

Broadmayne Parish Council

Draft Response to Dorset Council's Consultation on Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan

(Prepared by Cllr. Lamb and the Clerk)

This draft aims to reflect a balanced response based on Councillors' feedback. We have reached the conclusion that it would be difficult to produce a corporate response to all of the questions in the consultation document and propose selective responses, as follows.

Carbon Targets (Page 6)

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

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

Comment - Broadmayne Parish Council (BPC) recognises the scientific consensus which has been built on the causes and scale of climate change, and the desirability of making every effort possible to create a better and more sustainable planet. To that end, at its September 2020 meeting, the BPC resolved to be supportive of Dorset Council's response to the climate change and ecological emergency, and to align its own plans and activities in this context with those of Dorset Council.

Our observation is that the Plan is aspirational and requires considerable development in terms of specific priorities, actions, timings, outcomes, risks and scenarios.

Renewable Energy (Page 7)

Agree Plan / No specific comments

Buildings (Page 9)

Agree Plan / No specific comments

Food and Drink (Page 11)

Agree Plan / No specific comments

The Economy (Page 13)

BPC believes that there are tensions between the aspirations of the plan and activities on which the area relies for income, in particular tourism and agriculture.

Major efforts will be needed to achieve sustainability with a high dependency on technological developments.

BPC are of the view that the plan should take account of the interests of the economically less-advantaged in a post-Covid-19 world, the virus having caused a huge one-off shock to the economy and revealed many inequalities. Training and job creation in green businesses should be given a specific mention.

Waste (Page 15)

BPC were concerned that in respect of Objective 6 (to reduce littering and fly tipping), the intention is to 'continue to work with community / police / environment agency' etc. This hardly represents radical change and experience suggests that more rigour will be needed to make a significant difference.

BPC observed that the recycling facilities in Dorchester have poor access, with cars queuing to enter the site and frequent closures. This situation is likely to contribute to fly-tipping.

Water (Page 17)

There is no specific mention under the heading 'reduce future surface water flood risk' of the need for drains on the highway to be regularly cleared. In BPC's experience this has become a significant problem in recent years.

Natural Assets (Page 19)

The protection of natural assets needs to be fully integrated into all aspects of the Plan.

Transport (Page 21)

BPC opposes the proposal to increase parking charges and scrap the shoppers permit as a means of deterring private car use. This would severely damage tourism and the retail sector. A better strategy would be to improve the green infrastructure and remove or reduce charges for electric and hydrogen powered vehicles

Infrastructure development should include recharge points for electric / hydrogen cars, better public transport for surrounding villages, cycle routes and so on. Better broadband would encourage work from home opportunities.

Concern was expressed over traffic control measures in Weymouth, which led to congestion and consequent pollution, suggesting a need for better impact analysis.

Making it Happen (Pages 23-27)

Leadership and Governance - Clearly critical to success

Funding the Response - A significant dependency

Engagement and Communications - *There can be little doubt that excellent communication is essential to gaining public engagement with the plan and this section needs to have a higher profile. Community initiatives, of which there are many, need to be integrated / co-ordinated.*

Whilst the primary thrust of the document concerns Dorset Council's carbon neutral target there needs to be greater emphasis on encouraging individuals and communities to do their bit. Young people have a crucial role to play in influencing attitudes.

Any Other Comments - *BPC supports the draft Strategy and Action Plan as a promising and positive way forward with locally relevant and sustainable policy-making sitting behind all future Dorset Council decisions. The plan is clearly a work in progress which will necessarily evolve over time. We anticipate potential conflicts between objectives and note a high dependency on technological and other advances.*

We found the Consultation Questionnaire rather difficult to complete and suggest that future consultations with organisations would benefit from a separate more freestyle document.