

**Full Council
14 December 2021**

Questions submitted for the Public Participation Period

Question 1 – submitted by Tess James, Co-Chair, Dorchester Opportunity Group

What are the costs of school tribunals for children with additional needs and how many are successful?

Response by Cllr Andrew Parry

Costs are for 2020/2021 academic year

- Total expenditure on all appeals: £59,344.35

With regards to the outcomes of tribunals

- In 2020/21 the Council received 61 tribunal appeals. The outcomes are as follows:
 - 12 remain pending
 - 32 were resolved outside of the hearing such as through mediation or discussion
 - 8 went to tribunal and were found in favour of the parent
 - 2 were found in favour of the local authority with a further 7 where the parent withdrew from tribunal during the process

Question 2 – submitted by Helen Sumbler

Further to the submission of the Bus Service Improvement Plan in October, have Dorset Council received any response from Government, and if not, when does the council expect to whether the bid for funds from the Bus Back Better fund has been successful?

Response by Cllr Ray Bryan

The message from the Department of Transport is that there are no further updates on BSIP funding. The Department is currently completing its assessment of the Bus Service Improvement Plans (more than 75 were submitted) and will make an announcement soon. No definite timeline was given.

Question 3 – submitted by Helen Sumbler

Will Dorset Council consider consulting with residents about additional sources of income such as setting up a new charitable trust (or partnering with a registered charity) to take donations from council taxpayers and others should they wish to contribute more to their council tax bill, and / or setting up a local lottery? Such additional income sources could then be used to assist with funding the extraordinary demands for funding from the implementation of Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and plans, either directly or indirectly.

Response by Cllr Ray Bryan

Previously Dorset Council consulted with our residents and community groups about support for a community lottery that will have a direct benefit for Dorset's small community groups. The response provided evidence that the majority were supportive of this, as long as it did not provide instant gratification and therefore would encourage addictive vulnerabilities. The community lottery we are developing will have a direct debit payment system which therefore eliminates the instant gratification associated with gambling addiction.

Our Communities and Partnerships team had begun to develop the project of getting it started with an original commencement date of June 2020. Unfortunately due to the ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic, and the additional responsibilities our small community groups took on during this time, and the Covid community response work the Communities and Partnerships team needed to pick up, we took the hard decision that this would not be an appropriate time to launch a project which would add an additional burden to our groups and took the decision to pause the launch. A decision will be taken in the new year as to when will be an appropriate time to restart the project.

Typically for council operated lotteries 60p for every £1 ticket sold goes to the good causes which sell the tickets. Normally 20p from every ticket goes into a central fund which is used for community causes. It would be possible for some or all of this central fund to be used on projects which have a climate and ecological sustainability theme.”

Statement – submitted by Sandra Reeve Dorset Climate Acton Network

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Ray Bryan and all those involved for the excellent letter which was sent on November 5th, 2021 during COP26 to key members of central government calling for further help in tackling the [Climate and Ecological Emergency](#)

- We wholeheartedly support the intention to invest in a new environmentally sound infrastructure that will help prevent and address the worst consequences of man-made climate change.
- We agree that there is a need for improvements to national standards, legislation and procedures so that local councils can be provided with new powers, responsibilities and funding to deliver an inclusive and green recovery. We feel that such new powers should include town and parish councils as well, as we all strive for zero emissions in Dorset as quickly as possible.
- **We were glad to see outlined the specific requests for:**
 1. removing hurdles for renewable energy deployment
 2. increased enforceable standards for building insulation and energy efficiency and increased powers to refuse planning permission for developments that negatively impact on our environment
 3. more investment in sustainable public transport infrastructure and active travel

4. stronger support for digital infrastructure and flexible working
 - We agree that with the appropriate support Dorset has the skills to build prosperity around a sustainable green-led economy
 - We recognise, alongside Dorset Council, that we need to engage with the public to encourage behavioural changes as we move towards net zero emissions and, as part of this we need to address the public perception that putting environmental and ecological benefits ahead of all else means an unacceptable level of sacrifice and compromise.

As well as thanking Dorset Council, DorsetCAN, with all its levels of expertise and its passion would like to respond by saying:

- we are ready at any stage to be part of the **Dorset Climate Partnership Forum** proposed by Dorset Council and to co-create a public engagement programme with you to promote and sustain the **Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy**.

- As part of that **Partnership Forum** we are willing to co-create an educational outreach programme to support the steady growth of climate change awareness, community resilience and the capacity to adapt to the changes that will occur in Dorset.

Finally, DorsetCAN would like to wish Dorset Council a Happy Christmas with your friends and family and a Peaceful New Year and to say thank you once again for all that you are doing on behalf of the county that we all love to call our home.