore it follows that there would be much reduced Council Tax income and a new Unitary Authority would fail to make the savings previously set out in last year's consultation.
- THE FIGURES NO LONGER ADD UP AND NO-ONE SEEMS TO BE MAKING THAT CLEAR**
- It appears that this is a short term offer of frozen Council Tax to induce Christchurch residents to join Bournemouth and Poole.
- Hampshire Council Tax is lower than Dorset's, so if we joined Hampshire, it is unlikely that Christchurch Council Tax would increase and may even decrease.

SAVINGS?

- We are told that this is all about saving money, and in the current financial climate savings will have to be made. The Government has reduced its grants to Councils. Christchurch has been prudent and is financially sound even with a grant reduction. Christchurch has a very good reputation and is a good partner for any other Council. Up to April 2019 Christchurch has no funding gap at all. Other Councils have not been so prudent, some have blatantly wasted money (e.g. surf reef, Imax and a failed bank), others have not increased their Council Tax in past years and now find themselves in debt.
- The proposal which the Secretary of State has before him includes financial calculations which went out with the public consultation in the Summer of 2016. We are now around 16 months on from then, and much has changed financially, they are out of date, and inaccurate.

CONCLUSION

- CHRISTCHURCH COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY BEING FORCED INTO A SINGLE COUNCIL WITH BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE, WHICH IT VOTED AGAINST JOINING.
- CHRISTCHURCH IS INVESTIGATING OTHER ALTERNATIVES, ONE OF WHICH IS REJOINING HAMPSHIRE.
- THE SECRETARY OF STATE, HAS GIVEN US AN OPPORTUNITY, BEFORE MAKING HIS FINAL DECISION, TO FIND OUT IF THERE IS "LOCAL CONSENT", HENCE THIS REFERENDUM
- LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE - DO YOU WANT TO BE PART OF A NEW "CITY BY THE SEA" WITH BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE, WHICH WILL DEAL WITH ALL LOCAL ISSUES, WITH A MINORITY AMOUNT OF COUNCILLORS TO REPRESENT YOU?
- DO YOU WANT TO LOSE CONTROL OF PLANNING, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND LICENCING?

VOTE **NO**

The following table references various claims from within these leaflets and robustly challenges these claims with factual corrections.

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Claim	Factual position
<p>“SERVICES DEALT WITH BY DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL. Some may tell you they are at risk. They are not”</p>	<p>Dorset County Council has a MTFP funding gap of almost £34m by 2020/21. This means that, without the fundamental change set out in Future Dorset, County Council services are at risk for all residents within that council area.</p>
<p>“We are told that this is all about saving money”</p>	<p>It is partly about saving money and bringing sustainability to public services in Dorset. It is also about a greater prize – a stronger economy, a more attractive inward investment climate, a clearer alignment with strategic health plans, a higher profile for the area and a better quality of life for residents across Dorset.</p>
<p>“Bournemouth and Poole Councils are in serious financial difficulty”</p>	<p>All Dorset’s councils face funding crises, in particular the top tier authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. Despite this, both Bournemouth and Poole Councils have frozen council tax for five consecutive years 2011/12 – 2015/16, and all three councils have consistently delivered balanced budgets or better.</p> <p>In addition, Dorset County Council, which provides over 80% of services to residents of Christchurch, has a cumulative MTFP funding gap of almost £34m by 2020/21.</p>
<p>“Christchurch’s assets would all be transferred to Bournemouth and used to help reduce Bournemouth’s debt burden”</p>	<p>Bournemouth and Poole Councils are both asset and cash-rich, with £631m and £583m in long-term net assets excluding pensions liabilities, and £82m and £52m in reserves respectively. The value of these assets and reserves far outweigh any held by Christchurch Borough Council yet these assets would all transfer to the new council that would serve Christchurch.</p>
<p>“Whatever happens services will still be provided by the top-tier Authority for the area, whether that is a Unitary Council or a County Council.”</p>	<p>There will be no top-tier council unless the Secretary of State changes his mind and refuses the Future Dorset proposal. Christchurch Borough Council can only continue in a sovereign state if the two tier structure is preserved, the consequences of which are set out in our representation</p>
<p>“Bournemouth has a 50-year record of incompetent financial management”</p>	<p>Bournemouth has been a unitary authority, providing all local government services to its residents, since April 1997. Since being a Unitary, the council has set a balanced budget every year and has delivered a net nil or better outturn for at least the last 10 years.</p>

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Claim	Factual position
<p>“Bournemouth has very little land to accommodate new housing required by Government, so they would have to look to Christchurch and Poole for land.”</p>	<p>Bournemouth Council is exceeding current housing targets, whilst Christchurch did not manage to meet theirs in 2013/14, 2014/15 or 2015/16.</p>
<p>“Others have not increased their council tax in previous years and now find themselves in debt”</p>	<p>These two matters are not related, as council tax is a revenue contribution for running services. Debt, whilst having a revenue implication in terms of repayment, is not a result of council tax freezes or used to fund revenue services. Debts are taken on in order to fund investments, deliver capital schemes, or add value to assets.</p>
<p>“Large councils lose touch with their electorate, react too slowly, naval gaze and become inefficient. Government research has shown that larger councils are less efficient”</p>	<p>The Government says that local authorities operate most efficiently when serving around 400,000 – 600,000 residents. Research to support the Future Dorset proposal shows that the two new councils would provide the optimum level of savings, be the most efficient at service delivery and be best able to represent their area at a national level.</p>
<p>“Bournemouth would control all planning matters”</p>	<p>The new Council would take responsibility for all council services, including planning. The new council would have an equal responsibility to all its residents, regardless of which area they live. Bournemouth Borough Council would not exist.</p>
<p>All Airport business rates would go to Bournemouth</p>	<p>Bournemouth’s Business Rates Payable is £78m in comparison to Christchurch’s £21m including the Airport. Central Government has plans to allow all business rates to be retained by councils, but they have made it clear they will also transfer a number of responsibilities to councils to make the overall scheme of retaining 100% business rates cost neutral. If this goes ahead and business rate retention is agreed, these would be by the new council, and used for the benefit of the whole area that that council covers.</p>
<p>“excess from every Christchurch council tax payer will be set against the debts of Bournemouth and Poole.”</p>	<p>Any debt repayment modelling will be based on the circumstances of the sovereign council that exists at the time the debt is taken out.</p>

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Claim	Factual position
<p>This is against local people's wishes</p>	<p>There is overwhelming support across all of Dorset for this proposal. Extensive consultation by an independent research company, ORS, was commissioned by all nine of Dorset's councils. It conducted the research over eight weeks last autumn and found support for this proposal is strong right across the county. In both rural and urban areas, in all boroughs and districts, a statistically sound sample found that residents favoured this solution.</p> <p>It found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of respondents across Dorset support two councils instead of nine • 65% of respondents support the Future Dorset proposal <p>It also identified support amongst business representatives, public sectors partners, businesses themselves, community groups and parish councils all across Dorset.</p> <p>The open questionnaire, in which any resident could have their say, identified that residents from Christchurch were the least supportive of any change, with 41% supporting two unitaries, and 31% and 25% supporting options 2b (Future Dorset) and 2c respectively. So in many ways the result of the referendum is unsurprising as it demonstrates that only those with the greatest interest or specific motivations will self-select and participate when offered the opportunity.</p> <p>In the household survey, which used a methodology that provides results that represent accurately the response that would have been received should every single resident have taken part, 63% of residents in Christchurch supported change, with 64% backing option 2b (Future Dorset) and only 17% backing 2c.</p>
<p>“Our MP Chris Chope has persuaded the Government to let us submit alternatives”</p>	<p>This is standard process during the representations period and is not down to a single MP. No costed or viable alternatives have been provided. The two-tier system is unsustainable, as acknowledged by the six councils behind the Future Dorset submission, and via the Cities & Local Government Devolution Act 2016. Option 2c - whereby Christchurch was included within the Dorset area council - was the least supported option by Christchurch residents in both the open questionnaire (only 25% backed this option) or representative household survey (in which just 17% back this option).</p>
<p>“The Council wants to remain as it is... to continue to ‘buy in’ services such as Social Care”</p>	<p>This suggests that Christchurch Borough Council has control of specifying, procuring and governing the services provided by Dorset County Council. This is not the case and is misleading.</p>
<p>“Christchurch has the land and money Bournemouth needs to help them resolve their financial and housing problems.”</p>	<p>Bournemouth Council is exceeding current housing targets, whilst Christchurch Council did not manage to meet theirs in 2013/14, 2014/15 or 2015/16. Bournemouth Council has £631m in net assets, and £82m in reserves.</p>

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Claim	Factual position
<p>“Bournemouth has almost no land left for housing and is not going to be able to meet the Government’s house building targets</p>	<p>Bournemouth Council is exceeding current housing targets, whilst Christchurch Council did not manage to meet theirs in 2013/14, 2014/15 or 2015/16.</p>
<p>Planning, licensing, green belt, transport needs planning would all be “given to Bournemouth”</p>	<p>These would be the responsibility of the new council, with equal responsibility to safeguard the entire area. Bournemouth Borough Council would not exist.</p>
<p>Christchurch residents would not benefit from this proposal</p>	<p>It is doing residents of Christchurch a huge disservice to suggest that they will not benefit from change. Dorset County Council, which provides almost all local government services to the residents of Christchurch, including libraries, education, highways maintenance, adult social care, children’s services, and trading standards, faces a cumulative £34million service funding gap by 2020/21. Future Dorset is Dorset County Council’s proposal (along with Bournemouth, Poole North Dorset, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Councils) for saving money and freeing up funds to make services sustainable in the long run, for everyone in Dorset.</p>
<p>“We could find that we are forced to maintain a gypsy and traveller site for all three towns”</p>	<p>Neither Bournemouth nor Poole Council have any plans for gypsy and traveller sites. Whilst any new policy would be down to the new council to determine, current policy in both Bournemouth and Poole is to discourage temporary settlement through the installation of deterrents and strong management of any encampments</p>
<p>“In September 2015 the Leaders of four Councils met on the Bournemouth sands...”</p>	<p>The photograph took place at Branksome Beach in Poole.</p>
<p>“Bournemouth has asked the government to force Christchurch into the new planned ‘Super Council’.”</p>	<p>The proposal has the backing of six councils, including Dorset County Council, which serves residents of Christchurch. Future Dorset was prepared because the six councils behind it can no longer justify so many councils with all the costs that running them entails, in these times of financial pressure and austerity. The running costs of two councils instead of nine will be significantly lower, freeing up funds for spending on frontline services.</p>

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Claim	Factual position
400,000 would be represented by 40 elected councillors	The number of councillors for each new council is expected to be around 75 per local authority. This alone will save over £1.1million each year across Dorset. Greater accountability will come from the clarity that local people will have over the role of their local authority and their councillors – one council for all services provided locally will be much easier for people to hold to account.
“Christchurch would be lucky to have a maximum of two councillors in the Cabinet”	Cabinet posts are not allocated on an area basis; they would be appointed by the Leader of the new Council.
“The Government now says that there is a maximum FIVE YEARS transition period” (for CTH)	DCLG officials have stated that a ten year harmonisation period is the maximum acceptable.