Have your say: a combined authority for Dorset.

The Dorset Communities Forum has been requested to circulate the following to Voluntary organisations in Dorset. We believe that it is important to have our say in the future of the County and would request that you have a look at the proposals and complete the online consultation.

"Alongside talk of unitary and devolution, you may have heard the phrase ‘combined authority’ coming up a lot recently. But what does it actually mean and how would you be affected?"

The nine councils across Dorset have been working together on proposals for a combined authority. We’ve now got to the point where we want to hear from local people and businesses about those proposals. The consultation is open now and runs until 17 June 2016.

Why is a combined authority a good idea for Dorset?

- As we are already aware councils need to transform the way they work in order to be fit for the future – this is the first step in that direction
- A combined authority would provide Dorset with the certainty of structure and accountability to be successful in any devolution deal with Government
- A combined authority would give Dorset one strong voice when bidding for funding or inward investment
- A combined authority would provide speedier decision-making on issues related to strategic economic growth and strategic transport for the area

Six combined authorities have already been established nationally with many other areas also working towards this arrangement. This is an exciting opportunity for Dorset to be part of national change.

Please take a look at our combined authority pages at www.dorset-combined-authority.uk and use the short online form to tell us what you think about the proposals. It’s a chance for each of us to have a say about an important change to the local government landscape in Dorset.

Once the consultation has closed results will be collected, shared with the Secretary of State and then go onto inform Government’s decision on establishing a combined authority in Dorset.

Please note this consultation is about Dorset’s proposal for a combined authority and is not about unitary options. If you have any questions, please contact Steph Lyons at S.Lyons@dorsetcc.gov.uk or on 01305 224271."