

Public Document Pack



DORSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15 JULY 2021

Present: Cllrs Tony Alford, Jon Andrews, Richard Biggs, Cherry Brooks, Dave Bolwell, Alex Brenton, Piers Brown, Graham Carr-Jones, Simon Christopher, Kelvin Clayton, Robin Cook, Janet Dover, Jean Dunseith, Matthew Hall, Paul Harrison, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Rebecca Knox, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Howard Legg, Robin Legg, Jon Orrell, Emma Parker, Andrew Parry, Mary Penfold, Bill Pipe, Byron Quayle, Molly Rennie, Maria Roe, Jane Somper, Clare Sutton, David Taylor, David Tooke, Daryl Turner, Kate Wheller, Sarah Williams, John Worth, Jill Haynes, Mike Dyer, Mike Parkes (Vice-Chairman), Ryan Hope, Rob Hughes, Tony Ferrari, Beryl Ezzard, Andrew Starr, David Walsh, Cathy Lugg, David Gray, Toni Coombs, Gill Taylor, Barry Goringe, Pete Barrow, Brian Heatley, Ryan Holloway, Pauline Batstone, Tim Cook, Nick Ireland, Paul Kimber, Laura Miller, David Morgan, Louie O'Leary, Ray Bryan, Val Potheary (Chairman), Belinda Ridout, Mark Roberts, Julie Robinson, Spencer Flower, David Shortell, Susan Cocking, Gary Suttle, Roland Tarr, Simon Gibson, Bill Trite, Les Fry, Peter Wharf and Rod Adkins

Apologies: Cllrs Mike Barron, Derek Beer, Andy Canning and Shane Bartlett

Also present:

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Susan Dallison (Democratic Services Team Leader), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Hayley Caves (Member Development and Support Officer), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Jacqui Andrews (Service Manager for Democratic and Electoral Services) and Antony Littlechild (Sustainability Team Manager)

17. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2021 were received and noted.

18. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

19. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced the sad death of Alderman Biles who served as a councillor for Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and Dorset County Council between 1963 – 1983. Cllr O'Leary was invited to pay tribute to him.

The Chairman also announced the recent death of former Cllr Brierley who served as a councillor at Dorset County Council for 11 year up to 2013. Cllr D Turner and Cllr S Christopher paid tribute to him. There was a minute silence for pay respect and for reflection.

20. Public Participation - Questions and Statements

Public questions, statements and the responses from the Leader of the Council and appropriate Portfolio Holder were set out in Appendix 1 attached to these minutes.

21. Public participation - petitions and deputations

The Chairman advised that a petition has been received from the STAND group, requesting that the council rejected the inclusion in the local plan of the site north of Dorchester, as a preferred option for major building development. This petition had also been submitted as a duly made representation to the local plan consultation and was being considered alongside all the other responses received during the consultation period.

The petition could not be debated as it related to a planning decision.

Full Council would be making the decision about the content of the plan for the next stage, the publication plan at its meeting in April 2022. This would then be published in May 2022, with the opportunity for people to make comments. All responses made at that stage would be considered by the inspector who will hold the public examination. The STAND petition will be debated at that meeting as part of the Local Plan process.

22. Questions from Councillors

There was one question received from Cllr N Ireland. A copy of the question and the response was attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes.

23. Announcements and Reports from the Leader of Council and Cabinet Members

The Leader of the Council advised members that his bulletin would be published following the meeting and a few areas that would be included in this were as follows: -

- Update members on the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions
- Update on the creation of the new special school and Centre of Excellence near Shaftesbury.
- The progress of the review of council assets and facilities.
- He reported on a meeting with Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government – Proposed Planning Reforms
- Matt Warman MP visited Dorset and the 5G Rural Dorset project.

In response to a question regarding the calculation of housing numbers and the planning bill, the Leader of the Council confirmed that he did raise concerns with Robert Jenrick. The Portfolio Holder would circulate more details when appropriate.

In response to a question in respect of underfunding of services, the Leader of Council confirmed that he would continue to lobby for a fair deal for Dorset.

24. **Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy**

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment presented the recommendation to adopt the Climate and Ecological Strategy & Action Plan and associated response to the notice(s) of motion of 18 July 2019. This was following Dorset declaring a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019.

In presenting the strategy he advised that it set out key areas where Dorset Council would need to take action to directly reduce carbon emissions to become a carbon neutral Council by 2040 and working with Dorset residents and organisations towards achieving a wider carbon neutral County by 2050. As technologies advanced, he hoped to be able to shorten some of those target dates. He also thanked officers and the Executive Advisory Panel for their work on the document and consultation process.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the report on Climate Change notice(s) of motion tabled by Cllr D Turner and Cllr K Clayton at Dorset Council on 18 July 2019. These were referred to the Climate Change Executive Advisory Panel for consideration. He confirmed that the Strategy and accompanying action plan had been thoroughly researched and costed and set out how all the issues raised in the notice of motions would be addressed.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the strategy and action plan had been considered by the informal meetings of Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 12 May 2021 and Cabinet on 18 May 2021. He reminded members that the strategy was a living document that would be constantly amended and updated.

The Strategy, Action Plan, and the response to the notices of motion was supported and seconded by Cllr R Hughes.

Members spoke largely in support of the strategy as a realistic approach to climate change and carbon emissions in Dorset and acknowledged that there was still much more to do. The following points, comments and questions were raised: -

- Concern was expressed about the lack of ambition of the document, in response the portfolio holder confirmed that the transforming cities fund would be used to encourage people back to cycling and walking.
- Officers were also engaged with central government to develop a public transport campaign which was at the centre of the ambition for the Dorset Council area.

- Grant funding was time limited, but much work had started and an extension to the time limit has also been sought.
- The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment was working closely with the Portfolio Holder for Planning to address climate issues in the remit of the planning portfolio.
- Recognised that target dates were realistic, but wherever possible dates would be brought forward.

Following discussion, the Chairman asked that the vote be taken on both recommendations together. Upon being put to the vote the “minded to” motion was carried.

The Executive Director for Place advised that he noted the result of the “minded to” vote and confirmed that he had read and considered the report before members. He also acknowledged the comments made by the original proposers of the notices of motion of 18 July 2019 and the views expressed at the informal meetings of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee of 12 May and Cabinet of 18 May 2021. He confirmed that his decision was to adopt the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy.

Delegated Decision of the Executive Director for Place

- (a) That the Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan be adopted.

Council noted

- (b) The response of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Executive Advisory Panel (EAP) in the publication of the draft Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and action plan addressed the Climate Change Notices of Motion tabled by Cllr Daryl Turner and Cllr Kelvin Clayton at Dorset Council on 18th July 2019.

[Decision - Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy - Dorset Council \(wdwp.local\)](#)

Reason for the decision: Dorset Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019 and established an Executive Advisory Panel to strategically guide the Councils response. A draft Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan was produced and approved for public consultation by Cabinet in October 2020.

25. Youth Justice Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented the recommendation to adopt the Youth Justice Plan.

This was a PAN Dorset report, which had been considered by People and Health Scrutiny Committee on 20 April 2021 and Cabinet on 18 May 2021.

The recommendation was seconded by Cllr B Pipe.

Members welcomed the report and upon being put to the vote, they were “minded to” adopt the Youth Justice Plan.

The Executive Director for People (Children) confirmed that she had taken into account the background information relating to the report and had listened to the debate, noting the “minded to” vote and confirmed her decision was to adopt the Youth Justice Plan.

Delegated Decision of the Executive Director of People (Children)

That the Youth Justice Plan be adopted.

[Decision - Youth Justice Plan - Dorset Council \(wdwp.local\)](http://wdwp.local)

Reason for the decision: Local authorities are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan, setting out how the statutory requirements for a multi-agency youth offending team are fulfilled locally. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is a partnership between Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, along with Dorset Police, NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and the National Probation Service Dorset. Approval for the Youth Justice Plan is also being sought from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The Youth Justice Plan needs to be approved by the full Council.

26. Community Governance Review of the Parishes in the Dorset Council area

The Leader of the Council presented a report on a Community Governance Review of Parishes in the Dorset Council area and proposed the recommendation. This was seconded by Cllr M Roberts.

In response to a question, the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic confirmed that parish meetings would be reflected within the review process and terms of reference.

Upon being put to the vote the “minded to” decision was to approve the recommendation as set out in the report.

Following the vote, the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic advised that he taken into account the background information, the report and the point raised at the meeting in respect of parish meetings. His decision was to adopt the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review of all parishes in the Dorset Council area.

Delegated Decision of the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic

That the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review of all parishes in the Dorset Council area be adopted.

[Decision - Community Governance Review of the Parish in the Dorset Council Area - Dorset Council \(wdwp.local\)](#)

Reason for Recommendation: To ensure that community governance arrangements within the area under review are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area.

27. **Proposed Dissolution of Chedington Parish Council**

The Leader of the Council presented a report on a request from a parish meeting to dissolve a parish council in advance of the community governance review discussed in the previous item. Cllr S Flower proposed the recommendation as set out in the report.

The local ward member Cllr R Knox seconded the motion. Upon being put to the “minded to” vote the motion was carried. The Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic advised that he had considered the background to this item and listened to the support of the local ward member. He confirmed that his decision was to make the order to dissolve the Chedington Parish Council as detailed in the report.

Delegated Decision of the Corporate Director of Legal and Democratic

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (a) | o make an order under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1972 to dissolve the Chedington Parish Council. | T |
| (b) | o grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive, after consultation with the ward member, to enable orders to be made under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 to group, separate or dissolve parish councils without the need for individual decisions by the Full Council. | T |

[Decision - Proposed Dissolution of Chedington Parish Council - Dorset Council \(wdwp.local\)](#)

Reason for the decision: Dissolution of the Parish Council has been requested by Chedington Parish meeting.

28. **Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Maria Roe**

The following motion was proposed by Cllr M Roe and seconded by Cllr B Heatley and supported by: Cllr Paul Kimber, Cllr Brian Heatley (seconder), Cllr Dave Bolwell, Cllr Kate Wheller, Cllr Kelvin Clayton, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr David Tooke and Cllr Roland Tarr.

Notice of Motion

“Government decided to retain the Standard Method formula used to determine housing need for local authorities last year. The formula determines the target for the number of houses Local Authorities must achieve or run the

risk of facing penalties. This formula uses the 2014 household projections which showed a greater population growth than there is now. In fact, Dorset has one of the lowest growth rates in comparison to the rest of England. Using the outdated data set results in an inflated and inaccurate number of houses being planned for Dorset which will put pressure on our Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and on the character of our towns and villages. There is a concern from many residents that excessive growth may be at the expense of local people as well as the environment. There is an obvious need for the right types of housing to be built and for them to be built in the right place - this is not in dispute. Everyone should have a decent place to live, which meets their needs, and that they can afford. We have an opportunity now with the new Local Plan to challenge the target imposed on us to ensure that the number is correct.

Dorset Council therefore resolves to:

- Call on Dorset Council to make the case to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government before the next full council, to use more recent data in their calculations for the target number of houses instead of the outdated 2014 numbers, and to report back to council”.

Members debated the motion and the methodology of housing requirements for the area of Dorset.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was **LOST**

29. **Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Nick Ireland**

The following motion was proposed by Cllr N Ireland seconded by Cllr R Hope and supported by Cllr Andy Canning, Cllr Clare Sutton, Cllr Sarah Williams, Cllr David Taylor, Cllr Jon Orrell, Cllr Peter Barrow, Cllr Gill Taylor, Cllr Howard Legg, Cllr Tim Cook

Notice of Motion

1. That Dorset Council resolves to replace the Leader and Cabinet model of Governance with a Committee system in which seats on committees, including those on a Management Committee, are allocated in accordance with political proportionality.
2. That the change to the Committee system is to take effect from the Annual Meeting of Dorset Council in 2022.
3. That a working group of councillors, nominated by group leaders on a politically proportionate basis, be formed to recommend to Full Council the changes to be made to the Constitution to bring about the change to the Committee system.
4. That the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to recommend to the Council consequential changes to the scheme of Members' Allowances.

The Leader of the Council proposed an amendment to the motion to delete words in (3) and (4); to change (2) to read “that a review of the current Dorset Council governance model be undertaken during 2023 by a working group of councillors, reflecting political proportionality, and that an options paper be available to inform a governance review following the scheduled elections in 2024. The amendment was seconded by Cllr N Lacey-Clarke.

Councillors debated the amendment and the Leader of the Council asked for a recorded vote on the motion. This was supported by at least 10 councillors.

In accordance with procedure rule 8.1 and prior to the vote, councillors agreed to continue the meeting beyond the 3 hour threshold for the duration of a meeting.

Those who voted for the amendment: Cllrs Rob Adkins, Anthony Alford, Pauline Batstone, Cherry Brookes, Piers Brown, Ray Bryan, Graham Carr-Jones. Simon Christopher, Susan Cocking, Robin Cook, Toni Coombes, Jean Dunseith, Michael Dyer, Tony Ferriar, Spencer Flower, Les Fry, Simon Gibson, Barry Goringe, Paul Harrison, Jill Haynes, Rob Hughes, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Andrew Kerby, Rebecca Knox, Noc Lacey-Clarke, Cathy Lugg, Laura Miller, Louie O’Leary, Emma Parker, Mike Parks, Andrew Parry , Mary Penfold, Bill Pipe, Val Potheary, Byron Quayle, Belinda Ridout, Mark Roberts, Julie Robinson, David Shortell, Gary Suttle, Jane Somper, William Trite, David Walsh, Peter Wharf, John Worth

Those who voted against: Cllrs Jon Andrews, Peter Barrow, Richard Biggs, Dave Howell, Alex Brenton, Kelvin Clayton, Tim Cook, Janet Dover, Beryl Ezzard, David Grey, Matt Hall, Brian Heatley, Ryan Holloway, Ryan Hope, Nick Ireland, Stella Jones, Paul Kimber, Robin Legg, Howard Legg, David Morgan, Jon Orrell, Molly Rennie, Marie Roe, Andrew Starr, Clare Sutton, Roland Tarr, David Taylor, Gill Taylor, David Tooke, Daryl Turner, Kate Wheller, Sarah Williams. There were no abstentions.

The meeting adjourned for a short comfort break at 21.38pm and returned at 21.48pm.

As part of proposing the following amendment Cllr K Wheller took the opportunity to extend her grateful thanks to the staff for all their hard work during the pandemic.

Amendment

“With the acknowledgement of the staff workload and with grateful thanks to them, it is proposed that a review of the DC governance take place over this current term with a vote to be taken before the 2024 election.” The motion was seconded by Cllr P Kimber and supported by Cllr L Fry.

Councillors debated the amendment before them and upon being put to the vote the “minded to “motion was carried.

Councillors were asked to vote on the substantive “minded to” motion. Upon being put to the vote this was carried.

The Chief Executive advised that he had considered the background information and listened to the debate and the “minded to” decision. He confirmed he decision as set out below.

Delegated Decision of the Chief Executive (Substantive)

With the acknowledgement of staff workload, and with grateful thanks to them, it is proposed that a review of the DC governance take place over this current term with a voting before the 2024 election.

[Decision - Notice of Motion Submitted by Cllr N Ireland \(Committee Governance System\) - Dorset Council \(wdwp.local\)](#)

30. **Social Mobility in Dorset**

The Executive Director for Place advised that this report responded to a notice of motion that was presented to Council on 18 July 2019. The matter was considered by the Economic Development Executive Advisory Panel on several occasions between August 2019 and February 2020 and the EAP panel agreed to address social mobility through the Economic Growth Strategy, adopted by Cabinet in July 2020.

The Portfolio Holder for Education, Children, Skills and Early Help proposed the recommendation. Cllr P Barrow seconded the motion.

Councillors discussed the motion and upon being put to the “minded to” vote the motion was carried. The Executive for Place advised that having considered the background and listened to discussion he was decision to approve the recommendations as set out within the report.

Delegated Decision of the Executive Director for Place

- (a) That the Economic Development Strategy approved by Cabinet on 28 July 2020, be welcomed and recognise the important part that the strategy will play in improving social mobility throughout Dorset.
- (b) The lead responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help, be noted and the Executive Director for Place in relation to economic development and for improving social mobility.
- (c) That a strategic alliance be formed with partners and community representatives to build upon the objectives of the Economic Development Strategy by co-producing a targeted plan to improve social mobility in Dorset, be agreed
- (d) That the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee undertake quarterly monitoring of progress towards achieving the objectives of the Economic

Development Strategy and the plan to improve social mobility in Dorset as part of its ongoing performance management scrutiny responsibilities.

[Decision - Social Mobility in Dorset - Dorset Council \(wdwp.local\)](http://wdwp.local)

Reason for Recommendation: Improving social mobility aligns with the corporate aims for economic growth and strong healthy communities

31. **Exempt Business**

There were no exempt items.

32. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items to report.

Appendix 1 Public Participation - Questions
Appendix 2 - Questions for Councillors

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 10.40 pm

Chairman

.....

**Full Council
15 July 2021**

**Public Participation Period
Questions and Responses**

Question 1 – submitted by Toby Branston

Dorset Council has signed up to addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency. Therefore can they answer why they are prepared to put over 800 houses on organically farmed fields in Wool with high levels of biodiversity including at least 10 priority species of birds such as cornbunting and yellowhammer plus brown hares. For reference; 'priority species' are those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The identified fields are important for several priority species of bat (all species are protected) which feed nightly on the abundant insect population of over 300 recorded species. These fields are also the most diverse botanically in the area due to being managed organically and sympathetically for wildlife.

Response by Cllr David Walsh

Like all councils, we are required to meet our area's housing needs as well as addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Environmental constraints are very important considerations in decisions about the most appropriate sites for development. We have consulted on a range of potential development sites and will be considering all the responses carefully before making any decisions about the sites and policies to be included in the next stage of plan preparation.

Question 2 & 3 – submitted by Russell Todd

The Broad Oak Residents Association (BORA) has recently been involved with a planning application and, as a result of engaging in the planning process we believe that it is unfair and lacks rigour:

It is not particularly clear how the process works and now having taken part, it would appear that the process is obliging the objector to second guess what the applicant might say in response to your objection. This has the result of making your objection overly long and potentially unclear.

Question 1: The planning process does not automatically notify neighbours that an application is starting or ongoing and if the applicant fails to put up a notice to find out what is going on you have to constantly refer to the Dorset Council (DC) website. Not everybody uses the internet and it can be difficult to find planning applications that are relevant for your immediate area.

I would have thought that DC has a duty to inform those with neighbouring properties or has a process of notification that allows for those who do not have access to the internet or do not use it.

Question 2: When an applicant makes a statement why does DC not require

evidence to support that statement? Most people keep records of business or receipts for other purposes and it would not be hard to add this to an application.

There does not seem to be an overarching view of individual planning applications and how that affects what is going on beyond an individual application. A series of individual applications in a small area can have significant impacts on roads and services, but this is not accounted for in the current process.

BORA request that the committee review the planning application process to create a fairer system that has some rigour to it, so that all parties involved in an application can have some confidence that a fair decision has been arrived at and that the process is not leaning one way.

Response by Cllr David Walsh

Dorset Council sets out its consultation commitments in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. All applications are publicised via site notices which allows neighbours and other local residents to be alerted to planning applications in their area, including residents who do not have access to the internet. We also publish details on our website which, for the vast majority of Dorset residents, provides a convenient means of looking at all plans and documents submitted with the application.

All planning applications must be considered on their individual merits and must be determined in accordance with relevant development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan sets out the strategy, generic policies and site specific allocations for the area.

Statements by an applicant are only one part of an application. Local Planning Authorities set out mandatory and local requirements for documents and evidence that are required to enable the determination of an application. We cannot control what an applicant says in a statement but the details that form the planning application are assessed against national and local plan policies, having regard to the representations and consultation responses that are received.

Question 4 – submitted by Helen Sumbler

With regard to the Community Governance Review of Parishes in the Dorset Council area:

What is the background behind this / the urgency to undertake the governance review at this particular time, when we are still in the midst of the Covid pandemic, the impact of Brexit is still unknown and there are so many other pressing matters that require council officer resources; and also bearing in mind that any recommendations would not take effect until 2024, 2 years after the Order is made?

Response by Cllr Spencer Flower

A Community Governance Review has not been undertaken for many years by some of Dorset Council's predecessor councils, and we have received requests from a number of parishes for a review of their boundaries. Rather than undertaking piecemeal reviews, it is considered more appropriate to consider governance arrangements across the area as a whole. As any changes can only be implemented at scheduled elections, to delay this piece of work could risk any changes not taking effect until 2029.

Question 5 – submitted by Helen Sumbler

With regard to the Community Governance Review of Parishes in the Dorset Council area:

As part of the review process, will Dorset Council be proposing any changes, or will the only change proposals to be developed into recommendations be those as a result of submissions / representations received from the parties consulted?

Response by Cllr Spencer Flower

Primarily, Dorset Council will be interested in considering submissions made by local residents, councils and other interested parties. However, there may be areas where eg electoral inequality is not achieved but no submissions are made by interested parties. In this case, Dorset Councillors will be asked to consider changes to ensure that the principles of good community governance are achieved.

Statement – submitted by John Grantham

Item 14 tonight gives the opportunity for ANOTHER Council to move to REAL democracy..... FROM a position where the Leader of any biggest party, (voted in on just 39.3% of votes), is able to hand-pick from just one party, the 10 councillors, assisted by Lead Members, to comprise the Cabinet, which effectively then determines policy.

When "Public First Group" planned to achieve a Committee system for West Dorset District Council in 2015, an essential step was Research. In Sherborne over 2 days we interviewed 306 people at our stand, discussing the merits of Cabinet v Committee. Before we started an official-looking gentleman said "Everyone wants the Cabinet system!"

Not so! The research found less than 50% even knew there WAS a 'WDDC' and a 'DCC'. Under 10% knew there was a Cabinet system operating. And of the 306 respondents ...301 opted for the Committee system,.... most scarcely believing the archaic nature of the Cabinet system.

That was when we KNEW we'd win a referendum. We circulated 2000 notes to Dorchester homes mid-week, describing the two systems, saying we had a "signing-stand" in South St on Saturday. NO LESS THAN 800 people came out and signed!! They knew the Cabinet system had protected new council offices being built, despite

Dorchester's Town Referendum where 93% had voted against. The build simultaneously obliterated a 226-bay central public-car-park in Dorchester. Among councils converting, using the 2011 Localism Act, were **Fylde**, then **Canterbury**, (where the leading party converted VOLUNTARILY, seeing the hordes of public, signing). By converting VOLUNTARILY they SAVED THE COUNCIL AND TAX-PAYER from referendum costs. **West Dorset** then voted by a landslide for the Committee system. Recently **Cheshire East**, whose Cabinet was judged to have acted highly partially, converted; and at **Sheffield City Council**, Labour's Cabinet system was able to protect its policy of chopping down thousands of trees on Council property, only stopped by public clamour and the Law at 5,400 fellings; leading to a landslide referendum vote FOR the Committee system.

PREDICTION: Hopefully the Council will vote tonight for the Committee system: with the public now meeting again, and with social media, the public WILL get to know the facts. If it's voted down tonight, but all the unfairly squeezed parties make the Committee system their no. 1 election promise at the next Council elections, they will undoubtedly take control of the Council and introduce the Committee system. There couldn't be a better time to implement the 'Committee' system, especially with a dozen WDDC councillors having worked it already, and staff-members who implemented its introduction. Congratulations if you can introduce this **non-party-political** PROCESS in May 2022 to turbo-charge your productivity!

Question 6 – submitted by John Grantham

Tonight there will of course be a vote on the possible introduction of the 'Committee' system into Dorset Council. There is of course experience of a public vote on this issue from the old West Dorset District Council, where a landslide vote by the electorate in favour of the Committee system occurred in 2016.

I hope tonight all are able to defuse the '**party-political**' angle to this issue. This is a vote purely on 'process', not 'politics', and it allows the council the opportunity to show its credentials in terms of its belief in **fairly and proportionately reflecting** the electorate's votes as they've cast them.

I believe Dorset Council could reasonably easily move into the Committee process by May 2022, and that its standing would be strongly and authoritatively enhanced.

I have voted many ways in my life but have concluded that a fair and just **system** is the vital determinant of the Democracy this country holds in trust.

As you can probably imagine, in the landslide referendum win in 2016 in West Dorset, there were many, many voters from the ruling party who voted for the Committee system, (I estimate several thousands), seeing it as 'just' and the 'right thing to do'. In fact the vote was not about politics, but about process.

In 2015 a councillor from the minority Conservative party in Reading, Berks, approached our stand saying they really hoped we'd get the Committee system. They said that as a result of that Council having 'gone Committee' they now went to the Council meetings with hope and relish, sitting as a minority party councillor WITH the other parties in Committee, instead of apart, and not looking to see where there were weaknesses in their arguments. Instead they were at last able to use their collective brain-power to contribute, to look at and discuss together how they could crack critical issues on Children's Education, Social Services or the Housing Build programme.

My Question therefore is: At this late stage I would be interested to learn – if it is possible to say – if Councillors have your support in reassessing all they learn from

this evening and coming to their individual conclusions, and that you will promote the issue as a completely non-party-political 'free vote' on whether to introduce the Committee system in May 2022?

Response by Cllr Spencer Flower

We are just coming out of the worst global crisis for 100 years. Covid-19 will have long lasting consequences for the individuals and communities which make up Dorset. The pandemic has left this council with significant additional burdens and financial pressures and has caused disruption to our planned transformation programme. Any eight councillors can require an item to be debated at a meeting of the Full Council but choosing now to force a debate about the Council's internal rules and how we organise ourselves and make decisions seems self indulgent. Having to completely re-write our internal rule book will only serve to divert councillors and council staff away from what should be our top priorities; to ensure Dorset recovers well from the pandemic and to modernise how we provide council services. Focusing instead on our own internal rules makes us look out of touch with reality and would have a serious negative impact on our commitment to always put the interests of our communities first. This is not the time to debate the merits or otherwise of the changes set out in the Motion. The risks I have outlined are just far too great. My view is that this sort of change to how the council organises itself should be considered immediately following elections, not halfway through a term of office.

Question 7 – submitted by Dr Sandra Reeve

CEE Strategy documents - Appendix B

In Appendix B, it is noticeable that, apart from the targets, the only other section where the EAP is mentioned is in the Leadership and Governance section. In item 1, subject area "Ensure strong partnership set-up/over- sight, collaboration and 'bottom-up approach through community involvement (TPCs, young people, assemblies)" the comment in the Recommendation column is "Assemblies – EAP ruled out."

The assemblies that community groups ran to raise public awareness and increase the engagement with the recent Dorset Council CEE Strategy and Dorset Council Local Plan consultations were met with positive responses from the public. Surely the use of similar facilitated public assemblies (also known as peoples' assemblies, community assemblies and community conversations), that provide an opportunity for all participants to speak in a non-threatening, small group situation, could provide an additional means of engaging with the public about the CEE Strategy and Action Plans.

Could the Council please explain why the use of this form of public engagement has been ruled out?

Response by Cllr Ray Bryan

The Council is committed to communicating and engaging with key stakeholders, organisations, groups and individuals in order to support the journey to a Zero-Carbon County and the making it happen section of the strategy sets out some of the initial actions we plan to take. The emphasis has been on community engagement using existing established groups and forums. The EAP had concerns about the behaviours, actions and motivations of some involved in promoting the assembly approach, and this is something the council can keep under review.

We have begun this process through the development of the strategy but recognise this is just the start and there is a great deal to do. Our future approach to communications and engagement is being developed to support the strategy and we will aim to use a range of communication tools and methods across the services provided by the Council to enable wider engagement and partnership working, to raise awareness, encourage behaviour change.

Questions 8 & 9 – submitted by Giles Watts

Monitoring Emissions in Dorset.

The Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy states baseline emissions data for Dorset both for direct emissions by Dorset Council and emissions for the whole of Dorset. The origin for these baseline emissions is not clear. Neither is it clear how future emissions will be monitored both in terms of frequency and detail. Tracking emissions accurately is fundamental to being able to identify successes and failures in the strategy and so drive emissions down and meet our targets.

Question: Please can Dorset Council state the origin of the emissions data quoted in the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Document and state how often and in what detail they propose to monitor future county-wide emissions in Dorset.

Response by Cllr Ray Bryan

The carbon emission figures from 'Dorset Council' are calculated using national Green House Gas conversion factors provided by the Department for Business, Energy and Industry Strategy - Green House gas reporting: conversion factors. These are updated annually and allow us to convert our energy use (kilowatt hours), vehicle fuel (litres petrol/diesel), staff travel (mileage) and our waste (kilograms) from all our operations into Carbon Emission equivalents. The carbon figures reported for 'Dorset County Area' are provided centrally by the Department for Business, Energy and Industry Strategy – Emissions of carbon dioxide for Local Authority areas.

Both of these sets of data will be monitored and progress reported to the public annually, this will be reported at the same level of detail provided in the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, within a wider progress report.

**Full Council
15 July 2021
Questions from Councillors**

Question submitted by Cllr Nick Ireland

Following yet another recycling collection failure in Crossways Ward, we see again that we don't have sufficient resilience in the service and moreover that *"unfortunately we currently only have one restricted access vehicle with a split body which can collect dry recycling and glass at the same time; a second vehicle was lost in the fire at Crookhill last year and so far we have been unable to source a replacement."*

Why eight months later hasn't a replacement been sourced and will the portfolio holder give a date when this will be rectified in order to restore to our council tax paying residents the service level they both expect and deserve?

Response by Cllr Jill Haynes

I am sure all councillors are aware that Dorset Council lost 20 vehicles in the devastating Crookhill depot fire last November. Most of these vehicles have been replaced, but we've only been able to replace one of the two specialist vehicles used for collecting recycling at restricted access properties, despite constant contact with vehicle suppliers.

This means we don't currently have an appropriate alternative vehicle to collect glass on these difficult to access routes when the one vehicle is off the road, such as for inspections or repair work. This was the case with the recent missed glass collections in Crossways.

The vehicle we use is now back in service and the glass will be collected at the same time as the recycling. Officers are continuing to look at all options including short term lease, if suitable vehicles are available, whilst procurement options are evaluated for new replacement vehicles.

In the meantime, we apologise for any inconvenience caused and would kindly remind everyone that we will always collect extra household glass during regular recycling collections if presented in a sturdy container.

This page is intentionally left blank