

Bridport Town Council
DRAFT Response
Dorset Council Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy Consultation

BTC Response in Summary:

BTC welcomes the decision by Dorset Council to produce a Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Implementation Plan. Whilst the action plan does include some quite ambitious aspirations the language throughout the document is often weak verging on vacuous.

Our response to most sections of the action plan is to call for greater urgency and the addition of defined and measurable levels of commitment/ targets. Many of the proposed actions sound good but are undermined by weak levels of commitment. Taken together with the paucity of numerical targets for actions the casual reader is left wondering whether the Action Plan could lever any meaningful change. It is change that is so important. Dorset Councils Action Plan should be driving faster action, more urgent action and more joined up action.

The 2050 target for the Dorset Council area to become net zero is not ambitious enough. As Greta Thunberg has said: "*Act like your house is on fire - because it is!!*"

The Action Plan has very little apparent commitment to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable residents in this plan. There are too few specific actions on food, transport and fuel poverty.

The Action Plan should not be listing things that Dorset Council are already doing, such as, "*Continue to upgrade of all Dorset streetlights to LED*". Neither include actions that any responsible Council should be doing as a matter of course.

The document could have (considerably) less detail in the early pages. For example, description of what the emergency is could be moved to an appendix. Bringing forward the proactive '*Making It Happen section*' would give greater prominence to the need for collective action.

Finally there is little point Dorset Council making the right noises about the climate and ecological emergency if the Council also supports economic growth policies that perpetuate carbon generating models of energy use, consumption and travel.

Dorset Council's Role

We are committed to achieving a Carbon Neutral Council by at least 2040 and must help facilitate the changes required to work towards the whole of Dorset becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

However, we recognise that Dorset Council has only limited powers and responsibilities in many of the areas where action is required. Therefore, Dorset organisations and individuals will all need to act collectively to achieve this wider ambition.

The council has three key roles in facilitating the change required and the strategy document is framed into these three areas...

Direct

Take **DIRECT** action to reduce our own carbon footprint in order to become a carbon-neutral Council by 2040, showing leadership as a large public sector organisation.

As a large organisation, we directly account for at least 1% of Dorset's footprint from our use of energy and water in our buildings and assets, staff travel, and the waste we produce.

Indirect (through services)

Take **INDIRECT** action to facilitate change by ensuring the range of services we provide across the County are delivered in a way that supports our journey towards a Carbon Neutral County.

Dorset Council is responsible for the delivery of many key services, such as planning, housing, economic development, waste and transport, etc.

Influence & Partnership

Work in **PARTNERSHIP** with other organisations and communities to drive change across the County and put in place larger programmes and projects to support fundamental change required.

For example - Working with towns and parishes, community engagement, behaviour change, regional transport policy. This is as well as working with key partners and existing partnerships (LNP, LEP, AONB, Coast Forum etc.), therefore influencing key and sustainable energy strategies.

Our approach is about understanding what actions Dorset Council can directly influence, indirectly influence [such as through our services or use of our assets] and what we can only influence as part of a wider partnership. Do you agree with our approach?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain why you think this (optional)

BTC agrees with the general approach to direct and indirect actions but is disappointed that Dorset Council should opt for 2040 as the target date of carbon neutrality as an organisation.

BTC understands that the climate emergency requires a serious and immediate response. Reducing carbon emissions at the organisational level through direct action is a clear imperative. There is a real urgency required to meet national and international agreements on greenhouse gas emissions and direct action by organisations that have a leadership role, like Dorset Council, must be ambitious and appropriately resourced. The City of Bristol has recently adjusted its target for net zero for direct emissions to 2025.

Dorset Council should be part of national lobbying of government for more urgent actions and targets to address the climate and ecological crisis.

It is not until toward the end of the Action Plan that reference is made to the role of parish & town councils. We all have a role to play in reaching a net zero economy. Perhaps Dorset Council should take a stronger leadership role to oversee/co-ordinate and help resource local climate emergency plans. The Action Plan could detail how Dorset Council might take a lead in driving change at the community level, through funding, training, shared resources, co-ordination of plans, etc.

BTC recognises that cuts to greenhouse emissions need to be front-loaded – tackling the highest emitters first. It might, therefore be helpful if the Action Plan had some sort of ranking system, committing to tackling biggest emitters first. See Project Drawdown: <https://www.drawdown.org>
In Dorset it appears that transport is a key source of greenhouse gas emissions. Certainly a low/zero-carbon transport plan will be absolutely key to delivery of the Action Plan overall. BTC believes figures in the document don't put enough emphasis on the role of agriculture in both creating emissions and, potentially, capturing them.

BTC notes that most/all of the targets in the individual action plans are for the early 2020s – BTC hopes that detailed action plans promised on p65 will keep to this timescale, enabling Dorset Council to review targets for achieving in-house carbon net zero.

Targets

Carbon Targets

The strategy sets two targets: a more ambitious target of 2040 for Dorset Council itself and 2050 for the wider Dorset area (in-line with the government's national target).

(1) Dorset Council ITSELF to become carbon neutral by 2040, ten years earlier than the national target.

(2) The whole Dorset Council AREA to become carbon neutral by 2050, which will require support of central government and everyone in Dorset taking action

Do you agree with the target set for Dorset Council ITSELF as an organisation of 2040?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- **Strongly disagree**

Do you agree with the target set for the Dorset Council AREA of 2050?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- **Disagree**
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answers (optional)

BTC understand that the climate emergency requires serious and immediate response, reducing carbon emissions at the organisational level through direct action is the clear imperative. BTC would press Dorset Council to review the ambition for becoming a net zero organisation. A more ambitious target of 2030 would strengthen the internal resolve to take immediate action.

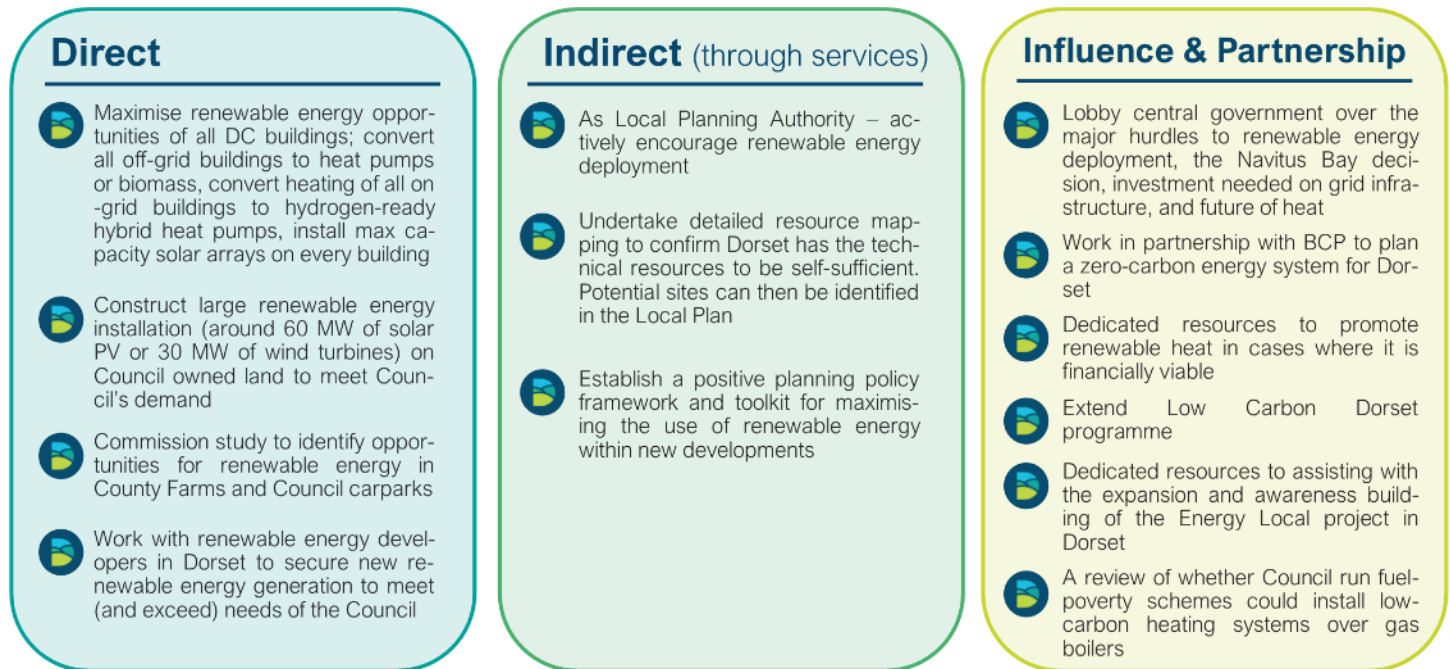
Dorset Council should extend the push to be more realistic with net zero ambitions to other spheres of influence, esp nationally with government. The scientific consensus is shifting, net zero targets set at 2050 for the advanced economies is no longer acceptable. We need a faster track for net zero if we are to avoid catastrophic consequences.

Topic Area - Renewable Energy

Areas for Action...

To achieve a carbon neutral county by 2050, all energy currently provided by fossil fuels for heating, transport and electricity in Dorset will need to come from a low-carbon source. This will require an enormous increase in renewable electricity generation in the County.

Dorset Council cannot itself do this, and does not have control of national planning policy or the money to put into renewable energy sources on its own. But there are many things the council can do to.



Renewable Energy - The above is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						

What we can influence and partnership						
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Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in our "renewable energy" area for action? (optional)

Putting this section first in the action plan suggests that it is the most important for reducing emissions. The order should be reviewed so that the biggest causes of emissions are given prominence in the plan: Transport 1st, then Food, Economy, Buildings, Waste and Water. While important some of the areas for action are less critical than others in reducing carbon and, BTC would suggest, in local residents perception of the need for action.

BTC is pleased to see a commitment to extend the Low Carbon Dorset Scheme which is exactly what the authority should be investing in to support the shift to net zero across the county.

BTC applauds Dorset Council in looking to generate renewable energy to help in becoming a net zero organisation. The commitment to look again at Navitus Bay is encouraging. However, use of farmland for solar arrays should be avoided unless it can be shown not to take land out of productive use.

BTC wonders why the Action Plan does not mention the proposed Powerfuel Portland ERF plant?

Action Plan

Renewable Energy - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

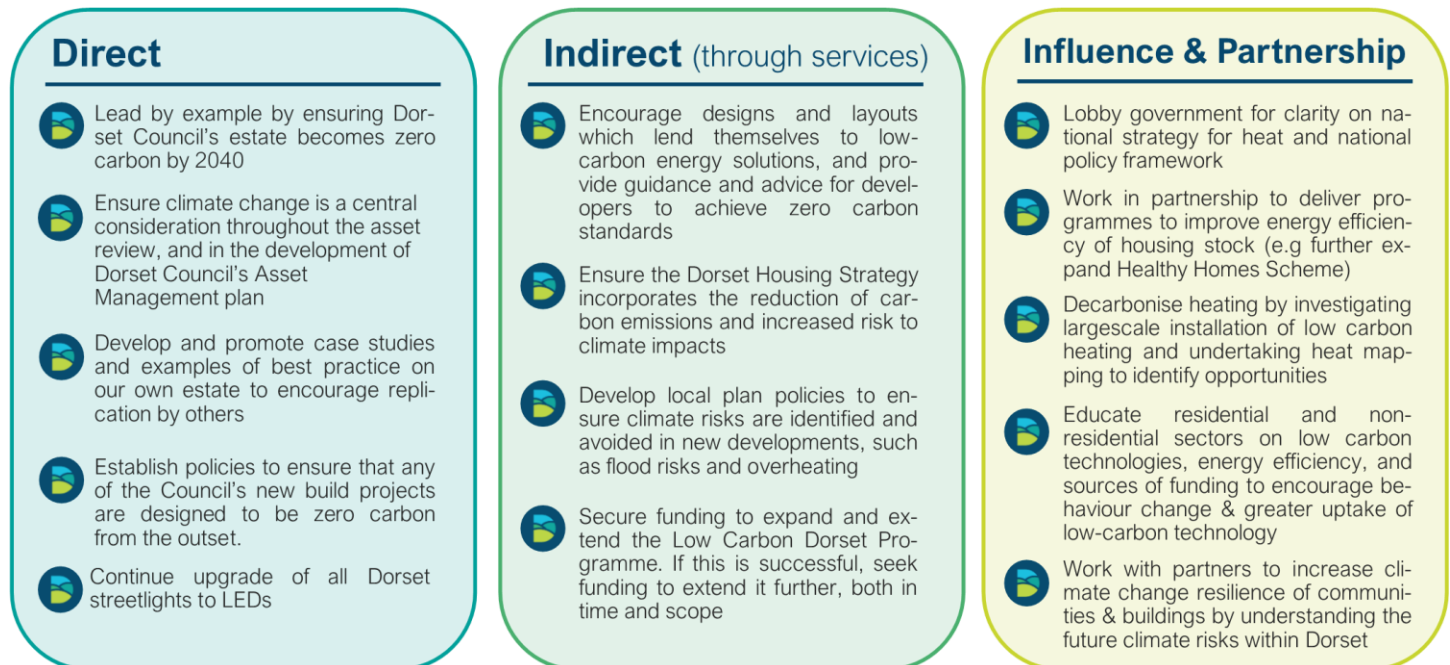
Please explain why you think this (optional)

Topic Area - Buildings

Areas for Action...

In order to create a carbon neutral Dorset, all carbon emissions from Dorset buildings will need to stop. All energy used for power will need to come from renewable sources.

Dorset Council has limited powers to achieve this. It will require everyone to take action in their homes and businesses. However we do have control of our own current buildings and any future buildings that are constructed on our land. We are also able to work with partners.



Buildings - The above is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						

What we can influence and partnership						
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Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "buildings" area for action? (optional)

As previously mentioned BTC feels the Action Plan can and should be strengthened with greater urgency and ambition For example;

- Making the climate emergency the primary consideration when approving new development through the planning process or
- Developing a strategy to enable domestic and commercial buildings in Dorset that are listed or are in conservation areas to meet carbon neutral targets.

Large scale retro fitting of the counties aged housing stock is the big economic winner for both householders and the economy through creating local jobs. Dorset Council is ideally placed to lead and drive a major retro fit campaign involving Housing Associations and local building firms. Retro fitting social housing should be the number one action with investment to back it up.

Overall BTC considers that this section has some strong ideas, a fair degree of innovation and a commitment to county-wide change.

Action Plan

We have identified a number of initial targets and specific actions that Dorset Council can take to address the areas above.

Buildings - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

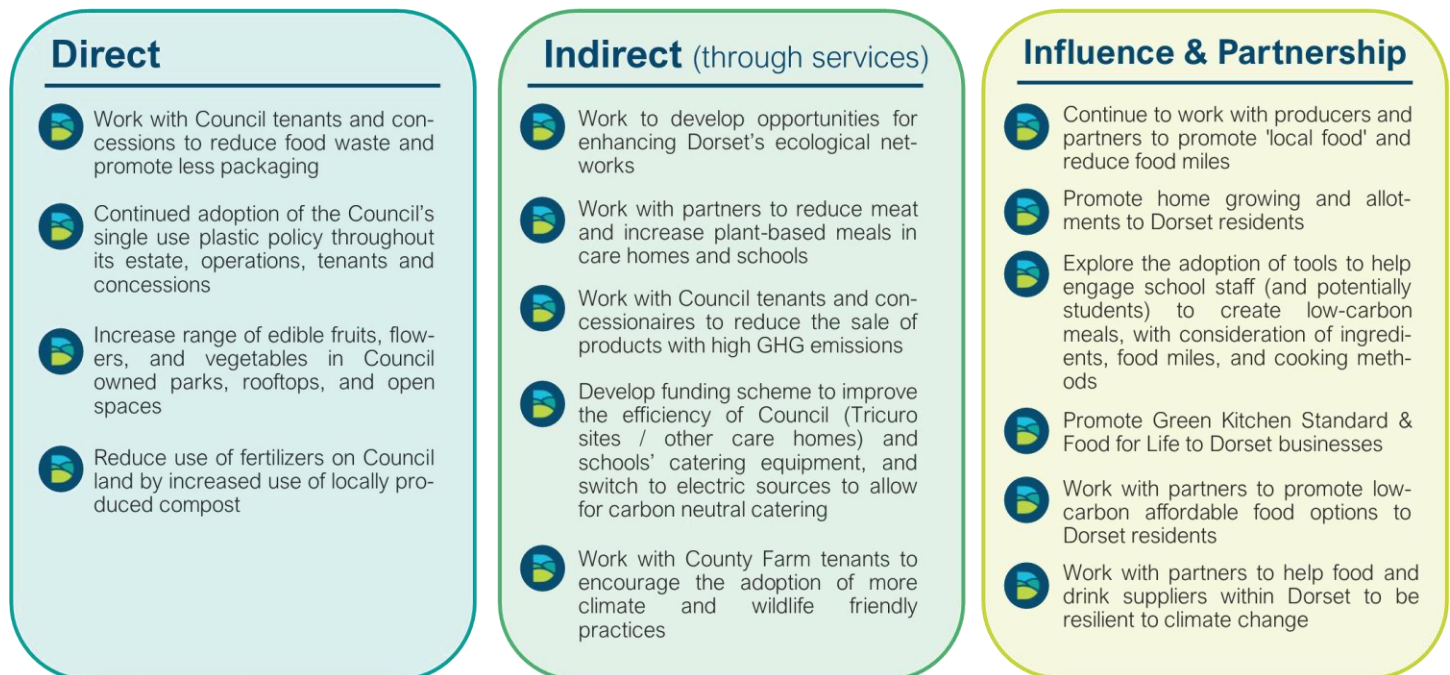
Please explain why you think this (optional)

Topic Area - Food & Drink

Areas for Action...

To reduce the environmental impacts of food production, but still meet the rising demands, more food will need to be produced using less land and emitting fewer greenhouse gases. This will mean farming practices within Dorset will need to change. There will also need to be a significant shift in the behaviour of consumers here in Dorset.

Dorset Council must work towards reducing our carbon emissions, food poverty and the level of waste produced, all while meeting the increasing demand for food. To do so, we must help by establishing the following initiatives.



Food and drink - The table (above) is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						

What we can influence and partnership						
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Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "food and drink" area for action? (optional)

As previously mentioned BTC feels the Action Plan can and should be strengthened with greater urgency and ambition. For example

- why not stop using artificial fertilisers from 2021? Artificial nitrate fertilisers are a major cause of pollution and degrades soil health. Dorset Council should take a lead in banning pesticide and artificial fertilizer use on its landholding.
- A Plan that sets out how Dorset could become a sustainable food county by 2030 would be most welcome!!

BTC is disappointed that the Action Plan is only willing to '*encourage*' adoptions of climate friendly farming on County farms. County farms should be leading the way in demonstrating climate adapted farming in the county through widespread adoption of agroecological farming practices.

The Action Plan does not mention the issue of food security. The Covid public health crisis has clearly demonstrated the vulnerability of food supply and the gap between local food production and imports. Dorset Council has a strong role to play in pushing for changes to the food system; striving for greater food self-sufficient in vegetables and meat.

Suggested improvements to the Food & Drink Section include:

- Specific reference to agroecological practices as the baseline for improvements.
- Stop use of pesticides & fertilizers and instigate plans to improve biodiversity through maintenance practices on Council land, public spaces, verges, etc. within a year.
- Require transition to agroecological practices on county farms within 5 years, offering training & support as needed.
- Lead discussions with NFU, landowners, producers, the Landworkers 'Alliance to develop a Dorset-wide move to sustainable food production that addresses food security and food poverty as a matter of urgency.
- Work with Dorset AONB, producers, etc to develop linked forested and wild spaces across the county – supporting soil regeneration and biodiversity.
- Cut waste, packaging and food miles across the county: work with schools, colleges, pre-schools, all DC settings, town & parish councils, voluntary groups, health settings, etc to set up a county-wide system.

- Work with food banks, voluntary groups, children's services, etc to assess food poverty across DC. Support town and parish councils and producers to set up community fridges, food co-ops, community growing projects and other innovative ways of addressing need.
- Look at ways to make public/County farm land available to low-income residents and support them in growing their own food.
- Work with schools, colleges & producers to encourage young people into food production – apprenticeships, start-ups, making land available.
- Carbon reduction should be a mandatory part of any new contracts with suppliers.
- Talk to the Landworkers 'Alliance – they're based in Dorset.

Action Plan

We have identified a number of initial targets and specific actions that Dorset Council can take to address the areas above. Our summary action plan for Food & Drink can be found here.

Food and Drink - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

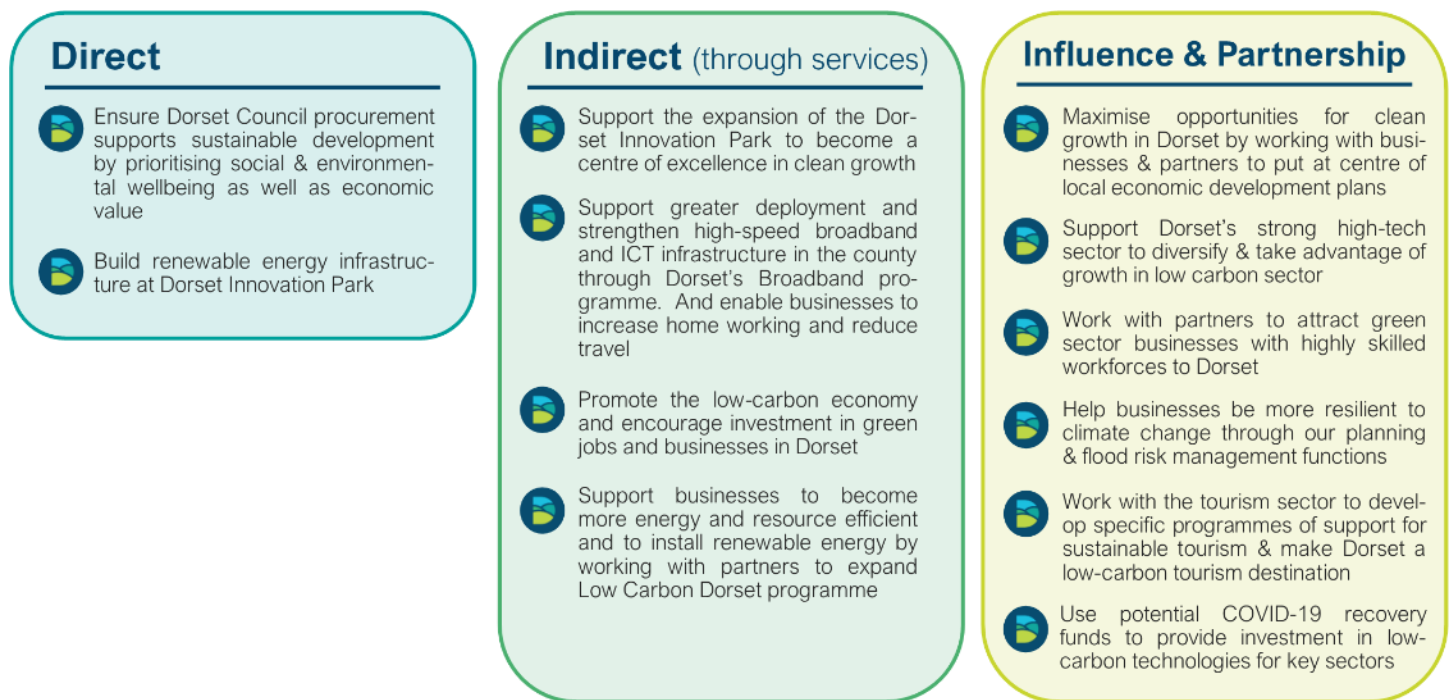
Please explain why you think this (optional)

Topic Area - Economy

Areas for Action...

We will need to create a zero-carbon economy here in Dorset. This means that emissions from the Dorset's commercial and industrial sector will need to stop whilst making sure the county's economy still thrives.

Dorset Council cannot singlehandedly these kind of emissions. But it can work with partners, influence services and develop existing programmes to drive transition to a zero carbon economy in Dorset.



Economy - The above is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						

What we can influence and partnership						
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Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "economy" area for action? (optional)

As previously mentioned BTC feels the Action Plan can and should be strengthened with greater urgency and ambition. For example, instead of '*encourage*' investment in Green jobs - Only invest in Green jobs!! Use of any Covid Recovery funds should only be used to support green growth.

BTC would support the concept of a low carbon Tourism destination but would want the Action Plan to be much more specific as to what this looked like and how businesses and communities involved in tourism can begin to shift to more sustainable tourism models.

BTC is pleased to see reference to a circular economy and short-term nature of current investment models. Also a clear understanding of the opportunities inherent in a move to a green economy.

Action Plan

We have identified a number of initial targets and specific actions that Dorset Council can take to address the areas above. Our summary action plan for Economy can be found here.

Economy - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- **Neither agree/disagree**
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain why you think this (optional)

There's a lot of emphasis in the Action Plan on the Dorset Innovation Park with many projects clustered around east Dorset. BTC would like to see a commitment to spreading the benefits of project investment across the whole county.

Topic Area - Waste

Area for action...

To reduce the carbon impact from our waste activities, Dorset must work towards being more sustainable and efficient. This means reducing the amount of waste we produce by keeping resources in use for as long as possible and recovering and reusing products and materials wherever we can.

Direct	Indirect (through services)	Influence & Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out internal waste audits across our operations & create waste reduction plan supported by targeted campaigns Continue to work towards our commitment to become single-use plastic-free & eliminate the use of all single life products Ensure waste is minimised through procurement e.g. DC suppliers to take back packaging or use reusable packaging systems Develop business plan to tackle food waste within Council premises, with a particular focus on schools & adult services Ensure sufficient contracts are in place to reuse, recycle & recover as much Council waste as possible Work with Waste manager to reduce emissions from waste collection vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish appropriate infrastructure to support circular economy as part of Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Dorset 2008 – 33. Develop targeted campaigns to reduce amount of waste produced and increase reuse & recycling Trial a 'not sure' box and use results to inform residents what can or cannot be recycled Trial provision of free/subsidised food-waste caddy liners in specific areas Explore opportunity for increased commercial waste services Develop a contract & infrastructure strategy to enable the most efficient and cost-effective solution for Dorset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to second round of consultations relating to the resources & waste strategy for England Investigate how Dorset Waste Services can work with partners to facilitate reduction of commercial and industrial waste Continue to engage with public, communities, schools & businesses to increase understanding of waste issues & best practices Develop further campaigns to reduce the amount of waste generated & stimulate further reuse, recycling & composting Introduce a pilot project in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy to reduce food waste Continue to work with the Police, EA & community groups to reduce littering & fly tipping

Waste - The above is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						
What we can influence and partnership						

Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "waste" area for action? (optional)

BTC supports the commitment for a transition to a circular economy but unfortunately the Action Plan doesn't explore in any detail what this means in practice. The commitment to recycle furniture is good but how will this be done and who will have access to it?

Develop strategies to address the elimination of single use plastics and the extension of recycling and re-use to commercial personal services (such as health, dentistry and hairdressing) and ensure the cultural changes required to enable implementation.

There is no mention of food waste in the Action Plan. A strategy to eliminate food waste that focuses on food producers and retail as well as consumers is urgently required.

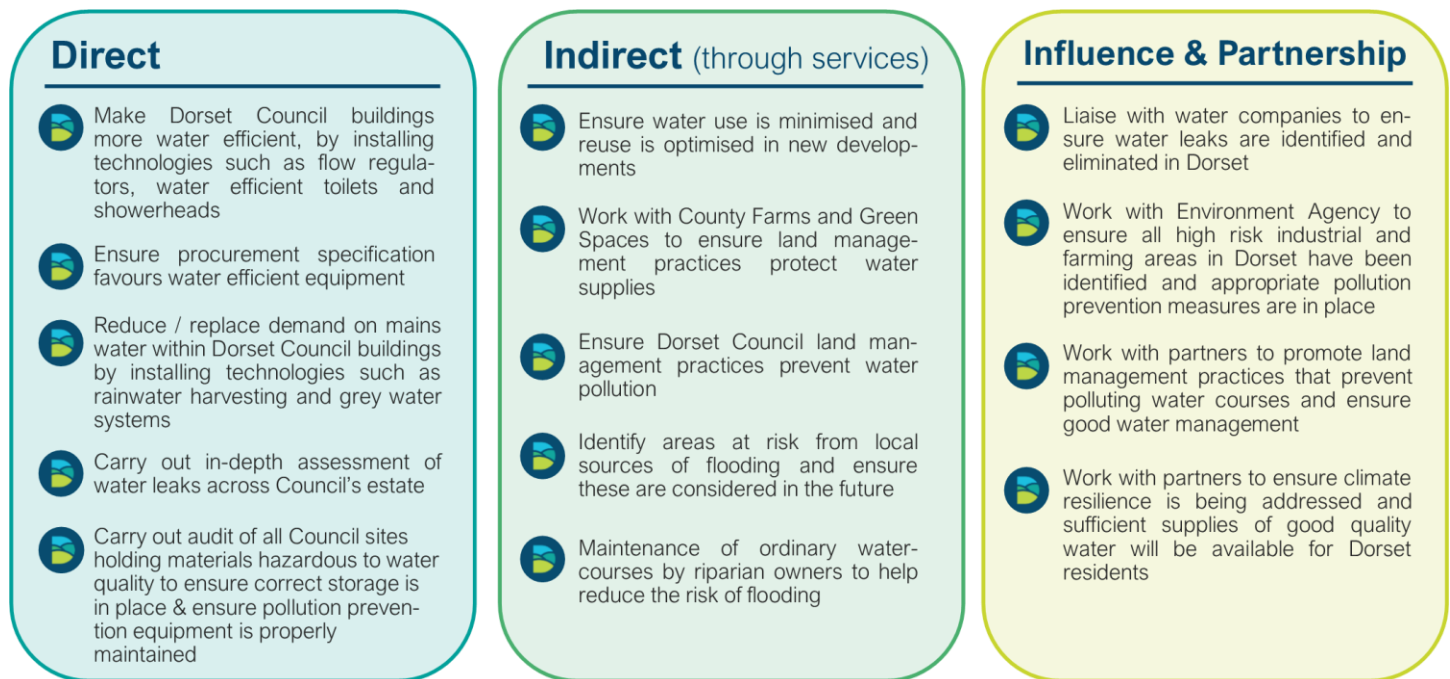
BTC would like to see more partnership projects included in the Action Plan; working with parish/town councils, food banks, supermarkets, schools, etc to roll out community fridges and free-food stalls?

Topic Area - Water

Areas for Action...

By 2050, steps will need to be taken, led by the water industry, to significantly reduce demand for water, reduce wastage and manage water resources.

It is critical that Dorset Council takes action through its own operations, services and influence to encourage a reduction in Dorset's water demand and wastage, and the management of water resources.



Water - The table (above) is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						

What we can influence and partnership						
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Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "water" area for action? (optional)

As previously mentioned BTC feels the Action Plan can and should be strengthened with greater urgency and ambition. For example;

- Take action to bring sea quality up to the highest standards (EU water quality standards or equivalent) for all the Dorset shoreline, and make similar progress for sites used for wild water swimming.
- Support Natural Flood Management initiatives.
- Promote the use of natural filtration systems (reed beds, etc) for new developments.
- Promote the restoration of wetlands as a way of protecting water supplies.
- Connecting the banning of chemical use on County farms and restoration of soil health to restore water quality?
- A commitment to meet and exceed EU river water quality standards across the county.(currently less than 50% meet these).
- Although flooding is mentioned, why there is no reference to rising sea levels? Of particular importance to coastal communities.
- Refuse planning applications that seek to build on flood plains.

Action Plan

We have identified a number of initial targets and specific actions that Dorset Council can take to address the areas above.

Water - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain why you think this (optional)

Topic Area - Natural Assets

Area for Action ...

Natural Assets provide clean air, water, and healthy soils that are vital for the physical well-being of Dorset's population.

Critically, our declaration of an ecological emergency recognises the increasing pressure being placed on ecosystems and biodiversity and the need to work hard to maintain and improve Dorset's natural assets. Dorset Council can take action on its own estate and continue to work closely with partners.

Direct	Indirect (through services)	Influence & Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to use Dorset Council land to increase resilience to climate change Increase biodiversity on identified areas of Council land Increase area of Council owned or managed land for ecological & carbon sequestration outcomes Creation of wildlife friendly areas on council land (incl. bee-friendly zones) Increase hedge & woodland planting through Dormouse District Licence project Review all chemical use to ensure no harm to unintended species Expand cut & collect verge management Increase tree planting where suitable to avoid detrimental effects on other habitat types or landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop / adopt biodiversity, green & open spaces supplementary planning document to ensure a consistent approach for developers to take up protection & enhancement measures of key biodiverse areas Use the financial contributions from development raised through Nitrates Supplementary Planning Document to buy land for rewilding / tree planting / creation of rough grassland and scrub Ensure all decision making around use of natural assets is based upon ecological value Manage heathlands SPD – SANGS in-house to provide additional areas for ecological & carbon sequestration purposes Work with tenants of County Farms to promote and ensure best environmental practices are upheld 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate to residents, business, & landowners good practice Develop guidance to ensure community tree planting initiatives are ecologically robust & sensitive to local landscape ('right tree in the right place') Promote tree planting through partnership working & use of Council tree planting checklist Promote the health & wellbeing benefits of publicly accessible high ecological value land Work in partnership with Children's & Adult Services to ensure natural environment is fully utilised in social care offer Work with partners to connect fragmented habitats across county Work with town & parish councils to promote best practice within their greenspace & communities

Natural Assets - The table (above) is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						
What we can indirectly impact						

What we can influence and partnership						
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Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "natural assets" area for action? (optional)

As previously mentioned BTC feels the Action Plan can and should be strengthened with greater urgency and ambition. For example:

- The Action Plan needs to go beyond merely '*identify opportunities*' and present clear, defined, measurable outputs and outcomes for improving natural assets.
- '*Create wildlife friendly areas on council land*' is good but the Council shouldn't be creating non wildlife friendly environments full stop.
- "*Review all chemical use to ensure no harm to unintended species*" is not strong enough – Dorset Council should be talking solely in terms of agro-ecological policies and moving quickly to practices that don't require chemical intervention. How else will the biodiversity assets, so highly valued, be protected?
- '*Increase tree planting*' but, where? How many? When? Dorset Council should look to be more ambitious and set a target for increasing the % tree cover in County from a poor 12% at present to above the national target of 17%.

Dorset Council should consider supporting the Campaign for Nature and push for an ambitious target of protecting at least 30% of the county by 2030 and working to ensure it can be fully and fairly implemented.

BTC is pleased to see the Action Plan recognises the value of land for carbon sequestration and supports actions to 'utilise' the natural environment for well-being. However, BTC would like to see more detail on how the Action Plan will be implemented. Especially how vulnerable residents can gain access to and opportunities for engagement with the land – eg schools, hospitals, growers' groups...

Action Plan

We have identified a number of initial targets and specific actions that Dorset Council can take to address the areas above. Our summary action plan for Natural Assets can be found [here](#)

Natural Assets - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

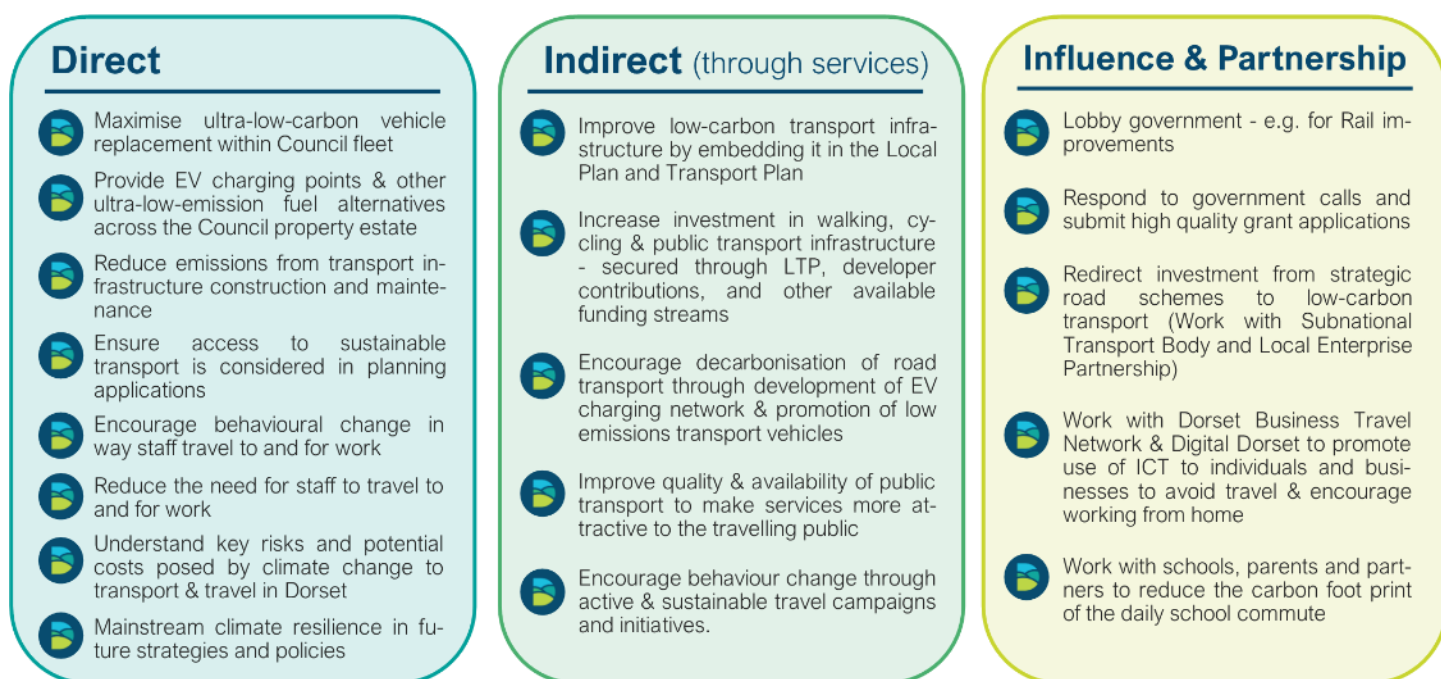
Please explain why you think this (optional)

Topic Area – Transport

Areas for Action...

The transport sector is a major contributor to our carbon footprint. Decarbonising this sector will be a key challenge in moving towards a zero-carbon future. In rural areas like Dorset, car ownership is amongst the highest in the country.

Dorset Council can encourage employees to travel less and can replace its vehicle fleet with Ultra low emission vehicles and work with partners to the provision of electric charging points and sustainable transport infrastructure.



Transport - The table (above) is taken from the strategy and identifies the areas for action where we see Dorset Council can either directly impact, indirectly impact or only influence outcomes. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
What we can directly impact						

What we can indirectly impact						
What we can influence and partnership						

Please explain why you think this and if there is anything fundamental that you feel we have missed in "transport" area for action (optional)

Transport is the most problematic sector for reducing carbon emissions and will need strong leadership from many local authorities – Rural public transport has been eroded away over the last 10 years and with covid the public's appetite for public transport will take many years to recover. From the BTC perspective the Action Plan doesn't really address the fragmented and insufficient nature of our public transport and does nothing to increase access for vulnerable and rural communities. Town and Parishes would be keen to work with Dorset Council to create a strategic transport plan for the whole county.

Dorset Council should be masterminding a major investment in pedestrian and cycling investment targeted at making journeys, for work and leisure, into and out of settlements (< 5km journeys) possible without having to resort to motor vehicles.

Dorset Council also needs to consider helping people engage with cycling and walking. It is not enough to provide routes if people don't feel empowered, or lack the bikes, to use them.

BTC would like to see a strong connection between the Transport and the Economy actions? Sustainable transport links for work and tourism are vital.

As previously mentioned BTC feels the Action Plan can and should be strengthened with greater urgency and ambition. For example:

- The Action Plan needs to go beyond "*Improve the quality and availability of public transport with a focus on maintaining the core network,*" – Maintain a core network is not enough, the network needs to be expanded to serve the needs of rural communities with links to tourism and the economy made clear.
- "*Investigate potential for small scale park& ride*" – is a weak target. Dorset Council should be talking to all relevant towns and expect them to enter into discussions with business on viability and inherent opportunities and come up with plans, including what support is needed from Dorset Council.
- The most effective way to ensure a comprehensive, affordable and accessible bus service is to take the service back into DC control.

- Provision of local transport should go hand-in-hand with discouraging car use through cutting access to parking, particularly on-street, raising parking charges and generally making car travel less viable and bus travel cheaper and easier.

BTC note Dorset Council have 'permanent staff resource in place 'for low carbon transport policies'. Can this resource be made available to towns & parishes to support their efforts?

Action Plan

We have identified a number of initial targets and specific actions that Dorset Council can take to address the areas above.

Transport - The above action plan identifies where we see Dorset Council can take action. Do you agree with what we have proposed?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree/disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain why you think this (optional)

Making it Happen

Leadership and Governance

Taking action to address the Climate and Ecological Emergency will need a multi-disciplinary approach, drawing on skills and resources from across Dorset Council and wider partners. It will need to be part of the way we do things and embedded in the way we deliver our services.

To ensure the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy is effectively delivered we have identified several key actions:

Leadership & Governance Actions

- Lobby government for additional resources and a supportive policy framework
- Actively input into national forums and consultations to encourage policy development in this area
- Review our structures to ensure governance at the highest level to take forward action across the Council
- Ensure enough human resource is in place to drive forward action
- Develop tools to undertake robust impact and policy appraisals to ensure climate change is considered in all key corporate projects, programmes, strategies and plans
- Ensure climate change is considered in all corporate projects

Do you agree we have identified all the relevant leadership and governance actions?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer (optional)

BTC is encouraged by the strength of language in this sections – the language is fairly strong and specific. BTC suggests that the 'Making It Happen' section should appear earlier in the Strategy. It gives a strong message about their commitment and the importance of joint action that will be fundamental to delivery of the Action Plan.

Is there a specific department in the Council that is going to oversee delivery of the Action Plan? Who has overall responsibility for targets? Which committee has oversight? BTC suggests there needs to be a Climate Action Committee with powers necessary to push this forward across all Council departments.

Making it Happen

Funding the response

Tackling the climate emergency will require significant investment at all levels of society. Dorset Council alone will need to invest many millions of pounds (over £100m) over the next 20- 30 years just to be-come a Carbon Neutral Council.

Funding the Response Actions

- We will develop a finance strategy to enable us to deliver this climate emergency response by identifying and implementing ways for our finance department to actively support climate change action. This includes establishing invest-to-save schemes, such as our transformation fund, capital receipts through asset rationalisation, and building into our capital programme. We will also explore options to raise additional funds, such as through borrowing or council tax.

Wider action across the County is likely to require several billion pounds of investment from the government, organisations, and individuals. It is anticipated that further funding and incentives will be forthcoming from central government to support the shift to a low-carbon future.

- We will work with partners and lobby government to seek additional support and external funding and to maximise opportunities for external funding from government and others, making sure Dorset gets its fair share. This is in addition to securing innovative financial arrangements for climate change projects and programmes and giving significant weight to climate change in the procurement process.

Do you agree with our approach to funding the actions required to implement the strategy i.e. invest-to-save schemes, capital receipts through asset rationalisation, and building into our capital programme as well as exploring options to raise additional funds through borrowing and council tax?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer (optional)

Have we missed a way of raising money to pay for action? (optional)

Making it Happen

Engagement & Communications

We all need to take action to address the climate emergency and support the transition to a low-carbon future. We need to put the climate at the forefront of our communications and encourage and support action by everyone in Dorset.

We have identified several key actions Dorset Council can take to raise awareness of the issues, support action at a community level and engage with wider stakeholders to tackle some of the major challenges the Climate and Ecological Emergency raises.

RAISING AWARENESS

We will look to provide more accessible and digestible information on climate change and ecology and the actions we can all take through a range of channels. These will include upgrading our climate change website, developing an online information hub for sharing information, and best practice. This is as well as directing information to residents through Council literature and encouraging an open and ongoing dialogue between the Council and Dorset residents.

We will improve the awareness, engagement, and knowledge of our staff and service providers through staff awareness campaigns, with a focus on how employees can reduce their carbon emissions. This is in addition to increasing their climate resilience in the workplace and at home and integrating key climate change messages into induction programmes. Furthermore, we will organise targeted briefings and training sessions for officers, members, and decision makers on the benefits and opportunities of tackling climate change, highlighting this contribution to other Council priorities. We will also establish an internal climate change champions programme.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ACTION

We will support Town and Parish Councils to develop and implement their organisation and area wide climate action plans. This is as well as helping them engage with residents to encourage community action and drive change at a grassroots community level.

We will help to facilitate and support new and existing community-led projects and community organisations active in this area. Furthermore, we will work with these groups to signpost and communicate shared messages.

ENGAGEMENT WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

We will consult with residents and organisations on this strategy and plans as they develop, using existing and new consultation processes.

We will build support from stakeholders and the wider public by informing and educating on the benefits and opportunities of acting on climate change and creating, maintaining, and developing partnership working on all aspects of climate change action. We will seek to develop a Dorset Climate Emergency partnership group.

We will facilitate the development of a Dorset-wide partnership with other key public, private, and third sector partners in order to develop a partnership approach to driving forward some of the fundamental changes that will be required to deliver a carbon neutral county.

Do you agree with what we are proposing for engagement and communications actions

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree or disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer (optional)

Little reference is made in the Action Plan to the role of Parish & Town Councils and how Dorset Council might take a lead in change at the local level, through funding, training, shared resources, co-ordination of plans, etc. Work in partnership is all very well but perhaps it should be Dorset Councils role to oversee/co-ordinate local climate emergency plans?

Making it Happen

Monitoring & Progress Reporting

To ensure we are on track to meet our targets and not exceed our carbon budgets, we need a robust baseline and regular progress monitoring and reporting of both carbon emissions and ecological indicators.

- We will develop a robust baseline for Council and County carbon emissions and ecology, developing in-house data collection systems to draw data from all the former Councils now forming Dorset Council. This is as well as considering wider emissions from Council activities (Scope 3) such as procurement.
- We will further explore the Dorset County footprint, beyond the data provided by Central Government, to provide a wider understanding of Dorset's emissions e.g. agriculture.
- We will monitor and report on actions and progress in achieving carbon reduction by producing an annual report of progress on climate change targets, budgets, and actions.

Would you be interested in seeing the progress reviews?

- Yes
- No

How often do you want to be updated on progress?

- Annually
- Every 6 months
- Other (please explain)

How do you want to be updated on progress? (select all that apply)

- Annual report
- Our Website
- E - newsletter
- Social media
- Press releases
- Other (please explain)

Any other comments (optional)