Public Document Pack

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 26 February 2024
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)
Shane Bartlett (Chairman), Andy Canning (Vice-Chairman), Rod Adkins, Jon Andrews, Piers Brown, Barry Goringe, Brian Heatley, David Shortell, David Tooke and Bill Trite

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services
Meeting Contact 01305 252209 / lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

For easy access to all the council's committee agendas and minutes download the free public app called Modern.Gov for use on any iPad, Android, and Windows tablet. Once downloaded select Dorset Council.

Agenda

Item **Pages**

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES 5 - 10

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2024.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

To receive any updates from the Chairman of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. **The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below**. Further information read Public Participation - Dorset Council

All submissions must be emailed in full to lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on 21 February 2024.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g., the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

6. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and

statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on 21 February 2024.

Dorset Council Constitution – Procedure Rule 13

7. 20MPH POLICY 11 - 32

To consider a report of the Road Safety Manager.

8. REDLANDS LEISURE AND COMMUNITY PARK UPDATE 33 - 48

To consider a report of the Service Manager for Leisure, Arts and Cultural Services.

9. GRID CAPACITY REVIEW 49 - 104

To consider a report of the Climate and Ecology Policy Officer following a task and finish group review.

10. PLACE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 105 - 106

1) To review the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

2) Monitoring of the Performance Dashboard – members of the committee to flag up any areas for potential review:

Operational – Corporate: Councillors Piers Brown, Barry Goringe and David Shortell.

Operational – Place: Councillors David Tooke and Jon Andrews.

HR: Councillors Rod Adkins, Andy Canning, Brian Heatley and Bill Trite.

The Chairman, Councillor Shane Bartlett, maintains an overview of all the above areas.

11. EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS FORWARD PLANS 107 - 128

To consider the Executive arrangement forward plans.

Forward Plans are provided to members of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee to review and identify any potential post decision scrutiny to be undertaken, by scheduling items into the work

programme to review after a period of implementation.

12. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

13. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph x of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

Dorset Council

PLACE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024

Present: Cllrs Shane Bartlett (Chairman), Andy Canning (Vice-Chairman), Jon Andrews, Piers Brown, Barry Goringe, Brian Heatley, David Shortell and David Tooke

Apologies: Cllrs Rod Adkins and Bill Trite

Also present: Cllr Laura Beddow, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Spencer Flower, Cllr Simon Gibson, Cllr David Gray, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr Andrew Starr and Cllr David Walsh

Also present remotely: Cllr Alex Brenton, Cllr Jill Haynes, Cllr Ryan Holloway, Cllr Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cllr Molly Rennie and Cllr Gill Taylor

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):
Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), Jan Britton (Executive Lead for the Place Directorate), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Paul Ackrill (Service Manager (Finance)), James Ailward (Head of ICT Operations), Gemma Clinton (Head of Commercial Waste and Strategy), Lisa Cotton (Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services), Sean Cremer (Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial), Tim Hulme (Head of Assets and Property), Heather Lappin (Head of Strategic Finance), Chris Matthews (Head of Human Resources), Matthew Piles (Corporate Director - Economic Growth and Infrastructure), Matthew Turnbull (Democratic and Electoral Services Apprentice) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):
Dawn Adams (Service Manager for Commercial and Procurement), Steven Ford (Corporate Director for Transformation, Innovation, Digital, and Environment) and Jennifer Lowis (Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement)

46. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

47. **Minutes**

The Chairman noted that in respect of the minute relating to ‘Review of Dorset Council’s Tourism Service’, the wording of the final paragraph should be amended to read as follows:

‘Following the discussion, it was agreed by the committee that the Chairman and Vice-chairman would meet with officers to discuss the setting up of task and finish

groups to explore opportunities for income generation in tourism through a future review'.

The committee agreed with the amendment to the wording and the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 (as amended) were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48. **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

49. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from councillors.

50. **Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Strategy report**

The committee was invited to consider the budget proposals for 2024/25 prior to consideration at Cabinet on 30 January 2024 and Full Council on 13 February 2024. The report gave a summary of progress to date on the budget strategy and process and provided the opportunity for the scrutiny committees to review further, budget assumptions and actions being proposed to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25.

The Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee had the opportunity to consider the implications of the proposals on behalf of residents of Dorset and to provide constructive challenge to decision makers before a final decision was made. It was noted that the comments made by the committee would be reported to Cabinet on 30 January 2024 and taken into consideration as part of the budget setting process.

A short introduction and overview of the budget proposals was provided by the Executive Director of Corporate Development followed by an exploration of the budget proposals in a number of key theme areas.

Further to the discussion held, the Chairman provided a summary of the key points raised during the discussion in relation to each area covered by the committee and noted that the points below would be submitted to Cabinet as part of the budget setting process:

Workforce Issues

- The committee note that Dorset Council has spent around £14m a year over the last couple of years on the employment of agency staff, which is a more expensive option. It is flagged up that driving forward the transformation process is imperative to reduce costs in this area

- It is important that Legal Services staffing is kept to full strength in order to mitigate the risk to the council

- There needs to be sufficient funding and focus on communications and engagement to ensure that the council's recruitment programme is successful

- The committee recognise that the recruitment and retention of staff continues to be a challenge particularly with the wage economy, competition with other local authorities and with a national shortage of local government officers in some service areas.

Transformation

- Clarification is sought on the position with Public Works Loans as this may affect Dorset Council's working with town and parish councils

- The committee is confident with the Invest to Save strategy and transformation project

- It is noted that the sponsorship and income stream through the use of council assets could be developed further to become more commercial and bring in a bigger income for the council

- The committee note the role of the Our Future Council programme to find efficiencies and transformation in services, with an initial focus on Place and Corporate areas. Assurance will be sought on progress with the programme in September/October 2024 with regular monitoring opportunities for councillors provided.

Home to School Transport

- There is a need for additional placements at the Dorset Centre of Excellence to be progressed at pace to assist with relieving SEN budget pressures

- The committee highlight the importance of Dorset Council working with maintained schools and academies to progress the necessary SEND infrastructure to mitigate against SEND travel costs and to enable education at a more local level.

Waste Services

- The committee is content with the budget proposals in this area.

At this point in the meeting, it was proposed by D Shortell seconded by D Tooke and agreed by the committee, that the meeting continue beyond the 3-hour limit as set out in the Constitution.

Planning

- The committee recognise the need to ensure adequate capacity of staffing in planning as a large statutory planning authority and the risk that not

having adequate capacity could pose to the budget

- The Council should lobby the Government to be more flexible within the planning approach, although it is noted that guidance on new legislation is awaited and further discussion can take place at this time.

At this point in the meeting, the committee had a twenty-minute adjournment and returned at 1.45pm.

Property and Assets

- Councillors are generally content with the strategy in this area but note that the council should be mindful of when assets are costing significant money to maintain.

Car Parking

- It is noted that this area will be subject to scrutiny later in 2024 and debate will be held at this time.

Funding for Dorset

- The committee ask the Leader and portfolio holders to continue to lobby Government to demand a better funding deal for Dorset.

Commercial Strategy

- The committee request that a task and finish group be established post May 2024 to consider the council's commercial strategy.

Partnership Working

- The committee note the theme of the Our Future Council programme around the working relationship between Dorset Council and town and parish councils and note that it would be helpful for Dorset Council to produce a list of items that could be discussed for potential sharing or devolution.

The Chairman thanked officers and portfolio holders for their work on the budget and input at the meeting.

51. **Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

Councillors reviewed the committee's work programme and noted items to be considered at the next meeting on 26 February 2024.

52. **Executive Forward Plans**

Councillors considered the Cabinet Forward Plan and decisions of the meetings held on 7 November and 5 December 2023, which the committee could use to identify potential areas for post decision review.

In addition, the committee noted the forward plan for the Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd and the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence.

53. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

54. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 3.42 pm

Chairman

.....

This page is intentionally left blank

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee
26 February 2024
20 MPH Policy

For Review and Consultation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

Report Author: Tony Burden
Job Title: Road Safety Manager
Tel: 01305 224165
Email: tony.burden@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

The purpose of this report is to review the policy in its first year of operation and to highlight the ongoing review by the Department for Transport (DfT) into 20mph.

It does not seek to go into the detail on individual application decisions.

The policy is aimed at introducing new 20mph schemes, in urban areas and village streets that are primarily residential, to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists and to improve quality of life.

Recommendation:

1. To review progress on policy delivery.

2. To note the potential for new national guidance on 20mph for England.

Reason for Recommendation:

1. To comply with the recommendation to scrutinise the delivery of the policy 12 months after implementation.

2. To be cognisant of the DfT *'The Plan for Drivers'* ongoing review.

1. Background

1.1 Dorset Councils (DC) Cabinet of 1 November 2022 approved the 20mph policy after a recommendation by the Place and Resources Overview Committee of 6 October 2022. This was the first time that DC had agreed a bespoke policy for 20mph.

1.2 Chairman of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee requested a 6-month progress update, and this was presented to committee at the meeting of 25 May 2023 with no recommendations being made.

1.3 Cabinet requested that this committee should scrutinise the operational delivery of the policy 12 months after implementation which will then allow for any amendments or changes to be recommended.

1.4 The policy has sought to ensure that 20mph schemes give the maximum benefit for the affected communities within urban areas and village streets that are primarily residential, to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists and those using a mobility scooter, wheelchair, or similar mobility aid.

1.5 The policy has provided officers with a framework for dealing with community led requests and has also enabled officers to progress 20mph schemes as part of a highway improvement measure and to actively promote 20mph schemes, where appropriate, on new residential housing developments.

2. 20mph Limit or Zone

2.1 During operational delivery there has been some uncertainty from communities around the terminology used to describe a limit or zone. This is understandable because there used to be a very clear distinction.

20mph zones require any point in the road to be within 50m of a traffic calming measure which used to be defined quite strictly as physical calming such as vertical (speed humps) or horizontal deflections (chicanes, road narrowings). This reliance on largely physical calming reduced the need for signage but created new risks and increased costs and the requirement was therefore relaxed by DfT. Current guidance allows for repeater signs, carriageway roundels and mini roundabouts to also be classed as traffic

calming, however, a *20mph zone* would still require the installation of at least one physical calming measure.

20mph limits only require each point in the road to be within 50m of a repeater sign that informs the driver that the speed limit is 20mph.

2.2 A careful assessment is always carried out when considering whether an application can meet its objectives by use of a limit or zone with all new schemes needing to be compliant with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.

3. Promotion of policy

3.1 Speed limit changes can be emotive subjects. Media coverage was generated during the development of the policy which was lengthy and necessarily delayed due to the Covid pandemic. The Communication Team provided a news release shared through the usual media channels promoting the policy once it had been agreed by Cabinet.

3.2 A website was created allowing public access to the policy and a new online application form. N.B.: an application can only be made by a DC Member, Parish or Town Council.

3.3 Engagement took place with the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils through the webinar of 7 February 2023 which at that time was the highest attended with 62 delegates.

3.4 The policy has also been promoted through regular liaison with DC Members and routine engagement with Parish and Town Councils.

4. Levels of interest

4.1 From policy implementation until 31 December 2023 there have been **25** applications with **24** other locations having expressed an interest. Other locations are actively considering an application with overall interest likely to remain high.

The first community application was received 3hrs after policy sign off.

5. Operational delivery

5.1 A one team approach has been taken to delivery with different sections of the highways service taking a leadership role.

- **Road Safety Team** lead on delivery of the community led applications and 20mph safety schemes linked to collision reduction.

- **Transport Planning Team** together with the **Highways Improvement Team** lead on 20mph schemes linked to Active Travel.

- **Highways Development Team** lead on 20mph for new housing developments.

- Other sections of the service including local **Community Highways Team, Transport Studies & Data Team, Traffic Regulation Team**, and **Sign Shop Team** play an important role in the assessment process and delivery.

5.2 A phased approach has been taken to community led applications with the process being supported by the creation of an oversight group known as the 20mph Panel.

The panel decide on what applications should progress to formal public consultation as part of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) making process and will consider which applications reach sufficient priority for funding.

The panel consists of the following members:

- Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment
- Cabinet Lead Member for Highways and Travel
- Transport Planning Team Leader
- Transport Planning Implementation Manager
- Road Safety Manager

5.3 Phase one relates to applications submitted before the 1 March 2023.

The panel of 27 April 2023 met to consider eight applications submitted during this period and agreed that five applications met criteria, one did not meet criteria, one required further investigative work and the other application was withdrawn to consider an alternative application for a Speed Indicator Device within the existing 30mph.

The five locations that met criteria were:

- Bridport Town Centre
- Langton Matravers
- Pimperne – *not including the A354*
- Wimborne Town Centre – *extension to the current 20mph*

- Winfrith Newburgh

After primary consultation had been conducted these applications progressed to formal public consultation.

A combined TRO for all locations was produced for the consultation to reduce costs. Consultation began on 12 October 2023 and received 319 responses. There was a **78%** majority in favour compared to those that objected with a small number of general comments.

Those supporting 20mph raised the following key themes:

- Will improve road safety.
- Will improve the environment.
- Will reduce noise.
- Will increase active travel.

An assessment of the objections noted the following main category of concerns:

- Will not be enforced.
- Will increase pollution and congestion.
- Not required, speeds already low or too few collisions.
- Money should be spent on other measures such as fixing potholes.

On 31 January 2024 the five applications received delegated powers from Cllr Bryan, Portfolio Holder, Highways, Travel and Environment, and we are now working towards delivery dates beginning in the first quarter of the 2024/25 financial year.

5.4 Phase two applications relate to those submitted between 1 March 2023 and 31 December 2023, and any carried over from phase one. The panel of 31 January 2024 met to consider 18 applications and agreed that six met criteria and these will now move forward to public consultation which we aim to hold in the second quarter of the 2024/25 financial year.

The six locations that met criteria were:

- Cheselbourne

- Child Okeford
- Milborne St Andrew – *The Causeway*
- Okeford Fitzpaine
- Winterborne Kingston
- Wimborne – *Allenview Rd / Burts Hill*

5.5 Community led applications have progressed at a pace that has been commensurate with the levels of operational demands and risks being managed by the highways service.

5.6 The phase one and two schemes together with future supported schemes will be an important addition to the thirty schemes that have previously been installed by DC.

5.7 The policy has been used to actively promote the installation of 20mph schemes, where appropriate, on future residential housing developments.

Many of the residential streets within housing developments have been designed in such a way to encourage speeds at or below 20mph in accordance with national design guidance document *Manual for Streets*, however, there is need for careful assessment given the potential for a two-tier speed limit if the road through the development used by buses remains 30mph. Having a mixed speed limit on a housing development could result in unwelcome signage denoting the different speeds with negligible change in behaviour.

Where practical, the extent of a 20mph scheme associated with a new development will include any adjoining residential areas to ensure consistency for the community.

Several new 20mph housing development schemes are progressing with Curtis Fields, Weymouth closest to delivery.

There has been interest from communities living in existing housing developments to retrospectively introduce a 20mph scheme and these will be considered through the community led application process in close liaison with the Highways Development Team.

5.8 The policy has been used to identify potential 20mph schemes as part of a highway improvement measure.

The increasing popularity of the School Streets initiative supported by the recent Active Travel England grant will enable the installation of 20mph where this would support the School Street.

Unconnected to School Streets we are progressing a 20mph scheme at a school in Weymouth where it is no longer necessary to have a School Crossing Patrol but new safety measures including a 20mph limit have been identified which will help to improve safety throughout the day.

5.9 During operational delivery it has become clear that many communities feel unsafe due to speeding, or they have a perception of speeding but are unsure as to whether they should apply for a 20mph limit or whether other measures may be more appropriate.

Options such as painted SLOW signs, the installation of a Speed Indicator Device (SID), the creation of a Community Speed Watch group or consideration of a more appropriate reduced speed limit (not 20mph) are all valid options that can be considered before moving towards a 20mph application.

These options have been further enhanced by the current DC *Please Slow Down Initiative* funded by the Police Crime Commissioner which is an ongoing trial of a new 'please slow down' sign to combat the risk of speeding within village communities. This pilot is operating within the North Dorset MP constituency boundary.

Due to this mix of safety options the Road Safety Team seeks to actively engage with communities to consider alternatives before progressing to a potential 20mph application. For example, a North Dorset village has recently pivoted towards a SID application and a Purbeck village is now seeking a 30mph limit where currently they have a National Speed Limit (60mph). Both communities had originally pursued a 20mph application.

It is pleasing to note that as intended the policy has led to an increase of interest in Community Speed Watch volunteering. These volunteers play a crucial part in road safety and last year they monitored the speeds of over half a million vehicles, with the police issuing warning letters to 12,600 motorists.

5.10 The key to implementing any successful scheme is for it to be delivered in collaboration with education, training, publicity, and enforcement for all road users.

We have developed a new *20mph Toolkit* for DC Members, Parish and Town Councils which provides tools, assets and information needed to conduct successful communication to encourage compliance once a new 20mph scheme has been implemented.

The Road Safety Team will be conducting post implementation speed surveys to establish if the new limits have reduced speeds, collision data reviews and will work closely with DC Members and Parish and Town Councils to understand the community's perception of the new limit.

6. Enforcement strategy

6.1 DC is the responsible highways authority for setting speed limits with Dorset Police (DP) being responsible for enforcement.

6.2 Every new 20mph scheme will have a supporting TRO and DP are always consulted during the making process.

6.3 The Dorset Road Safety Partnership (DRSP) which includes the Assistant Chief Constable and Police Crime Commissioner meet on a regular basis with DC. The partnership is actively developing a plan to enhance the level of speed camera enforcement for all speed limits in its drive to improve road safety and meet the aim for Vision Zero.

Last year the Assistant Chief Constable made the following statement:

'Dorset Police would support a reduction in speed limit from 30mph to 20mph where a clear evidenced based approach has been taken, to demonstrate that the measure will initiate a reduction in speed and where possible to quantify and relevant, a related drop in collisions.

It's important to note that Dorset Police will not be able to supply additional resource to monitor and enforce any proposed reduction in speed limits from 30mph to 20mph, and that operations to do so, would have to be built into existing operational capability.

As with any speed limit, Dorset Police would focus its monitoring and enforcement activity based on risk, and in line with National Police Chief Council guidelines. With 20mph limits, and specifically in line with those guidelines, Dorset Police would only enforce where there is a significant risk from continuous high speeds, i.e. a proportionate approach'.

7. Policy matrix criteria

7.1 The policy requires amongst other criteria an assessment of injury collision history and relevant damage only/near miss collision reports.

7.2 The Road Traffic Act provides a definition of a reportable road traffic collision and DfT guidance 'STATS20 manual' provides a detailed explanation of the data which must be collected by the police when a collision is reported to them. This guidance requires police forces to report personal injury road traffic collisions to local highway authorities, however, there is no requirement for non-injury collisions reported to police to be reported to local authorities.

7.3 To mitigate the above gap in reporting DC has created a non-injury reporting system in addition to an option to report near misses, however, many communities are unfamiliar with this system, it is not well used, and the limited number of reports cannot be verified. Due to the lack of verification and out of fairness none of the applications have been assessed on the non-injury/near miss criterion.

7.4 Whilst recognising that there will remain an element of under reporting by the public the DRSP has identified that most collisions reported to DP are non-injury collisions and by not reporting these to DC or BCP this creates a gap in knowledge for all partners and a risk to the wider road safety arena. Work is underway to consider how best to capture non-injury collisions that are reported to DP and a separate work strand to understand hospital data so that partners have a much better understanding of the collisions that are occurring pan-Dorset.

8. Risks

8.1 UK Government has announced that because of the Welsh Government approach to 20mph and the expansion of TFL ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zones) in London they intend to update the 20mph guidance (for England) as part of their *'The Plan for Drivers'* review.

DfT state that while 20mph schemes are an important tool in improving road safety in residential areas, over-use risks undermining public acceptance, and they are clear that 20mph should be considered on a road-by-road basis to ensure local consent, not as blanket measures.

The DC policy already considers applications on a case-by-case basis and does not have a blanket use of 20mph. It will be necessary to consider a review of the local policy once the new DfT guidance has been provided.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 DC are promoting 20mph schemes within the capital programme where they reach sufficient priority. An initial £75,000 of capital funding has been allocated for 20mph limits for this FY.

Costs associated with the five Phase One applications including signs, labour, traffic management and TRO process will be approximately £25,000.

None of the planned schemes include any physical traffic calming measures (zones) which would have significantly increased costs.

9.2 Several Town Councils are considering whole town 20mph applications, and the costs associated with delivery of these schemes would be commensurate to the geographical ambition.

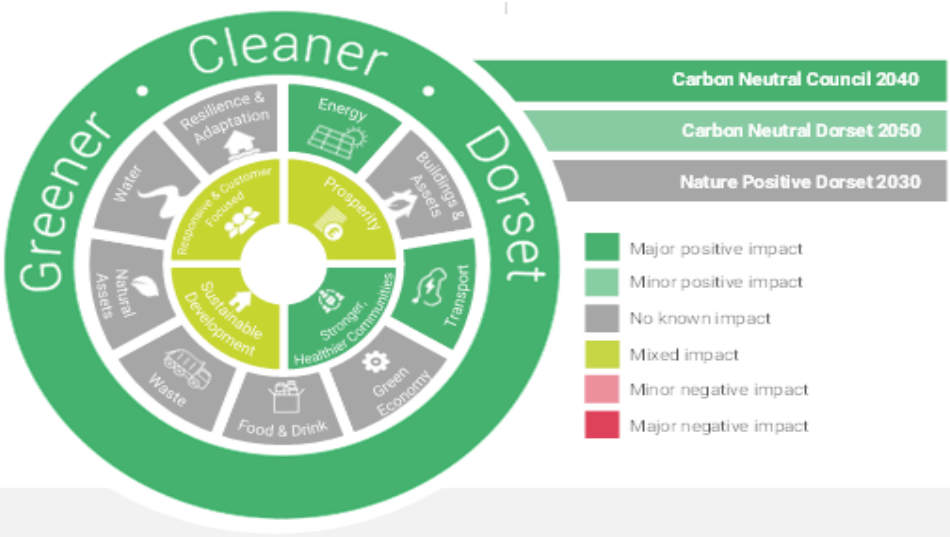
9.3 There remains an option for any large-scale schemes or more expensive 20mph zones to be considered for separate funding. They would be prioritised using the existing Local Transport Plan (LTP) prioritisation process.

9.4 Parish and Town Councils can self-fund lower priority schemes if they meet the essential criteria.

9.5 DC has received funding from Active Travel England for the delivery of School Streets. Part of these funds can be used to implement 20mph schemes associated with this work.

9.6 Costs associated with a new housing development 20mph scheme are met by the developer with no costs to DC, however, retrospective schemes on established housing developments are unlikely to be met by the developer.

10. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications



Quantitative Impact on CEE targets (if known)		
	Unit	Number of units (+/-)
2030 - Natural asset extent & condition	Ha	0
2040 - Operational Emissions	CO_2 (tonnes)	0

ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS

Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Strategy Commitments	**Impact**
Energy	**Major positive impact**
Buildings & Assets	No known impact
Transport	**Major positive impact**
Green Economy	No known impact
Food & Drink	No known impact
Waste	No known impact
Natural Assets & Ecology	No known impact
Water	No known impact
Resilience and Adaptation	No known impact

Corporate Plan Aims	**Impact**

Prosperity	Neutral
Stronger healthier communities	**Strongly supports it**
Sustainable Development & Housing	Neutral
Responsive & Customer Focused	Neutral

10.1 The climate wheel assessment did not identify any recommendations.

10.2 DC has conducted a literature review of 20mph schemes and the impact on Air Quality (AQ). The results have been varied, with contestation regarding the significance of the impact in reducing emissions. This review is contained within the background papers.

10.3 None of the current 20mph schemes are in areas subject to routine AQ monitoring and therefore to gather data it would be necessary to obtain at least 12 months baseline data while the location remained at 30mph. This delay might be unacceptable to a local community that was successful in its application for 20mph. We are engaging with the Environmental Health Team to consider options.

11. Well-being and Health Implications

11.1 The policy is aimed at maximising important benefits of 20mph schemes including quality of life and community benefits, and encouragement of healthier and more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling, wheeling and other mobility aids.

12. Equalities Impact Assessment

12.1 The policy is directly aimed at having a positive impact on vulnerable road users including children and the elderly. This starts at the application stage when Members, Parish and Town Councils are required to consider these concerns, and they will then form part of the evidence base for an application. The potential benefits to vulnerable road users are considered throughout the process.

13. Appendices

13.1 20mph toolkit.

13.2 Literature Summary Regarding 20mph Zones and Air Quality.

14. Background Papers

14.1 20mph policy 20mph Limits and Zones - Dorset Council

14.2 DfT: The plan for drivers The plan for drivers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

14.3 North Dorset signs initiative Release: Dorset PCC joins forces with Dorset Council to discourage speeding · Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner

14.4 School Streets link School Streets - Dorset Council

14.5 Dorset Road Safety Partnership Dorset Road Safe Partnership - Dorset Road Safe Partnership

14.6 DfT STATS 20 Manual STATS 20 - Instructions for the Completion of Road Accident Reports from non-CRASH Sources (publishing.service.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

20mph Toolkit

Following your successful application for a 20mph speed limit/zone, this toolkit offers some resources to help you implement your scheme.

The key to implementing any successful scheme is for it to be delivered in collaboration with education, training, publicity and enforcement for all road users.

This toolkit provides tools, assets and information needed to conduct successful communication and to encourage compliance of the 20mph scheme once implemented. Everything listed in the toolkit can be supplied to you initially, although there may be a charge if you require further copies.

A4 Posters
For noticeboards and local newsletters.

Roadside banners
These can be displayed on private land with landowner permission, as long as they are temporary signs, in car parks with the permission of the car park owner or operator, or maybe outside schools. They must not be displayed on the highway.

Images
We can supply these in JPEG format for use on website and social media channels.

Road user tips for travelling in 20mph Limits
Often, motorists complain that driving at 20mph is difficult to do, so we provide you with some tips for all road users. These can be used on your website, newsletters and verbally at engagement events. (See Appendix 1)

Social media messages
We have provided examples and imagery for you to use on your social media pages or to use on local resident pages but you may wish to tailor the text according to your area. (See Appendix 2)

See Branding and graphics (Appendix 3)

Making Dorset a great place to
Live, work and visit

How to engage with your community - ideas

Engagement events
Local community events e.g. fayres, stands in local high-street, etc.

School competitions
Engage with local schools to come up with posters, poems, songs, etc to promote the 20mph message.

Local businesses and suppliers
Particularly businesses with fleet/delivery vehicles, to promote 20mph to your drivers.

Community Speedwatch
If you have residents that would be interested in a Community Speedwatch group, please visit Community Speed Watch - Dorset Road Safe Partnership

Speedwatch is an educational alternative that is owned, managed and run by the community. It gives the local community an opportunity to assist in the reductions of speed, making it a safer place to live, work and visit. For further information please visit Community Speed Watch - Dorset Road Safe Partnership

Contact us for further information
We are keen to support communities in implementing a successful 20mph scheme. If you need any further assistance or advice please contact us by email at **roadsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk**

Terms and conditions of toolkit usage

1. Any creative assets used must not be changed or copied without prior consent from Dorset Council

2. Unless prior permission is given by the Highway Authority, no banners may be placed on the highway. Permissions can be sought by contacting Dorset Highways Highways licences and services - Dorset Council

3. As part of using the toolkit you agree to raise awareness of the 20mph messages through your own activity and engagement.

4. Dorset Council will create, own and retain all rights to the brand and set of creative assets, including key campaign messages, therefore if you require the use of assets in any other format or channel that isn't listed you must seek advice and guidance from Dorset Council.

5. You must use the campaign messages as they have been intended and set out in this toolkit.

Appendix 1

Road user tips for travelling at 20mph

We have provided below some tips that could be used on your website, in newsletters and verbally at engagement events

Pedestrians
1. Look for safer places to cross the road – pedestrian crossings, zebra crossings, pedestrian islands, footbridges and toucan crossings are safer places to cross.

2. Children learn from their parents/carers and if you have children walking independently, make sure you have taught them the Road Safety Code:

- **STOP** before the kerb
- **LOOK** for cars and other traffic
- **LISTEN** for cars and other traffic
- **THINK** at all times
- **HOLD HANDS** Younger children should hold hands with their adult (if the adult is pushing a buggy, the child can hold on to the buggy).

3. Avoid distractions. Common distractions can include mobile phones, headphones, balls, food/drink, and talking to friends.

Dorset Council offers various education programmes to primary and secondary schools; if a school is interested in your area, ask them to contact the Road Safety Team: roadsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Motorists
Get used to the sound and feel of your vehicle travelling at 20mph, so that it doesn't feel strange.

A lower gear selection for the road conditions is likely to be required, 2nd or 3rd in most will work! The engine won't burn a lot more fuel but it will help you keep to the speed limit.

Leave plenty of time for your journeys. If you're not in a hurry, you're less likely to feel under pressure to rush.

You must drive at an appropriate speed for the road conditions: 20mph might still be too fast in some areas, especially near schools during pick-up and drop-up times.

Be prepared for pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users crossing the road and at junctions.

Remember at 30mph you travel 13.5 metres every second; at 20mph you will only travel 9 metres. This provides you more space and time to be able to react and avoid collisions.

Dorset Council offers motorist education and training courses for all ages, such as:
• Life Drive courses for young drivers
• Dorset Driver Gold Courses (65+)

Cyclists

Always follow the Highway Code.

Consider wearing a cycle helmet (make sure it is fitted correctly).

On the road, position yourself where you are visible, maintain a gap from the kerb or parked cards and use clear signals.

Be bright and be seen: wear something fluorescent or bright coloured in daylight and/or reflective at night. Consider using lights even during daylight hours.

Give good clear and timely signals when you change direction at junctions or move around obstructions and look before you move.

Obey road signs, they are there for you as well as all other road users.

Take a refresher cycle training course if you do not feel confident on your bike. Training is available in Dorset for adults and children - Cycling - Dorset Council.

Power Two-Wheelers
Riding in 20mph zones, especially for long distances, can be tricky if you are on a powerful bike. Try selecting a lower gear. It will help you maintain control and the engine will feel more comfortable at the lower speed.

Maintaining smooth control of a bike at a low speed is an art, practise it somewhere safe and get used to the feel of the bike at low speed.

Dorset Police offers Bike Safe Courses for those who hold a full motorcycle licence, for further information please visit: Driver and rider training - Dorset Council

Appendix 2
Social media post ideas

Here are some examples of the messaging you may wish to use on your parish/town social media account if you have one, along with the images:

20mph limit schemes are being introduced in *insert town/parish* to help create a healthier and safer town and/or parish (delete as appropriate). The scheme is being introduced as part of plans to increase walking and cycling #SaferTravel #ActiveTravel #Walking #Cycling

20mph schemes are being launched in *insert town/parish*. Cycle training courses give people the skills and confidence to cycle more. Find out more at Cycling - Dorset Council #SaferTravel #ActiveTravel #Walking #Cycling

Work has finished on a new 20mph speed limit scheme, which aims to increase walking and cycling. Find out more about the scheme *insert link to town and/or parish website with more information* #SaferTravel #ActiveTravel #Walking #Cycling

Get used to the sound and feel of your car travelling at 20mph. Select a lower gear, 2nd or 3rd in most will work! The engine won't burn a lot more fuel but it will help you keep within the speed limit. #20 #SaferTravel

Motorists – do you know how much space you should give cyclists when passing? The minimum distance is 1.5m, this might be hard to picture so think of it as a car's width. #ActiveTravel #Cycling

Make sure you plan your journeys and give yourself enough time to get to your destination- speed is a limit not a target and sometimes that limit could be inappropriate for the surroundings, particularly near schools and town centres #Don'tTakeSpeedToTheLimit #20

Motorists – always look out for vulnerable road users, give yourself and others space and time to react to the surroundings. #SaferTravel #20

Even though you might be walking in an area with a lower speed limit you still need to stay alert. Ditch the distractions, such as mobile phones and listening to music when near the road! #Walking #20 #MotoristLookOutForPedestrians

Excess speeding can cause devastating consequences. Always drive at an appropriate speed for the conditions, sometimes this could be lower than the limit stated. #Don'tTakeSpeedToTheLimit

Do you know how to pass a horse and their rider when driving? Even though you're in a 20mph limit this is too fast to travel around them. Maximum of 15mph and plenty of room to pass – about the width of a car. We all have a role to play to keep each other safer. #20 #SaferTravel #SpeedIsALimitNotATarget

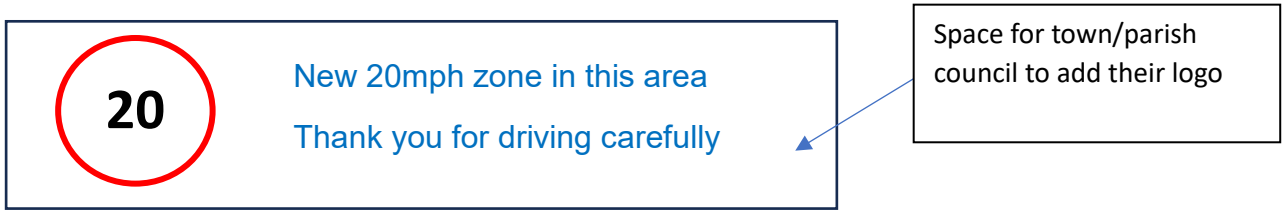
Appendix 3

Branding and artwork

We have produced banners and social media images for your use

Banners

We have a supply of roadside banners that can be booked from us. Alternatively, we can provide you with artwork for banners so you can add your logo and print via your own printer.



Social media images

Files are attached containing the following images. The are sized according to the social media platform you wish to use them on, for example Facebook, X or Instagram.

Literature Summary Regarding 20mph Zones and Air Quality

The results from research examining the impact of 20mph zones on air quality have been varied, with contestation regarding the significance of the impact in reducing emissions. However, Williams (2013) points out that it would be incorrect to assume a 20mph speed restriction would be detrimental to ambient local air quality, due to the range of effects on vehicle emissions. The volume and concentration of emissions produced is influenced by driving style, the type of emission and vehicle, road infrastructure and existing traffic management. These factors increase the complexity of quantifying the impacts of 20mph zones on air quality.

Promoting steady driving speeds can help reduce emissions. Emissions may increase in 20mph zones as vehicles use more fuel to accelerate between calming measures, for example speed humps and pedestrian crossings. However, TfL (2018) report that in 20mph zones vehicles move smoother with fewer accelerations and decelerations, thus producing no net increase in emissions. A smoother driving style can be achieved through using speed limits and average speed technology on the roadside, as well as real-time driving speed information (Vardoulakis et al., 2017).

Although some studies could not conclude whether 20mph zones had any significant impacts on air quality (Owen, 2005; Cleland et al., 2020), other studies noticed that different emission types were affected by 20mph zones. TfL (2018) produced an evidence summary regarding the impact on vehicle speed. The report highlights that petrol and diesel cars observe different changes in emission types when driving at 20mph and 30mph. Petrol cars release 8.3% less PM_{10} when driving at 20mph. However, petrol cars saw an increase of nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide emissions when driving at the lower speed. Diesel cars, on the other hand, observed a decrease in all three types of pollutants when driving at 20mph (Williams, 2013).

Additionally, local air quality depends upon the number of vehicles using a road. It is therefore possible that in some situations the amount of traffic using a particular road could be reduced following the introduction of a speed limiting scheme (Atkins 2010). 20mph zones can make pedestrians and cyclists feel safer, which can encourage more people to participate in active travel, rather than using a car for shorter journeys. This will have indirect positive effects on local air quality if there are fewer cars on the road (Jones and Brunt 2017).

Davis (2018) undertook a literature review of evidence about 20mph speed limits with regards to road safety, active travel, and air pollution impacts. They concluded that the limited literature is consistent with small improvements in air quality, but the methodological strength of research makes the evidence weak. A rapid evidence review undertaken by Atkins, AECOM, and Maher (2018) found similar conclusions to Davis (2018) and noted that exhaust emissions are difficult to quantify due to other associated factors found in 20mph zones. They stress that methodologies should be continually improved to be able to come to more significant conclusions about the impact 20mph limits have on air quality.

Overall, it is challenging to conclude the direct impacts 20mph zones have on air quality. Emissions are influenced by several factors, including driving style, engine type, and road infrastructure. However, there can be indirect impacts as more people could be encouraged to participate in active travel options, thus reducing the number of cars on the road. Future recommendations include enhancing methodologies and ensuring that existing and new 20mph zones have regular data monitoring to help assess impacts.

References:

Atkins, AECOM, Maher M. 2018. 20mph Research Study. 20mph research study: supporting technical appendix, rapid evidence review (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Atkins and Portsmouth City Council. 2010. Interim Evaluation of the Implementation of 20 mph Speed Limits in Portsmouth, Department for Transport.

Cleland, C., McComb, K., Kee, F., Jepson, R., Kelly, M., Milton, K., Nightingale, G., Kelly, P., Baker, G., Craig, N., Williams, A., Hunter, R. 2020. Effects of 20mph interventions on a range of public health outcomes: A meta-narrative evidence synthesis. Journal of Transport and Health. 17.

Davis, A. 2018. The state of evidence on 20mph speed limits with regards to road safety, active travel and air pollution impacts: a literature review of evidence. Bristol: Adrian Davis Associates.

Jones, S., Brunt, H. 2017. Twenty miles per hour speed limits: a sustainable solution to public health problems in Wales. Journal of epidemiology and Community Health. 71(7).

Owen., B. 2005. Air quality impacts of speed-restriction zones for road traffic. Science of the Total Environment. 340(1-3), pp. 13-22.

TfL. 2018. Speed, emissions, and health: The impact of vehicle speed on emissions and health: an evidence summary.

Vardoulakis., S., Kettle, R., Cosford, P., Lincoln, P., Holgate, S., Grigg, J., Kelly, F., Pencheon, D. 2017. Local action on outdoor air pollution to improve public health. International Journal of Public Health. 63. pp. 557-565.

Williams, D. 2013. An evaluation of the estimated effects on vehicle emissions of a 20mph speed restriction in central London. Transport and Environmental Analysis Group, Centre for Transport Studies, Imperial College London

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee
26 February 2024
Redlands Leisure & Community Park Update

For Review and Consultation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr L Beddow, Culture and Communities

Local Councillor(s): Cllr D Gray, Cllr H Legg, Cllr P Barrow

Executive Director: Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

Report Author: Paul Rutter
Job Title: Service Manager for Leisure, Arts and Cultural Services
Tel: 01202 228756
Email: paul.rutter@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Active Dorset took over the management of Redlands Community Sports Hub in November 2022 with an ambitious plan to improve and develop the facilities, introduce a more community led operating model, and find ways for individuals and groups to be more physically active.

Dorset Council have worked closely with Active Dorset to commission building and maintenance works to ensure that the facilities are watertight, compliant, and fit for use. Whilst some of these works have taken longer than anticipated, much progress has been made to improving the facilities and user experience.

The new key holder operating model has been well embraced by individual users, and several groups and clubs have come together which has coordinated their offers and helped to make all users feel supported.

Usage has exceeded expectations and Active Dorset continue to explore ways to support people to lead a more active lifestyle.

Although the community café and soft play area were delayed due to building issues, both are now open and have been well received by local people and users. These facilities will hopefully form an integral part of the community offer and be a valuable source of income and support further investment into the site.

Prior to taking on the lease, Active Dorset forecast a revenue budget based on data provided by Weymouth College and best assumptions. Despite having to deal with some unexpected costs, and unavoidable delays in bringing new income streams on board, they have already halved the operating deficit and, subject to further improvements, are optimistic about moving into an operating surplus from 2025/6 onwards.

Active Dorset should be congratulated for creating an environment where local people and users now want to be more engaged with the site, and this is evident with the expanding number of volunteers playing an active role in the day-to-day operations.

Recommendation:

That the committee notes and comments on the information provided in this report.

Reason for Recommendation:

On 6 September 2022, Cabinet agreed that the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee be asked to undertake a review of the arrangements at Redlands Community Sports Hub at an appropriate time. Active Dorset have been operating the site since November 2022, with 16 months a realistic time frame on which to assess progress.

1. Background

1.1 In June 2021, after prior discussions with Dorset Council portfolio holders and senior officers, Weymouth College officially announced that, due to a recurring annual deficit of around £200,000, they were no longer able to run Redlands Community Sports Hub (Redlands) and would actively seek new tenants to take over the operations of the site.

1.2 Through an Expression of Interest exercise, the College received a single formal bid from Active Dorset, a local charity with a focus on helping people to become more active. The Active Dorset proposal was only to operate the external sports facilities and they set out ambitious and exciting plans to develop Redlands into a more inclusive community park, with a café, new 3G all-weather pitches, new play facilities and routes for walking and cycling.

1.3 During this period, Dorset Council and Active Dorset representatives attended several community engagement events hosted by Weymouth

College; listening to the concerns raised about the potential loss of the indoor leisure provision. Weymouth Town Council were also engaged during this time and wanted to show their support for the retention of the indoor facilities and as a result have committed to provide an annual funding grant of £35,000 for 2023/4 and 2024/5.

1.4 On the back of this, Active Dorset brought forward a revised proposal centred around an investment plan for improving facilities, a key holder model, where community users and volunteers take on more responsibility for the site operations and an ambition to increase usage, especially from individuals and groups who are less likely to be physically active. This approach enabled the indoor facilities to remain open for use.

1.5 A lease for 30 years was granted to Active Dorset in November 2022, with a 5-year break clause that can be activated by either party if the new model of operation proves not to be viable. A 30-year lease will enable Active Dorset to have security of tenure to apply for external funding.

1.6 Under the new lease Dorset Council are responsible for effecting any essential repairs and maintenance to the fabric of the buildings and adjacent land. Monies received from Weymouth College, in consideration for accepting their surrender, will be used to offset these costs.

1.7 Active Dorset provided an 8-year income and expenditure forecast and although the site is expected to make a loss in the early years, they forecast an overall positive return of £24,000 by the end of the eight-year period.

2. Property Works

2.1 Dorset Council commissioned a condition survey which highlighted several items that were urgent for repair or below a satisfactory standard. However, it soon became apparent that many of the highlighted items needed more urgent attention as did other previously unidentified items.

2.2 Making the buildings watertight was and remains a priority. Roofing repairs have improved the café rooms and major works to the main sports halls, with the installation of an over cladding solution, are currently being carried out.

2.3 Safety and upgrade work to lighting and electrics were completed in Summer 2023. Similarly, the wooden floor in Sports Hall 2 has been refurbished. The improved lighting in both halls and the refurbished floor have been well received by users.

2.4 There have also been some drainage issues that have subsequently held up works however remedial works are in hand to address this.

2.5 There are currently more than 40 shower units fed by gas boilers. A smaller number of electrical shower units would reduce consumption and be more cost effective. The scope of these works is currently being investigated and costed.

3 General Update

3.1 Active Dorset took over the management of Redlands in November 2022, and following engagement with the local community, they renamed and rebranded the facilities as Redlands Leisure & Community Park.

3.2 A few property issues and delays have had a detrimental impact on maximising income opportunities in 2023-24. This has caused the delay in the opening of the community café and soft play area which had been identified as a key income stream for Active Dorset.

3.3 The new ‘self-service’ booking system and key code access arrangements have embedded well. Users attending sessions have adapted and are confident using online systems. The site is ‘cashless’ which has been uncontentious. A number of groups and clubs have come together which has coordinated their offers and helped greatly in ensuring all users are supported.

3.4 Financially the model of a small staff team has meant that the revenue position is already significantly closer to neutral despite the community café being delayed in opening and the 2 new 3G football pitches still to be delivered.

3.5 With greater club commitment and co-ordination and more individuals attending sessions, user numbers in the fourth quarter of 2022/23 were up on the same period in 2021-22 and this trend has continued into 2023-24. The growth in use by priority groups has been very positive with Pickleball a standout success.

3.6 Active Dorset have also sought to increase overall usage of the facilities via diversification and arrangements with the NHS and related bodies. This strategy has proved successful to date, particularly in the areas of well-being and rehabilitation.

3.7 The new Community Café opened on 08 January 2024, having been award a 5 Star Food Hygiene rating; with customers queuing to get in. The site now has over 20 volunteers, many of whom have been trained to operate the café.

3.8 The new soft play area has been installed in an adjacent room and this is proving a very positive addition and will no doubt add to the café's popularity.

3.9 Following discussions with Sports Governing bodies, all indications are that the refurbishment of the existing 3G football pitch and introduction of a new second 3G pitch, plus a new artificial cricket wicket are likely to attract grant funding. Active Dorset have commenced the application process and if a bid is successful, then construction could start in January 2025 and pitch openings around March the same year. These pitches will add significantly to revenue generation and, Active Dorset are confident that a positive financial position could be achievable from 2025-26 onwards.

3.10 There have also been some additional costs that have come to light since Active Dorset took on the management of the site. These include the requirement to spend more time and money on servicing and maintaining elements not previously identified, additional rates of £10,000 and an existing heating and hot water system that is inefficient and lacks flexibility. The additional cost of gas and electric has been exacerbated during a period of spiralling energy cost increases.

3.11 The site is already and will be significantly better than it was; watertight, welcoming and with properly lit indoor spaces. Moving forward, new 3G's pitches, an improved cricket offer, and new informal recreational opportunities will enable more users to positively engage with the site. Without doubt though the buy in by users and locals will be, and already is, the greatest driver of success. Volunteers are already engaged in helping in the café, undertaking decorating and one fantastic neighbour even walks the site with his dog each evening to make sure everything is locked properly.

4 Financial Implications

Active Dorset have experienced several property issues and challenges that have had a detrimental impact on their ability to generate income. Most notable is the delay in the opening of the community café and soft play area, which had been forecast by Active Dorset as a key source of income for 2023/4.

They have had to also incur a few unexpected costs that were previously unknown and had not been budgeted for. These include additional property rates of £10,000 and higher than anticipated energy costs.

Active Dorset had budgeted a £74,023 overspend in 2023/4 and current projections for the full 16-month period is £89,573. Dorset Council has allocated a budget of £120,431.

Given the points raised above this indicates a sound financial performance from Active Dorset. The usage trends and introduction of the community café and soft play area suggest that their budget forecasts for future years, whilst remaining challenging, are considered realistic.

5 Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

The implications and policy decisions relating to this lease were considered and implemented as part of the original Cabinet decision.

6 Well-being and Health Implications

As reflected by the Government and Sport England strategies and recognised by local authorities and Public Health England for some time, ‘sport’ is no longer delivered solely for ‘sport’s’ sake. Increasing participation in sport and physical activity and reducing levels of inactivity are key to both local and national Government achieving outcomes in public health (physical and mental), adult social care and education.

This is further reflected in the Council Plan, where a key priority is to help create strong, healthy communities. The council’s aims are to support communities to be active, to increase people’s healthy life expectancy and reduce differences between areas. Leisure facilities will play a significant role in providing opportunities for all ages to lead a more physically active lifestyle.

A recent report completed by Sheffield Hallam University reviewed the social return of investment into sport in England. It concluded that for every £1 spent on sport, £1.91 of benefits are generated in health and other related outcomes.

7 Other Implications

None

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

9 Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the 6 September Cabinet report and decision. This has been reviewed and continues to accurately reflects the opportunities for users and volunteers.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

11 Background Papers

None

12 Report Sign Off

12.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the Dorset Council style guide and also use the accessibility checker to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Use the Hemingwayapp to check the readability of your document, to do this, click the edit button on the top right of the hemminwayapp screen, paste your text and the app will highlight if there are any problem areas.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council website

Before completing this form, please refer to the supporting guidance. The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the Diversity & Inclusion Officer.

1. Initial information

Name of the policy, project, strategy, project or service being assessed:

Redlands Community Sports Hub – Lease and Management Arrangements

2. Is this a (please delete those not required):

Project

3. Is this (please delete those not required):

Both internal and external

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

The Council's decision to grant an early lease surrender from Redlands will enable Weymouth College to focus solely on their educational priorities.

Awarding a new 30-year lease to Active Dorset will enable the retention of all the leisure facilities at Redlands.

The local community have openly expressed their wish for the indoor sports provision to be retained and the proposed keyholder model will give users and volunteers the opportunity to play a more active role moving forward. This will involve groups and clubs taking responsibility for the facilities during their usage time, setting up and taking down their own equipment, and securing the building when last to leave. It will also create new opportunities for volunteering.

Active Dorset submitted an exciting business plan with a vision to create much more of a community park than a sport only space. They plan to introduce some soft landscaping and planting and an accessible hard surface loop for walking, jogging, and cycling, as well as a trim trail and informal play spaces such as a skatepark. New plans could also see the conversion of the underutilised squash courts into a modern multi-purpose studio and the creation of a new community café and children's soft play area; all of which would be designed to encourage more usage from all sectors of the community.

In terms of the formal recreational spaces, they are also keen to refurbish the existing 3G synthetic turf pitch and build an additional pitch to meet demand levels. The Dorset Football Facility Plan and Playing Pitch Strategy both identified a need for an additional full-size pitch for Weymouth and given the existing infrastructure, Redlands makes the ideal location.

Overall, this would allow for the retention and improvement of both the internal and external leisure and community facilities.

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

In June 2021, after prior discussions with Dorset Council portfolio holders and senior officers, Weymouth College officially announced that, due to financial pressures, they were no longer able to run Redlands and would actively seek new tenants to take over the operations of the site.

Through an Expression of Interest exercise, the College received a single formal bid from Active Dorset, a local charity with a focus on helping people to become more active. The

Active Dorset proposal was only to operate the external sports and set out ambitious and exciting plans to develop Redlands into a more inclusive community park.

Council representatives attended a number of community engagement events hosted by WC and Active Dorset; listening to the concerns raised about the potential loss of the indoor leisure provision.

Active Dorset have subsequently brought forward a revised proposal centred around a key holder model, where community users and volunteers take on more responsibility for the site operations. This approach would enable the retention of both sports halls and some of the ancillary spaces.

There is an identified strategic need for an additional full size 3G synthetic turf pitch at Redlands and early discussions with the Football Foundation around funding support has been positive as this is one of their priority projects.

Under the new lease DC will be responsible for effecting any necessary repairs and maintenance to the fabric of the buildings and adjacent land. Monies received from Weymouth College, in consideration for accepting their surrender, will be used to offset these costs.

facilities

Evidence gathering and engagement

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

Dorset Football Facility Plan

Dorset Playing Pitch Strategy

Dorset Built Facility Strategy

7. What did this tell you?

The strategies told us that there was an oversupply of sports hall provision in Weymouth, but an undersupply of sports pitches and 3G pitch provision.

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

Whilst the AD proposal around enhancing the external provision was positively received by many, the potential loss of the internal sports facilities raised significant unrest with users and the local community. Although the facility audit work suggested that most of this existing usage could be accommodated at other facilities within the local area, an online petition was created with nearly 4000 people voicing their concerns. Save Redlands Community Sports Hub | 38 Degrees

Even though the Council were not directly involved in the tendering process, they wanted to listen and reflect upon what the community had to say and consider any alternative proposals for the site. They were able to do this by attending a large community meeting hosted by WC and Active Dorset. They also joined discussions with local clubs and users and continued to engage with the Town Council and local ward members throughout.

On the back of this Active Dorset were able to bring forward a revised proposal that would alleviate the concerns raised by clubs, users, and the local community.

Whilst Active Dorset have a clear vision for the site, they are also keen to engage with the local community so that facility improvements will be shaped through strong community collaboration and support

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

No

Is an EQIA required?

Not every proposal will need an EqIA. The data and research should inform your decision whether to continue with this EqIA. If you decide that your proposal does not need an EqIA, please answer the following question:

N/a

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different protected characteristics.

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.

Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Positive	An enhancement of facilities for young children and families will have a positive impact within the local community.
Disability	Positive	The retention and enhancement of facilities will enable new and existing disabled users and visitors to still utilise Redlands.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	No change
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	No change
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	No change
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral	No change
Religion and belief	Neutral	No change
Sex (consider men and women)	Positive	The new 3G pitch would enable greater growth in girls/ladies' sport.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	No change
People with caring responsibilities	Neutral	No change
Rural isolation	Positive	Active Dorset have existing experience of running café that are managed solely by volunteers. This new venture will similarly develop opportunities

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		for volunteering that can help reduce isolation.
Socio-economic deprivation	Positive	Weymouth has high levels of socio-economic deprivation and health inequalities; the retention and enhancement of facilities will have a positive impact on the community. Deprivation Topic Data - Dorset Council
Armed forces communities	Neutral	No change

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

The decision to retain and enhance the community sports facilities at Redlands will be a positive outcome for a community that were concerned at losing some or all of the existing provision.

Facility developments and programmes are likely to evolve over time, however Active Dorset have recognised the importance of community engagement in helping to deliver these improvements.

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Data	To review on an annual basis the Active Dorset data relating to accessibility and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.	Paul Rutter	November 2023.

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA: Paul Rutter

Officers involved in completing the EqIA:Paul Rutter

Date of completion:05/07/22

Version Number:

EqIA review date: November 2023

Inclusion Champion Sign Off:

Equality Lead Sign Off: James Palfreman-Kay

Next Steps:

- the EqIA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqIA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqIA, to get a better understanding.
- EqIA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to Diversity and Inclusion Officer

This page is intentionally left blank

Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee

26 February 2023

Grid Capacity Review

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment

Local Councillor(s): N/A

Executive Director: A Dunn, Executive Director, Corporate Development

Report Author: Carl Warom
Title: Climate & Ecology Policy Officer
Tel: 01305 224802
Email: carl.warom@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary: Grid constraints are a drag on decarbonisation, economic growth and development. In some cases, projects that are seeking to connect to the grid are being offered connection dates as late as 2036. Consequently, it is causing costs and delays, and in some cases impairing project viability entirely. Resolving this will require working with network operators to strengthen the evidence for investment need. Moreover, significant national reform presently underway presents broader potential opportunities to strengthen how we collaborate with network operators, and to play an active role in the governance of the energy system. The report presents the findings of a Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee inquiry into the impacts, challenges and opportunities of grid constraints and the associated reforms. It presents a set of recommendations on how the council can best position itself to mitigate the risks and exploit the opportunities – with particular regard to how the network is planned, governed, invested in, reflected in our own policy and decision-making, and how we can strengthen our relationships with network operators.

Recommendation: To submit the recommendations of the Grid Capacity Task & Finish Group within Section 4 to Cabinet on the council's future approach to the strategic risks and opportunities regarding the electricity network.

Reason for Recommendation: To ensure that the council is best placed to mitigate the risks and exploit the opportunities associated with the future of the electricity grid.

1. Background

1.1. The energy crisis threw into sharp relief the challenges posed by the UK's lack of energy self-sufficiency. This strengthened national ambition to transition towards an energy system that is cleaner, more secure, and more affordable. We are consequently amid a period of major change for the UK's energy system.

1.2. Government's overarching ambition is to decarbonise electricity by 2035. Major progress has already been achieved, but there remains a considerable way to go. It is widely acknowledged, however, that traditional processes, policy and regulation are not suited to this challenge. A range of barriers are commonly highlighted, including constrained grid capacity, planning and regulatory consenting processes, energy markets, and global competition for investment to name just a few.

1.3. Discussion typically centres on renewables. Yet the future energy system requires not just cleaner ways of *generating* energy, but fundamental changes to how we *store, transport, supply* and *use* it. In particular, there is a fundamental challenge to ensure that the UK's 'creaking' grid is itself fit for purpose to accommodate new low carbon generation and storage assets – alongside the significant growth in demand for power from the electrification of heat and transport. Shortcomings in the system have already yielded a heavily constrained grid that has failed to keep pace with the pace of new generation and demand. This is yielding lengthy delays to attaining connections, and costing connecting customers and bill payers alike.

1.4. The challenge cannot be understated: grid constraints are now commonly cited as the single biggest barrier to decarbonising power. But if unaddressed its strategic significance is broader, presenting a drag not just on decarbonisation and energy security, but also on business expansion, development, investment and economic growth.[1] Solving it, however, could unleash benefits for households, communities and the economy alike.

1.1. This is not just an issue for the future. Local projects already face delays, curtailment or cancellation owing to prohibitive connection costs or grid strengthening delays – and in some cases it has impaired project viability entirely. Many local stakeholders have reported being offered connection times as late as 2036.

[1] For example, the Great South West's Green Energy Prospectus highlights the grid as a significant barrier to realising regional potential for low carbon generation.

1.2. This is thankfully now an area of significant ongoing national reform – particularly across 2022, 2023 and 2024. Government, Ofgem and industry have each begun setting out significant new policy, regulation, and processes over the last couple of years.

1.3. Consequently, this is an opportune point to subject the issue to extended scrutiny, and to examine how we can best mitigate any risks and best exploit emerging opportunities locally. Whilst much of the reform is at the national scale, there is a clear prospect for the council to play a strengthened role in influencing the emerging new energy system for the benefit of Dorset.

1.4. This report presents the findings of a Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee inquiry into the impacts, challenges and opportunities of grid constraints and associated reforms. It introduces the key terms, roles, processes, and policies necessary to understand the problems and opportunities, including:

(a) The confluence of factors – more decentralised supply, new technologies, major demand growth, and more complex balancing through wider use of flexibility tech – that are prompting the need to reform how the grid is governed, built, and managed.
(b) The programme of reform, such as on strategic planning and investment, connection queuing and charging, and electricity and flexibility markets.
(c) A set of recommendations for the council resulting from the issues outlined.

2. **Background to the review**

2.1. The Places and Resources Scrutiny Committee determined in May that a task and finish group should be established to review the issue of grid constraints and produce a set of recommendations. The overall objectives were threefold:

(a) Growing understanding and awareness of the issues to enable better engagement and advocacy.
(b) Gathering further evidence from key stakeholders on the local impacts and possible solutions.
(c) Strengthening links with network operators and forming a wider view on how the council could best mitigate the risks and exploit the opportunities for Dorset.

2.2. The review was specifically focused on electricity grid constraints. There are of course a much wider set of related energy system issues such as regards the deployment of renewables and storage assets, the deployment of low carbon technologies like EV chargers and heat pumps, electricity suppliers and bills, gas networks, and hydrogen – but full examination of these wider matters was outside of the scope of the review, except where they had relevance to grid constraints specifically.[2]

2.3. The inquiry was structured into five sessions which took place from October 2023 to January 2024, and was timed to coincide with the expected announcement of major national reforms from Government and Ofgem.

2.4. The task and finish group was Chaired by Cllr Shane Bartlett, and also comprised Cllr Andy Canning, the late Cllr Tony Ferrari, Cllr Brian Heatley, Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Robin Legg, Cllr David Tooke, and Cllr Kate Wheller. The group was supported by the Sustainability Team, the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability, and the Corporate Director for Economic Growth and Infrastructure.

2.5. The five sessions comprised:

1. **Session 1:** A background introductory briefing on key terms, roles, and processes.
2. **Session 2:** Evidence from council officers on the impact of constraints on council programmes.
3. **Session 3:** Evidence from local stakeholders on the impact of constraints in Dorset beyond the council.
4. **Session 4:** Evidence from grid stakeholders.
5. **Session 5:** Review of findings and recommendations

Those sessions were complemented by desktop research on the reform programme that emerged during the process.

2.6. Through the sessions the group heard evidence from a wide range of participants, including council officers from our sustainability, estates, planning and transport teams; Dorset Council's Cabinet; and externally from Regen and the South West Net Zero Hub; large and small scale renewables developers; retrofitters; EV chargepoint installers; public sector partners; community energy initiatives; high energy-using businesses; economic development representatives; housing developers

[2] Many of the opportunities noted for closer collaboration with electricity network operators pertain equally to gas networks, and there are considerable and distinct issues pertaining to the future of the gas network's role (such as in respect of hydrogen) that merit exploration. Many of the reforms and opportunities noted below (such as strategic planning, the new Future System Operator, and new sub-national governance) are 'cross-vector' initiatives that regard both electricity and gas.

and housing associations; and network operators. The inquiry is extremely grateful to all the participants for their time and insights.

3. Key findings

3.1. As noted above, the fundamental issue is one of constrained capacity and consequent delays and costs for connecting new assets. As well as acting as a drag on projects requiring connections and associated investments, it thereby increases the costs of the energy transition.

3.2. Throughout our sessions we heard from a wide range of local stakeholders who identified the contours of these challenges and their impacts – as well as recommending how the council might play a role in resolving them. They told us of many major and minor renewables, EV charger and building retrofit projects they had underway, many of which were running into capacity issues. Some of the key themes noted by stakeholders included:

Issues:

- Extreme delays to 2036 for connection times owing to transmission-level constraints.
- A very lengthy queue for connections, and its congestion with often speculative and unviable projects.
- More strategic projects often being stuck behind less strategic projects in the queue, owing to non-discrimination requirements in the process.
- Delays arising from non-infrastructural factors like wayleaves.
- Customer service issues for connecting customers, such as long waits for quotes or the inefficiency of having to manage non-standardised processes that vary across different network operators.
- Barriers to connecting due to inadequacies how the anticipated impacts of new connections are modelled overestimating risk, particularly for battery storage, and solar PV outside of summer peak periods.
- Requests for significant deposits (e.g. £200k) even for projects that have been given 10-12yr connection dates.
- Lack of upfront clarity about network infrastructure's precise location of condition, with the risk that further significant challenges can emerge once detailed feasibility work for individual connections is undertaken.
- Limited awareness by connecting customers on the extent of competitive demand for individual connections, and thereby of the likelihood of attaining one without incurring significant costs – to inform earlier customer decision-making about siting and the worthiness of sinking resource into an application.

Impacts:

- Reinforcement costs and delays threatening the timeliness or viability of projects – including risks to renewable deployment, business expansion and development.[3,4]
- Significant project cost uncertainties owing to connection costs tending to increase substantially if requoted (sometimes by tens or hundreds of thousands).
- Delayed or deterred investment, particularly in renewable generation.[5]
- Constraints to business growth potential or to the siting and relocation of high-energy using industries.
- Impediments to plant electrification to decarbonise high-energy industry.
- Limits on export rates for renewable generation impairing their income generation potential.
- Systemic incentives to install smaller capacity assets (under 'connect and notify' rules) in order to avoid the risk of connection delays.
- Missed opportunities to install heat pumps when boilers need replacing due to the risk of connection delays (during which period the building would lack heating or hot water), with the result that new gas boilers are instead locked in for the duration of their lifetime.
- Knock-on strategic economic risks, such as for investment in renewables, or to the tourism economy through impediments to EV charger provision or shore power/cruise electrification.
- Risks of exacerbating rural/urban disparities.

Solutions:

- Better evidencing the local need for network investment.
- Forging stronger strategic and collaborative relationships with network operators.
- Supporting better strategic planning of the network at a regional and local scale, to better fit local knowledge and ambition on net zero, development and economic growth.
- Lobbying on key constraints (e.g. Mannington GSP) to aim to expedite upgrades.

[3] And, relatedly, the holistic consideration of grid constraints within government's conception of sustainable development and determination of housebuilding targets.
[4] One participant noted a precedent of one local authority undertaking strategic investment in the grid themselves directly, to mitigate prohibitive costs impairing development in a locality.
[5] One participant told us that they have 10 projects totalling 30MW and £20m+ of investment stalled.

- Enabling wider use of constraint mitigation measures, including flexibility measures and energy storage, microgrids[6], alternative low carbon heat sources like geothermal, energy efficiency measures, and renewable colocation.
- Working cross-boundary and at a regional scale to make the case for investment.
- Better embedding the issue within local policy framework and decision-making, particularly planning.
- Exploring the opportunities for innovation projects and of Ofgem innovation funding.

3.3. Further discussion and analysis found that much of the underlying cause of these issues lies in the following:

- A lack of strategic anticipatory investment – Until recently, grid development has only occurred piecemeal and reactively in response to demand (rather than in anticipation of it), and there has been a lack of strategic planning and coordination of energy generation infrastructure deployment with grid upgrades. This owed to the traditional regulatory framework lacking mechanisms to facilitate strategic investment ahead of need.
- A lack of strategic network planning – The lack of a mechanism for anticipatory investment in part owed to the lack of strategic network planning which could inform decisions on what to build, where and when. Long-term network planning will be crucial to alleviate constraints and inform consenting and investment decisions that will support the deployment of grid infrastructure, renewable generation and electricity storage assets.
- Inadequate connection queue processes – The queue for connecting to the grid nationally has grown considerably over recent years to almost 400GW worth projects. Connection date offers are 5yrs later than the requested date on average, whilst 40% of projects are offered dates of 2030 or beyond (with some as late as 2036 or 2037). This impairs the allocation of capacity and decision-making on network upgrades, it can drive up costs, and it disincentivises investment in new generation or storage infrastructure.
- Poor coordination and sub-national governance – Some delays and inefficiencies derive from inconsistency in planning and delivery across institutions and across vectors (gas and electric), resulting in further inefficiencies and delays. This means that there's a patchwork of plans

[6] The inquiry heard from the example of the Hazelmead development in Bridport – a site of 54 houses in a grid constrained area with a microgrid. Funded by Low Carbon Dorset and Bristol Energy Cooperative, the project uses a private wire network including a 1.6MW community battery that mitigates the need for grid reinforcement by limiting peak demand from the development.

which make inconsistent forecasts, as well as little accountability and inconsistent engagement with local authorities.

- Poor infrastructure build times – Grid infrastructure development which qualifies as 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' (NSIP) has been subject to consenting delays that have played a role in delaying infrastructure build times – and thereby aggravated the wait times for consents dependent upon them. These challenges have been highlighted by both the National Infrastructure Commission and government's Electricity Networks Commissioner.
- Nascent flexibility markets – Upgrading grid infrastructure is only one half of the job of efficiently managing grid capacity. Just as important is enabling flexibility services like energy storage and demand side response measures where consumers are incentivised to shift their demand to other times. Smart and flexible systems will cut the need for new grid infrastructure, particularly regional flexibility markets, and enable more efficient use of available capacity. But these markets are still currently very immature.

3.4. The above challenges are very much recognised by Government, Ofgem and industry – and they have therefore prompted a programme of significant but complex policy and regulatory reform, much of which was released during the course of the review. This reform is therefore very recent and still emerging. It is thereby still being implemented and embedded, but there appears to be clear enthusiasm from Government, the regulator and network operators alike to resolve the systems challenges through these actions. They do present clear opportunities for Dorset.

4. Implications and recommendations

4.1. Dorset Council will continue to play a central role in the delivery of net zero locally – including through the leadership, policy frameworks, planning and investment required to support the deployment of low carbon technologies.

4.2. Alongside our role as a Local Planning Authority and Local Transport Authority, this means that we have a critical strategic interest in the future evolution of the energy system. Yet, unlike with transport and development – systems which are critically dependent upon the energy system – we currently play a much more peripheral role in strategically planning the local energy system.

4.3. Energy infrastructure needs to be seen through the same lens as other strategic infrastructure, with investment better aligned to local knowledge, ambition and decision-making. Our ambitions for net zero, development and economic growth will therefore require us to play a much more central role in local energy planning in the future – and strengthening our collaboration with energy networks will be essential for this. In so doing, we will be able to both better facilitate network investment aligned to our strategic ambitions; and maintain more efficient and collaborative operational relationships with network operators to smooth delivery.

4.4. There is clear intent from network operators to further strengthen relationships with local authorities so that we can better collaborate, innovate, and develop capacity and capability. Our relationships will no doubt evolve as we reflect on our ways of working and develop new forms of good practice. Our trialling of SSEN's LENZA tool[7] is a strong demonstrator of the willingness and opportunity for closer collaboration.

4.5. It is essential that we strengthen our relationships with network operators. Whilst we already provide some data to inform their forecasting, and whilst there are good operational links with projects like our public EV charger programme – there is also much opportunity to strengthen our links in other areas. In particular, we must establish better two-way flows of information with network operators through regular, iterative, long-term engagement. Stronger, ongoing relationships are needed in each of the following respects:

- Strategic: Co-developing policy or strategies in well-established areas (e.g. planning, transport, housing, economic growth, net zero); strengthening our input into their forecasting work; developing new strategic local or regional energy plans; providing regular opportunity for strategic conversations about barriers or opportunities; and collaborating to co-develop innovation projects to unlock innovation funding through Ofgem's Strategic Innovation Fund and UKRI.
- Operational: The planning and delivery of low carbon technology deployment projects (e.g. EV chargers, building retrofit) and development – including on barriers to approvals or consents; and strengthening support for vulnerable residents (e.g. on access to flexibility opportunities etc.).

[7] SSEN Distribution trains first councils to use new LENZA planning tool - SSEN

This review therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. **Establish regular quarterly strategic meetings with network operators**, to address strategic challenges and identify areas for collaboration or innovation. This should clarify single points of contact to coordinate meetings, facilitate data sharing, seeking or provide feedback on our respective plans, and identifying joint skills or comms opportunities. This may include brokering or facilitating strategic meetings between network operators and key local stakeholder groups like developers.

2. **Seize the opportunity of Regional Energy System Planners** by proactively engaging now to influence their design and implementation, and by reflecting on how we can most effectively give voice to local stakeholders. Also seek clarity from Ofgem on our potential participation in the SW (Peninsula) RESP.

3. **Strengthen the evidence on local investment need** to support our network operators' case for investment, by continuing to pursue a cost-effective route to Local Area Energy Planning – building on the strong opportunities of the LENZA trial and co-developing a dynamic plan that is useful for network operators.

4. **Ensure that grid constraints and constraint mitigation measures are embedded in our strategies, policy and decision-making**, by better utilising emerging data and tools to inform our strategies/plans, decision-making, and delivery programme design – in particular, to engage network operators on our emerging plans and using the LENZA tool to inform discussions.[8] This should also consider any wider but linked socio-economic risks or opportunities, such as from flexibility markets.

5. **Explore the opportunities of Ofgem's Strategic Innovation Fund[9] and our devolution asks** to actively develop, trial and deliver new processes, tools and approaches with network operators – particularly for flexibility.

6. **Lobby our MPs, government, Ofgem and network operators** on key grid issues such as expediting critical transmission infrastructure upgrades, queue prioritisation, and customer service improvements.

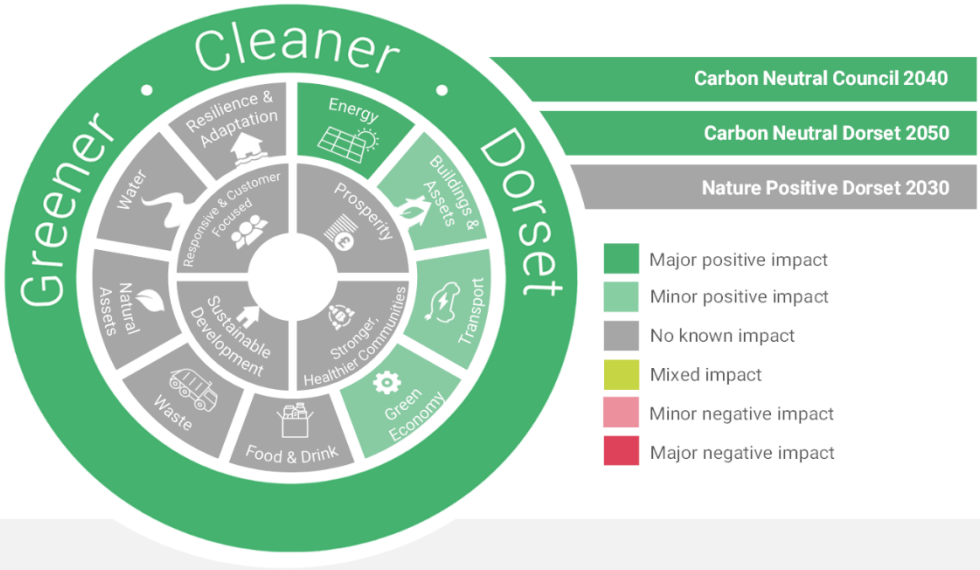
[8] Network operators are making available key datasets, analysis and tools on things like capacity and constraints, technology uptake forecasts, and customer vulnerability. There is a strong opportunity to better embed the insight within these into our plans and operations, including through wider use and application of: Emerging tools like SSE's Local Energy Net Zero Accelerator (LENZA) and UKPN's Your Local Net Zero Hub; datasets available through SSEN's Data Portal and NGED's Connected Data Portal, as well as the ESO's data portal; and Mapping, including SSEN's network maps, and NGED's network maps.

[9] https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-policy-and-regulation/policy-and-regulatory-programmes/network-price-controls-2021-2028-riio-2/network-price-controls-2021-2028-riio-2-riio-2-network-innovation-funding/strategic-innovation-fund-sif

5. Financial Implications

5.1. This report in itself has no financial implications, as it constitutes a set of recommendations to Cabinet. If agreed upon and actioned, there would be resource implications. Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6 constitute actions which would require officer time, though it is believed that these could be facilitated through existing roles – particularly a forthcoming energy policy role due to be appointed to the Sustainability Team. Recommendation 3 would potentially be more costly as it would involve the creation of a new strategy. The costs to undertake this are being scoped, with some existing examples having cost c.£100,000. Accordingly, as the recommendation states, a cost-effective approach is recommended that builds upon the existing availability of a digital geospatial mapping tool paired with collaborative approaches to engagement. As the report notes, it is recommended that the costs of such would be justifiable given the potential cost savings and strategic significance of the challenge – and its direct link to evidencing the case to secure local investment.

6. Environmental Implications



Quantitative Impact on CEE targets (if known)		
	Unit	Number of units (+/-)
2030 - Natural asset extent & condition	Ha	0
2040 - Operational Emissions	CO_2 (tonnes)	0
2050 - County Emissions	CO_2 (tonnes)	0

Summary of Impacts
As this report notes, grid constraints are currently a major barrier to decarbonisation – and, therefore, strengthening the system of strategic planning, investment and governance for the grid is critical for achieving net zero. Implementing these recommendations is therefore a fundamental and direct enabler for local efforts to decarbonise power, and thereby (indirectly) the decarbonisation (through electrification) of buildings and transport. Moreover, it thereby has potential to spur the green economic opportunities associated with the deployment of energy infrastructure and the electrification of transport and heating. The contents of this report and its recommendations thereby directly support the council's Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy ambitions for a Carbon Neutral Council by 2040 and a Carbon Neutral County by 2050 – notably Mission 1, Objective 4 (Influence strategic energy planning for a locally efficient and responsive grid).

Recommendations	Responses
Energy	Unlocking grid capacity will have a positive impact on energy infrastructure, by helping to unlock capacity to support the cleaner forms of generation.
No recommendations found for this category	
Buildings & Assets	Unlocking grid capacity will support the decarbonisation of buildings, particularly for onsite generation and heat electrification.
No recommendations found for this category	
Transport	Unlocking grid capacity with support the decarbonisation of transport through enabling provision for EV chargers.
No recommendations found for this category	
Green Economy	Unlocking grid capacity will have a positive impact upon the provision of green investment, jobs and skills within the energy sector most directly, and within building retrofit and transport electrification sectors indirectly.
No recommendations found for this category	
Food & Drink	n/a
No recommendations found for this category	
Waste	n/a
No recommendations found for this category	
Natural Assets & Ecology	n/a
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	n/a
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	This report did not evaluate resilience in its scope, however strengthened relationships with network stakeholders would also enable means for strategic discussion on network resilience and adaptation measures.
No recommendations found for this category	

7. Well-being and Health Implications

7.1. There are no specific health and wellbeing implications of this report. Indirectly, grid decarbonisation would have health and wellbeing benefits issuing from transport and heat electrification, requisite building energy efficiency improvements, and action to advert climate change.

8. Other Implications

8.1. There are no other specific implications contained in this report.

9. Risk Assessment

9.1. HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: High
Residual Risk: Medium
Failing to ensure sufficient grid capacity would present a significant barrier to the council's net zero ambitions for itself and Dorset. As noted in the report, it is also likely that it would act as an increasingly significant drag on investment, business expansion, economic growth and development.

10. Equalities Impact Assessment

An initial scoping exercise is currently being undertaken to highlight any specific impacts that need to be considered regarding the grid.

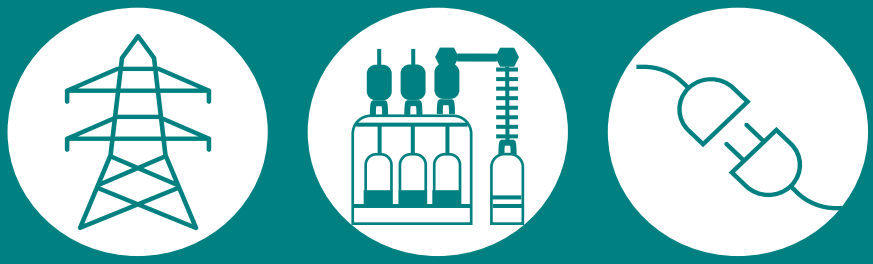
11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Grid Capacity Review – A final report of the Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group inquiry, Jan 2024

12. Background Papers

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – Appendix: Grid Capacity review summary (25 May 2023, Agenda Item 7)

This page is intentionally left blank



Grid Capacity Review

A final report of the Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group inquiry

January 2024

Dorset Council

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. The energy crisis threw into sharp relief the challenges posed by the UK's lack of energy self-sufficiency. This strengthened national ambition to transition from volatile and costly fossil fuel imports towards an energy system that is cleaner, more secure, and more affordable. We are consequently amid a period of major change for the UK's energy system.

1.2. Government's overarching ambition is to decarbonise electricity by 2035.[1] Major progress has already been achieved, but there remains a considerable way to go.[2] It will require deployment and delivery of energy infrastructure at an unprecedented pace and scale.[3]

1.3. It is widely acknowledged, however, that traditional processes, policy and regulation are not suited to this challenge. A range of barriers are commonly highlighted, including constrained grid capacity, planning and regulatory consenting processes, energy markets, and global competition for investment to name just a few.[4]

1.4. Discussion typically centres on renewables. Yet the future energy system requires not just cleaner ways of *generating* energy, but fundamental changes to how we *store, transport, supply* and *use* it.

1.5. In particular, there is a fundamental challenge to ensure that the UK's 'creaking' grid is itself fit for purpose to accommodate new low carbon generation and storage assets – alongside the significant growth in demand for power from the electrification of heat and transport. Shortcomings in the system have already yielded a heavily constrained grid that has failed to keep pace with the pace of new generation and demand. This is yielding lengthy delays to attaining connections, and costing connecting customers and bill payers alike.

1.6. The challenge cannot be understated: grid constraints are now commonly cited as the single biggest barrier to decarbonising power. But if unaddressed its strategic significance is broader, presenting a drag not just on decarbonisation and energy security, but also on business expansion, development, investment and economic growth.[5] Solving it, however, could unleash benefits for households, communities and the economy alike.

1.7. This is not just an issue for the future. Local projects already face delays, curtailment or cancellation owing to prohibitive connection costs or grid strengthening delays –

[1] The target was first set in Government's 2021 Net Zero Strategy, and has since been reiterated in strategy and policy throughout 2022 and 2023 as outlined below. The target is subject to a 'security of supply' caveat, which government has not defined or specified. Assessing success in meeting the 2035 target will require government to specify this and the residual emissions it is willing to accept from 2035.
[2] Greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation are around 12% of UK emissions; and they fell by 69% from 2010-21 mainly due to the shift from coal. However, they remain 'substantially above' the trajectory of government's Net Zero Strategy according to the Committee on Climate Change.
[3] To illustrate, meeting the national target of 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030 requires installing 4-5x more transmission infrastructure this decade than has been built over the last 30yrs in England and Wales.
[4] See the illustrative conclusions of the January 2023 Independent Review of Net Zero, the March 2023 report of the Climate Change Committee, and the April 2023 BEIS Select Committee Inquiry.
[5] For example, the Great South West's Green Energy Prospectus highlights the grid as a significant barrier to realising regional potential for low carbon generation.

and in some cases it has impaired project viability entirely.[6] Many local stakeholders have reported being offered connection times as late as 2036.

1.8. As this report outlines, however, this is thankfully now an area of significant ongoing national reform – particularly across 2022, 2023 and 2024. Government, Ofgem and industry have each begun setting out significant new policy, regulation, and processes over the last couple of years.

1.9. Consequently, this is an opportune point to subject the issue to extended scrutiny, and to examine how we can best mitigate any risks and best exploit emerging opportunities locally. Whilst much of the reform is at the national scale, there is a clear prospect for the council to play a strengthened role in influencing the emerging new energy system for the benefit of Dorset.

1.10. This report presents the findings of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee inquiry into the impacts, challenges and opportunities of grid constraints and associated reforms. It introduces the key terms, roles, processes, and policies necessary to understand the problems and opportunities, including:

(a) The confluence of factors – more decentralised supply, new technologies, major demand growth, and more complex balancing through wider use of flexibility tech – that are prompting the need to reform how the grid is governed, built, and managed.
(b) The programme of reform, such as on strategic planning and investment, connection queuing and charging, and electricity and flexibility markets.
(c) A set of recommendations for the council resulting from the issues outlined.

1.11. The following report is written both to record the findings and recommendations of the review, but also to serve as a primer on the issues in recognition of the technical and likely unfamiliar nature of the subject matter.

2. Background to the review

2.1. The Places and Resources Scrutiny Committee determined in May that a task and finish group should be established to review the issue of grid constraints and produce a set of recommendations. The overall objectives were threefold:

(a) Growing understanding and awareness of the issues to enable better engagement and advocacy.
(b) Gathering further evidence from key stakeholders on the local impacts and possible solutions.
(c) Strengthening links with network operators and forming a wider view on how the council could best mitigate the risks and exploit the opportunities for Dorset.

2.2. The review was specifically focused on electricity grid constraints. There are of course a much wider set of related energy system issues such as regards the deployment of renewables and storage assets, the deployment of low carbon technologies like EV chargers and heat pumps, electricity suppliers and bills, gas networks, and hydrogen – but full examination of these wider matters was outside of

[6] Some of the council's own decarbonisation projects have been impacted by constraints, with some facing delays to connections of 6 months-3yrs or longer, or some rendered unviable due to associated grid costs. Whilst these haven't necessarily resulted in financial costs, they have delayed potential carbon savings compared to if these low carbon technologies had been able to connect sooner.

the scope of the review, except where they had relevance to grid constraints specifically.

2.3. The inquiry was structured into five sessions which took place in from October 2023 to January 2024, and was timed to coincide with the expected announcement of major national reforms from Government and Ofgem.

2.4. The task and finish group was Chaired by Cllr Shane Bartlett, and also comprised Cllr Andy Canning, the late Cllr Tony Ferrari, Cllr Brian Heatley, Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Robin Legg, Cllr Robin Tooke, and Cllr Kate Wheller. The group was supported by the Sustainability Team, the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability, and the Corporate Director Economic Growth and Infrastructure.

2.5. The five sessions comprised:

1. **Session 1:** A background introductory briefing on key terms, roles, and processes.
2. **Session 2:** Evidence from council officers on the impact of constraints on council programmes.
3. **Session 3:** Evidence from local stakeholders on the impact of constraints in Dorset beyond the council.
4. **Session 4:** Evidence from grid stakeholders.
5. **Session 5:** Review of findings and recommendations

Those sessions were complemented by desktop research on the reform programme that emerged during the process.

2.6. Through the sessions the group heard evidence from a wide range of participants, including council officers from our sustainability, estates, planning and transport teams; Dorset Council's Cabinet; and externally from Regen and the South West Net Zero Hub; large and small scale renewables developers; retrofitters; EV chargepoint installers; public sector partners; community energy initiatives; high energy-using businesses; economic development representatives; housing developers and housing associations; and network operators. The inquiry is extremely grateful to all the participants for their time and insights.

3. What is the grid?

3.1. The electricity grid is the network of infrastructure responsible for carrying power from where it's generated to the point of consumption by a home or business. It comprises a system of overhead lines, underground cables and substations.

3.2. Most electricity has traditionally been generated at large power plants and generators, which was then transmitted and distributed via the grid to where it is consumed or stored.

3.3. There are two types of network which make up the two halves of the grid:

- *The transmission network* is the high voltage network that carries energy long distances from major large-scale generators to local area substations. Nationally this includes around 18,000km of cabling and a network of substations and other transmission assets which are owned, built, and maintained by the *Transmission Owner*.

- *Distribution networks* are the lower voltage networks that then carries electricity for the final part of its journey to homes or businesses. Nationally this includes around 800,000km of cabling and a network of substations and other transmission assets which are owned, built, and maintained by *Distribution Network Operators*.

3.4. The transmission network is akin to the network of motorways (high speed, long-distance), whilst the distribution is akin to network local highways (lower speed, shorter-distance). The two are bridged by grid supply points, which convert high-voltage electricity from the transmission network to a lower voltage so that it can be safely distributed to end users.

3.5. Power is stepped down from high to low voltage in multiple stages through different kinds of substation on its journey to homes and businesses:

- Grid Supply Points convert to 132Kv
- Bulk Supply Points convert to 66kV or 33kV
- Primary Substations convert to 11kV
- Distribution Substations convert to 400 or 230 volts, for use by household electrical devices.

3.6. There are physical limits to the amount of power that can be transmitted or distributed through a given piece of infrastructure – limits which are set to ensure that the equipment doesn't overheat or become overloaded. As equipment approaches its safe capacity, it is considered 'constrained' – meaning that it can start to act as a bottleneck in the network. This doesn't necessarily mean that it's at full capacity, and it may be unproblematic for some projects – but it can start to limit what it is possible to connect.[7] Resolving this problem may prompt 'reinforcement' works that expand the asset's capacity.

3.7. Building and maintaining the grid can involve a wide mix of activities, such as designing assets or extensions, cable or substation installation, cable jointing, trench digging, excavation and duct installation, and landowner negotiations.

3.8. The main operational stakeholders responsible for undertaking this work of building, owning, operating, and maintaining the grid are:

- The **Transmission Owner (TO)**, which builds, owns and maintains the national transmission network. That role is fulfilled by *National Grid Electricity Transmission* (NGET).
- The **Energy System Operator (ESO)**, which manages and plans the supply and demand balance on the network to ensure that it is stable and secure. In England that role is fulfilled by *National Grid ESO* (a separate company from NGET).
- **Distribution Network Operators (DNOs)** which build, own, maintain and operate the distribution network in 14 geographical areas throughout Great Britain. There are 6 DNOs nationally.

[7] Additionally, in some cases where power can't be transported where it needs to, some renewable generators distant from sources of demand may even be paid to generate less – resulting in 'constraint costs' for the network.

- **Independent Distribution Network Operators (IDNOs)**, which can build, own, maintain and operate local networks for new developments anywhere, in competition with DNOs.[8]
- **Independent Connection Providers (ICPs)**, which are accredited companies that can build networks by undertaking specific 'contestable' works[9] on behalf of a DNO or IDNO.
- The **Energy Networks Association (ENA)**, an industry body representing network operators and providing a platform to collaborate on reform, co-development and alignment of new processes and products.[10]

3.9. This system is governed by government and the regulator:

- The **Department for Energy Security and Net Zero** sets the policy and legislative framework.
- **Ofgem** sets the common regulatory framework and monitors compliance of all those listed above. This means that it determines licenses for those companies, and sets incentives, duties and penalties – as well as being responsible for dispute resolution (e.g. between network operators and connecting customers). It also sets the 'price control' framework which determines how much companies can charge customers, and thereby the amount available for grid investment.

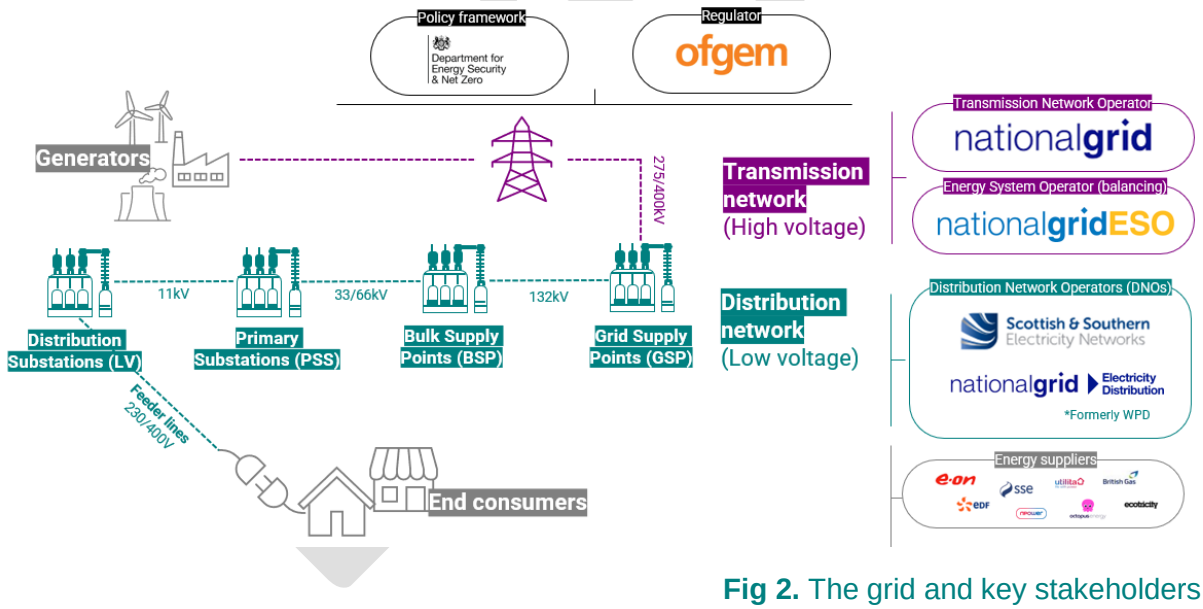


Fig 2. The grid and key stakeholders

3.10. National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) builds, owns and maintains the transmission network nationally, including the transmission infrastructure that serves Dorset directly. Dorset overlaps two DNO areas: the Southern area licensed to Southern and Scottish Energy Network (SSEN), and the South Western area licensed by National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED)[11]. Those license areas extend far beyond Dorset (SSEN's, for instance, covers 53 local authorities). Most of

[8] IDNOs have the same obligations for service performance standards as DNOs, but Ofgem regulates what they can charge through a distinct 'Relative Price Control' framework.
[9] Contestable works include things like cable or substation installation. Non-contestable works cannot be undertaken by ICPs, and typically concerns elements that directly interface with the DNO's network.
[10] The ENA's Whole System Strategy Group is working on means to strengthen collaboration between network operators and local authorities.
[11] Formerly WPD.

Dorset's local distribution network falls within SSEN's area, except for a small area in West Dorset managed by NGED.

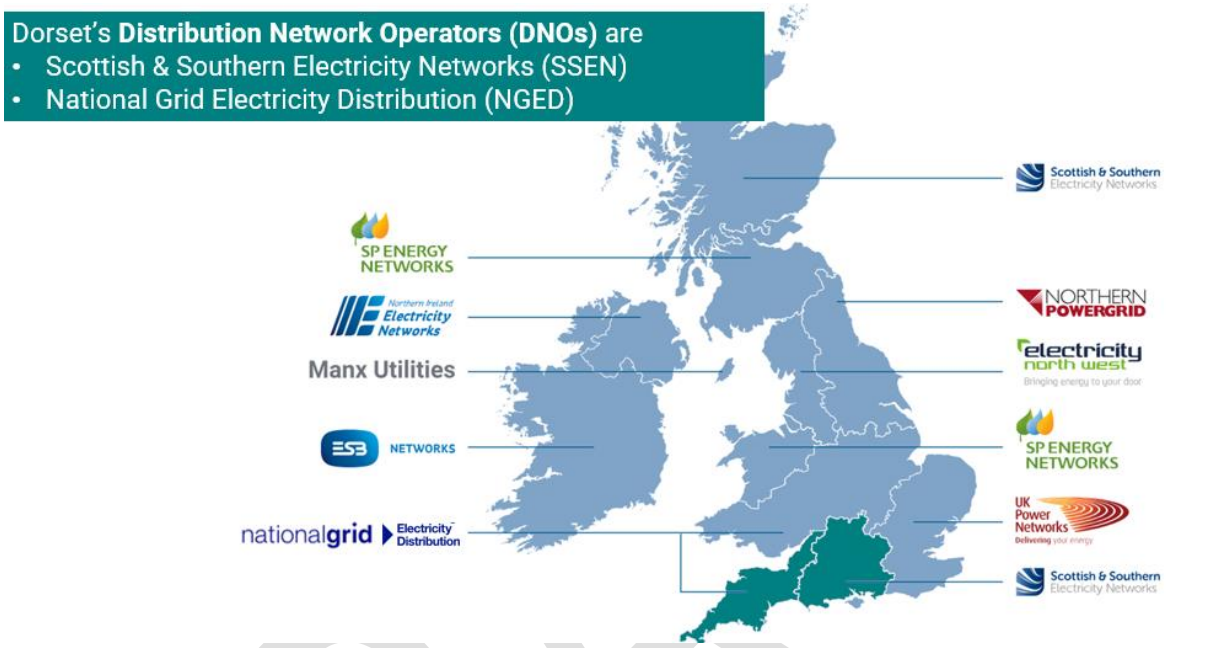


Fig 1. DNOs in the UK and Ireland

3.11. Network operators are not electricity suppliers. Suppliers are distinct companies which buy electricity from the wholesale market and sell it onto consumers, so are effectively an intermediary between consumers and the grid.[12] Whilst network costs are paid by all consumers through electricity bills (as outlined below), most consumers do not interact with network operators directly.

3.12. Direct interaction with network operators is typically undertaken only by those customers seeking to obtain a new connection to the grid, such as for renewables, a new development or to install an EV charger. Not all connections require an application in advance, only those over a certain threshold – as smaller assets can connect under 'connect and notify' rules that only require the network operator to be notified once they are installed. Connections agreements can be sought for both new generation or demand assets; and they are made with the network operator, who sets out the details of the connection, charges[13] and terms & conditions.[14]

3.13. Whilst most new connections don't presently do so, connection requests may also require (or 'trigger') an upgrade or 'reinforcement' to be made to the network to

[12] Suppliers forecast what customers electricity needs are and buy an expected amount from the electricity wholesale market. Discrepancies between those forecasts and actual demand are managed by National Grid's balancing services.

[13] Charges are usually based upon the costs associated with providing capacity at least capital cost, but alternative designs can be sought by the customer if they pay the additional cost. The charges typically comprise cost of the asset that will be used solely by the customer, some reinforcement costs (if required), proportional to the capacity expected to be used by the customer, and a rebate if the connection uses assets installed and paid for by a previous connection (the 'second-comer rule). The charges exclude any costs recovered by use of system charges.

[14] Agreements are usually only required when the connection involves demand of ≥50kVA, supply of ≥30kW, or connection at High Voltage or greater. Normally this isn't required for individual domestic premises. For examples see: EHV Generation Connection Agreement and Low Voltage Connection Agreement.

ensure that there is adequate capacity for the new connection. Reinforcement costs can be significant; but vary project to project and are contingent on factors like the size of the connection, its location, and its distance from the existing network. Generally, therefore, areas with spare capacity are quicker and cheaper to connect to. A connection offer will usually be made if one is sought, but the issue for connecting customers is whether it is viable to do so given any attendant delays or costs.

3.14. Ofgem regulates connections pricing and service quality through license conditions and its quality of service guaranteed standards.[15] When a new connection is sought, the network operator must[16] offer to do so at some price – and the initial request for the offer has no upfront charge. DNO licenses set conditions for the handling of connection requests.

4. How the is grid changing?

4.1. The scale and significance of constraints is growing due to changes in what is required of the grid. To decarbonise power and electrify transport and heat, new sources of supply, storage and demand will need to be connected to the grid, and the existing network will need upgrading to absorb the increase in power flow. There are three central dimensions of change: decentralisation, demand growth and flexibility.

Decentralisation:

4.2. Traditionally power generation has occurred remotely from large settlements, and the grid was designed for electricity to flow one way from a centralised source through a top-down system.

4.3. But increasingly generation is becoming much more decentralised and power is flowing back up the network (Figure 3). This is in due to the connection of many more local generators which are plugging directly into the distribution network (what are known as ‘embedded’ generators) – like commercial or community-owned renewables, or those installed on homes like rooftop solar panels – as well as forms of electricity storage (including potentially EVs) that can export power back into the network.

[15] Quality of Service Guaranteed Standards | Ofgem. Standard License Conditions include SLC 12 (requires specific information (including on charges) and an offer to be made within three months of receipt of requisite information); SLC13/14 (requires the DNO to have and maintain a charging methodology and statement); and SLC19 (a non-discrimination requirement that means DNOs can’t unduly discriminate between different types of customer).

[16] The Electricity Act 1989 sets the duty to offer a connection regardless of requirements. §16-17 require an offer to be made, and §19-21 require the offer to include details on payments required (including to previously connected customers to reimburse them for the initial contribution to the costs of the assets now being shared), reasonable security for the payment, and any other relevant terms. §23 enables disputes between customers and the DNO to be referred to Ofgem.

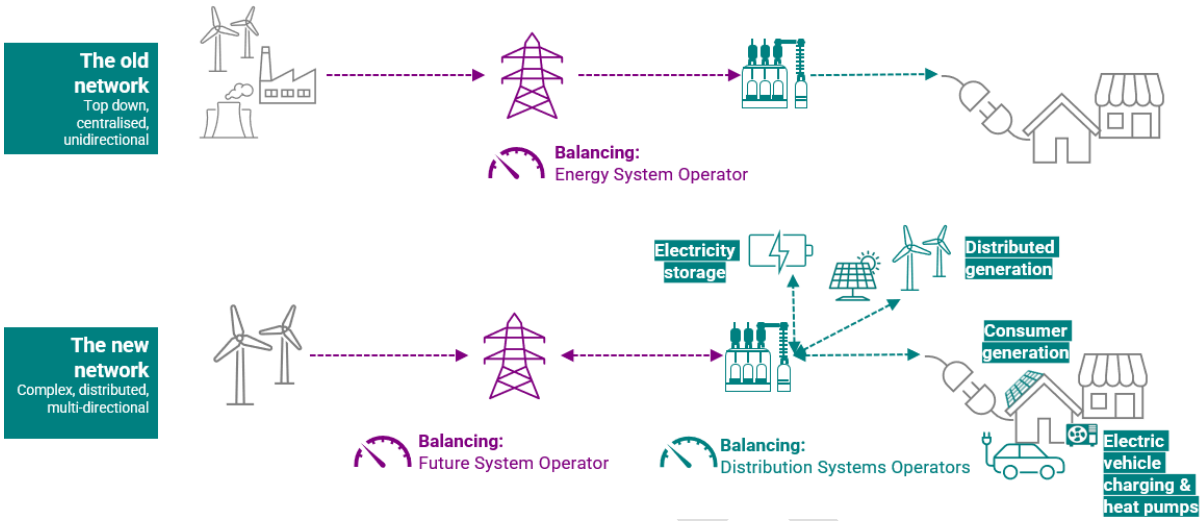


Fig 3. Decentralisation

Demand growth:

4.4. Demand for electricity is expected to double to 2050, mostly due to the electrification of heating, transport and sections of industry. The magnitude, speed and composition of that growth depends on modelling assumptions, but an indicative forecast of the Climate Change Committee's central scenario is shown in Figure 4.

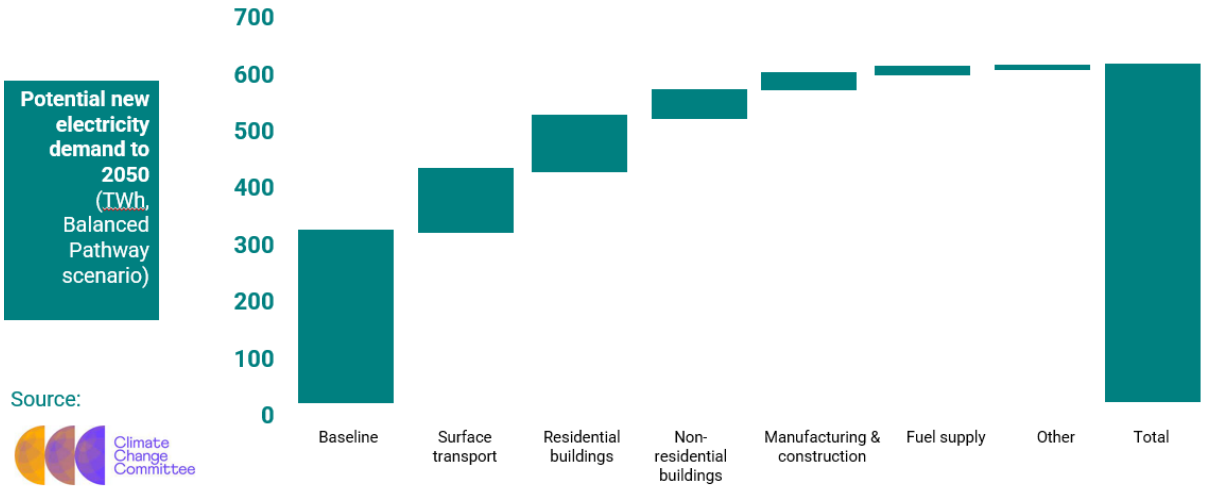


Fig 4. CCC's forecast of electricity demand growth

4.5. This significant expansion in new demand sources means that grid connection requests are not just being driven by new generation assets, but also by new demand assets like EV chargers and heat pumps.

4.6. This demand growth in turn means more that supply is needed – meaning that the grid must accommodate both the additional demand and the requisite generation. Currently around 60% of electricity in the UK is from low-carbon sources including nuclear[17], and the UK will need to not only decarbonise that residual 40% but also ensure sufficient generation capacity to meet anticipated future demand. Total

[17] Most total *energy* consumption in the UK is currently from fossil fuels, with electricity accounting for 18%.

generation capacity will thereby need to grow from ~100GW today to ~200GW by 2035, mostly from renewable sources (growing from ~40GW today to ~150GW).

Flexibility

4.7. Flexibility is the ability to shift the time and location of electricity generation and consumption to help balance supply and demand. As such, flexible assets like energy storage as well as demand response measures (where customers are incentivised to shift the energy use to different times) can adapt to help with balancing and so that capacity is used more efficiently.[18] Flexibility will become a much bigger part of the future system, in part as it can enable more efficient use of capacity and can thereby help to delay or avoid costly grid upgrades.[19]

4.8. Owing to the intermittency of renewables, nationally they will be complemented with both supply-side flexibility, firm generation and storage.[20] National Grid ESO already runs several flexibility markets, but these mostly contract demand-responsive gas plants presently. There is potential however for cheaper low-carbon assets to play a larger role, as well as for more demand-side response measures (where customers are paid to modify their electricity use). To an extent this presently owes to the relative ease (and lower risk) of rapidly modifying a small number of gas plants, rather than engaging with many smaller, decentralised assets – but network operators and the ESO are looking to significantly expand the role of other sources of flexibility.

4.9. Doing so could be helpful in four respects: as a more cost-effective means of mitigating the need for upgrades and ensuring more efficient use of capacity; to enable quicker and cheaper connections; as an economic opportunity for the deployment of flexibility assets and for flexibility service providers; and as a means for households and businesses to cut energy bills.

Combined impact

4.10. The overall upshot of decentralisation, demand growth and greater flexibility is that the system is shifting from a system of passive consumers served by a one-way flow of electricity from a few centralised generators, and towards a two-way system comprising millions of interacting and flexible generation, storage and demand assets and active consumer participation. This is in turn driving a significant increase in requests for connections, with the grid increasingly 'constrained' as its capacity struggles to keep pace. It also increasingly means that more balancing is required at the local and not just the national level, with DNOs thereby starting to play more of a role in balancing[21] (and, thereby, in the commissioning of flexibility measures).

[18] The grid needs to be highly responsive to balance, by reacting dynamically in real-time to match supply and demand. If they don't balance there's a risk of outage or a change in the network frequency or voltage which can cause damage.

[19] Government estimates that it could lower the cost of the system by £10-17bn/yr by 2050, by cutting the generation or network build otherwise required. Its overarching approach is contained within Transitioning to a net zero energy system: smart systems and flexibility plan 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[20] Government estimates that around 10-30% of electricity is due to come from dispatchable sources like nuclear, gas with CCS, hydrogen, or bioenergy with CCS. Nationally there will also need to be between 20-30GW of energy storage by 2035, alongside wider use of smarter flexibility technologies (like heat pumps or EVs that can adapt when they charge or even export to the grid),

[21] They are transforming into what is known as 'Distribution System Operators' in what is called the 'DNO-DSO transition'.

5. How are constraints managed?

5.1. Network operators have a responsibility to ensure capacity and to facilitate cost-effective reinforcement. That may be through upgrades to expand or install new substations, overhead lines or underground cables. In general, the higher up the grid you go, the more expensive and time-consuming reinforcement works are.

5.2. Reactive reinforcement may be required due to either incrementally greater demand from existing connected customers, or by their being 'triggered' by a new connection request. Requested new connections need to connect to either a modified or new line; and they may (but not always) require an upgrade through reinforcements. Network operators provide projects with estimates of the costs and options. Areas of constrained capacity can be expensive to connect to if they need reinforcements.

5.3. Reinforcements that are *not* triggered by a new connection request are assessed and approved by Ofgem, as the cost is recovered from all customers. Ofgem also now allows for *proactive* reinforcement of the network in anticipation of forecast future demand if evidenced – as explained further below. This shift to more anticipatory investment is still relatively new, and reinforcement works have traditionally been mostly reactive.

5.4. Permitting more investment ahead of need would help cut connection times and costs, but Ofgem also balances the risk of less efficient use of grid capacity, the costs for electricity bills, and the risk of stranded assets.

5.5. Customers partly bear the costs for upgrades in two possible ways:

- **Distribution Use of System (DUoS) and Transmission Network Use of System (TNUoS) charges** are ongoing charges paid by all network users for ongoing operations and maintenance costs – including reinforcements needed for incremental increases. They are paid indirectly via electricity suppliers, and form the 'network costs' element of a customer bill (around 25% of the total). Each DNO sets their own DUoS charges within regulatory limits.[22]
- **Connection Charges** are one-off costs invoiced to customers seeking new connections specifically which recover part of the costs of requested new connections – including the connection assets (like cabling or metering) and a proportion of any reinforcement costs. These costs are outlined in Connection Agreements and some aspects of the agreements are negotiable. Significantly, from April 2023, connection charges for reinforcement were removed for demand customers and reduced for generation customers.[23]

5.6. The amount that network operators can charge bill payers to recover the costs of grid upgrades is determined by Ofgem, which balances customer protections with the need for grid investment. The total amount that consumers can be charged is determined through the 'price controls process' using the 'RIIO framework' (see below) – which effectively sets a price cap for 5 year periods. It sets a framework to apportion risks and costs between network operators, connecting customers and bill payers.

[22] Ofgem doesn't approve individual charges. DUoS charging methodologies are published in the Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement, which is a multi-party contract between electricity distributors, suppliers and generators. See the methodologies of SSEN and NGED.
[23] See Ofgem's final decision on its Access and Forward-Looking Charges Significant Code Review.

5.7. Given the system changes already noted, there is a need for unprecedented build of new network infrastructure. However, managing capacity constraints won't just rely on expansions to capacity. Investment in further capacity is only one means to address constraints, and innovative alternatives that don't necessarily grow electricity bills are encouraged by Ofgem.[24],[25]

5.8. In particular, flexibility is vitally important in order to make most efficient use of capacity. Flexibility measures like energy storage and demand-side response schemes (such as financial rewards to cut electricity use in peak periods) will help to mitigate (defer or avoid) the need for more expensive infrastructure upgrades. As such, it is an important cost-effective alternative, and can cut the costs and time it takes for new connections. Accordingly, network operators have committed to a 'flexibility first' approach where they prioritise flexibility measures above reinforcement. Understanding the role of and value of investment in flexibility will be as important as considering grid upgrades.

5.9. Additionally, flexibility will provide opportunities for consumers to play a more active role in how the system is managed by, for example, getting paid to adapt their demand, supply power which they generate themselves, or to store electricity if they have the facility to do so.

6. How are constraints forecast?

6.1. As noted, network operators have a responsibility to ensure capacity for future forecast demand. Doing so requires modelling to forecast future supply and demand in order to anticipate the location, timing and scale of constraints within the network.

6.2. The future shape of constraints on the network is likely to be determined by major factors which effect generation and demand, like the location of new development, the extent of new renewable generation, the deployment of EV chargers and heat pumps, or the extent of improvements in building energy efficiency.

6.3. At the national scale, National Grid ESO prepares 'Future Energy Scenarios' annually, which outline four potential pathways to 2050 for the transmission network. Each scenario essentially describes a different way to decarbonise the grid – and so make different assumptions over key variables like the extent of investment, household efficiency retrofitting, EV take-up, and the relative role of hydrogen boilers and heat pumps.

[24] DNOs can seek innovation funding to maximise use of capacity and avoid or defer reinforcement, such as smarter monitoring and flexible connections.
[25] DNOs can also engage consortia of prospective connections to fund a connection considering their collective needs; and deliver a combined scheme that limits the costs and timeframes. Such could involve an upfront commitment to pay the costs, providing the DNO with confidence about their recoverability.

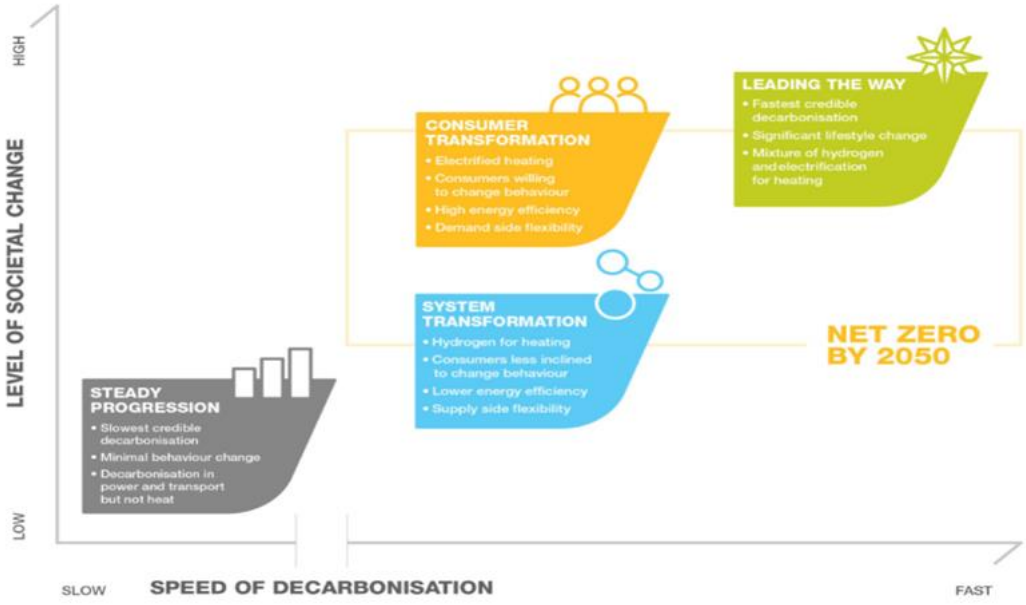


Fig 5. National Grid's pathways to 2050, which are the basis of forecasting

6.4. The *Consumer Transformation* scenario focuses more on changing how we use energy. *System Transformation* focuses more on changing how energy is generated and supplied. *Leading the Way* describes the fastest feasible trajectory that is a mix of those two, involving high consumer engagement, innovative tech and high investment to get to net zero *before* 2050. *Steady Progression* falls short. Each scenario has different corresponding implications for expected peak demand.

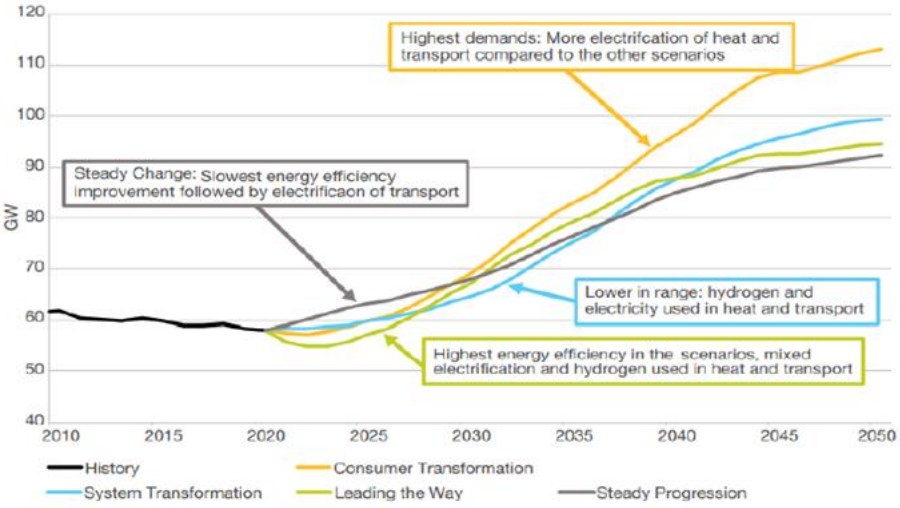


Fig 6. Peak demand implications of those scenarios

6.5. The scenarios in turn have encode assumptions about a range of factors regarding the pace of deployment for low carbon technologies like heat pumps and EVs, reflecting the expected impact of current government policy. Additionally, whilst the transition will significantly increase electricity demand, that will need to be mitigated by means such as energy efficiency improvements. As such, improving the energy efficiency of buildings should be understood as an important means of managing grid constraints, as the less efficient our buildings are, the higher their energy demand

and the more pressure they place on the grid. The scenarios thereby also encode assumptions about the pace of improvement to building energy efficiency.

6.6. The different scenarios also model the variable contribution of different fuel types. Figure 7 illustrates how overall *energy* demand is projected to be cut under all scenarios compared to today, but that *electricity* makes up a much bigger proportion of overall energy use (almost doubling in the Consumer Transformation scenario).

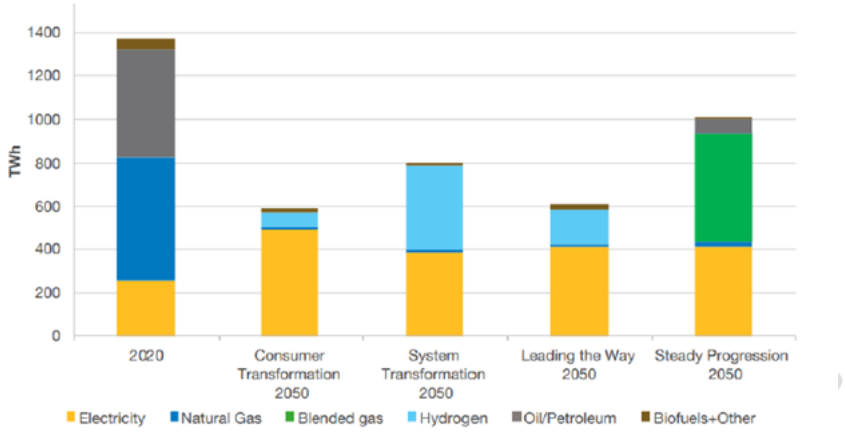


Fig 7. Differences in types of fuel demand in the scenarios

6.7. The Climate Change Committee generate the statutory Carbon Budgets to get to net zero, and all but one of the Future Energy Scenarios stay within budget. One – Steady Progression – isn't compliant with the statutory carbon budget nor the Paris Agreement.

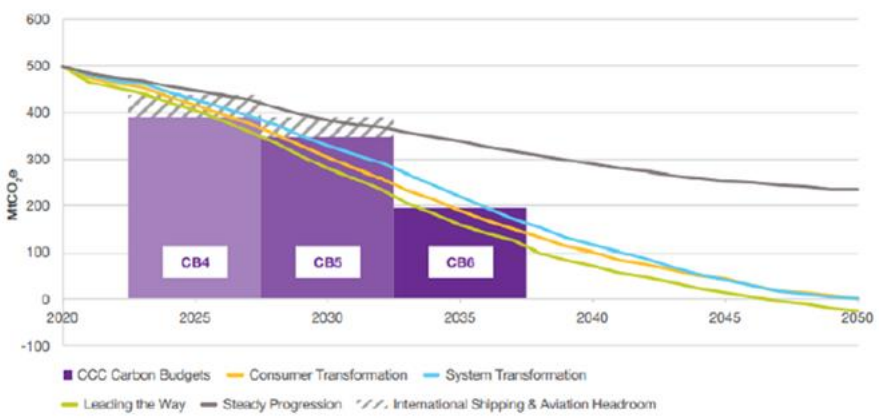


Fig 8. Implications of the scenario for staying within the UK carbon budgets

6.8. The foregoing analysis focuses on the *transmission* level, but DNOs also undertake annual forecasting to 2050 through '*Distribution* Future Energy Scenarios' (DFES) for the local grid. This forecasting enables the DNOs to plan for reinforcement or through flexibility measures, and provides the evidence base for investment in either. Both SSEN and National Grid work with Regen to produce these.[26]

[26] SSEN DFES 2023 Southern England report; NGED 2023 DFES. NGED also produce a helpful interactive DFES explorer which illustrates its projections at the local authority level: National Grid - Distribution Future Energy Scenarios Application

6.9. Regen's DFES scenario modelling uses the same framework, definitions and scenarios as the FES, but uses more local assumptions and more locally detailed forecasts. Model generation, demand and storage in order to anticipate future load scenarios and the location and timing of demand locally. This enables them to forecast where and when constraints are likely to emerge.

6.10. The modelling considers the baseline of operational or connected projects now, and what's in the pipeline. It then models to the medium and long-term and distributes these geographically.

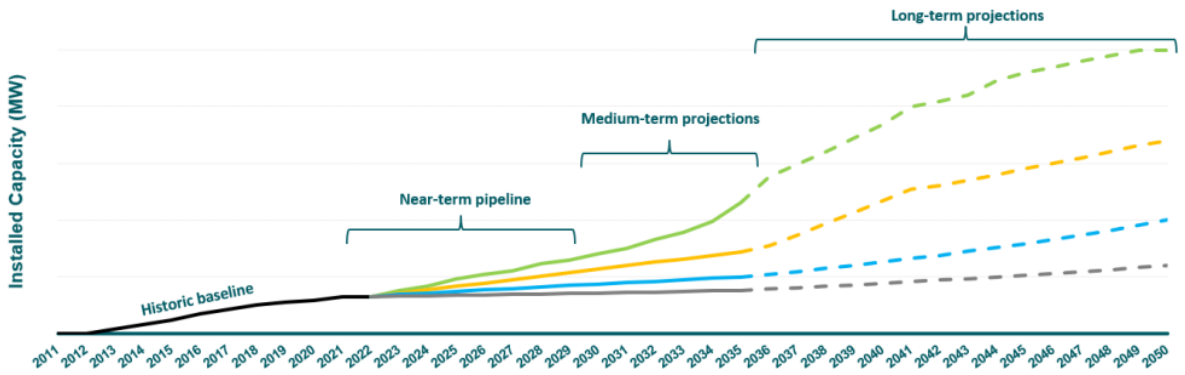


Fig 9. Considerations informing local forecasting

6.11. The projections are informed by an evidence base that consider technological and socio-economic factors, consumer behaviour assumptions, local authority strategies and plans for things like local housing development targets, and national policy (like the Future Buildings Standards) amongst other things. There are of course uncertainties on things like policy, tech, and consumer behaviour – and effort is made to factor these into the scenarios.

6.12. These DFES are also informed by engagement with local stakeholders, and DNOs hold multiple consultation and engagement events and actively seek information from local authorities – particularly on development and net zero plans.[27] Many Dorset Council officers input into these forecasting processes.

7. How does network investment work?

7.1. The FES and DFES forecasts are the basis of the strategic investment process, and they inform a suite of documents including a Network Development Plan, Network Options Assessment, and then finally a business case for future investment. These determine when and where grid infrastructure needs upgrading. They require high confidence on the necessity of works, provided through robust evidence on trends (like on the pace of EV uptake) or local ambitions (e.g. commitment to develop a particular renewables project).[28] The greater the confidence that can be given about

[27] For instance, officers actively provide figures on planned development for residential and non-residential buildings. Industrial demand can nevertheless be difficult to forecast owing to the range of possible occupants (and consequent range of energy demands) of industrial units.
[28] One participant emphasised, for instance, how a major renewable development such as offshore wind would trigger reinforcements that could unlock capacity for others and have a cascade effect.

local trends or projects, the stronger the Business Plan can be to evidence investment need.

7.2. The options assessments include holistic consideration of reinforcement alongside flexibility and demand-side response measures as well as other innovative solutions.

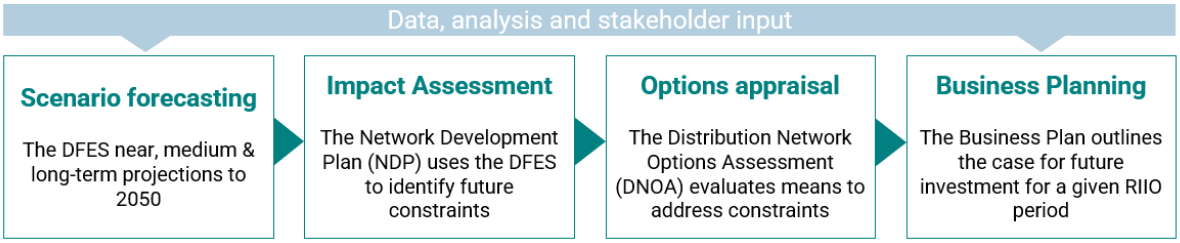


Fig 10. Steps informing investment planning

7.3. As noted above, the networks are subject to 'price controls' by Ofgem, which is regulated under the 'RIIO' framework[29], and which caps the revenue that can be collected from customers in line with its consumer protection duty. Network operators produce business plans outlining their planned expenditure, which Ofgem reviews and approves to set a cap on expenditure (and thereby, the amount that can be recouped from bill payers).

7.4. The Business Plans are produced for 5-year 'regulatory control periods' in which investment is planned.[30] These are submitted to Ofgem for approval and determine the level of investment that can be undertaken in that period – and for which they are given penalties and incentives to stay within, including for 'load-related expenditure' (i.e. the costs of expanding grid capacity).

7.5. The current price control period for distribution networks is called RIIO-ED2 and runs from 2023-2028. The current price control period for transmission networks is called RIIO-T2 and runs from 2021-2026.[31]

8. What are the constraints locally?

8.1. There are three Grid Supply Points that supply the Dorset Council area, at Axminster, Chickerell and Mannington – and these in turn serve 13 local Bulk Supply Points and around 50 Primary Substations.

[29] 'RIIO' stands for 'Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs'

[30] SSEN's 2022 plan, for example, outlined its plan to invest at least £3.5bn in the southern license area to 2028, to facilitate 8GW of distributed generation and storage, 1.3m EVs, and 800,000 heat pumps.

[31]

Fig 11. Dorset's Grid and Bulk Supply Points

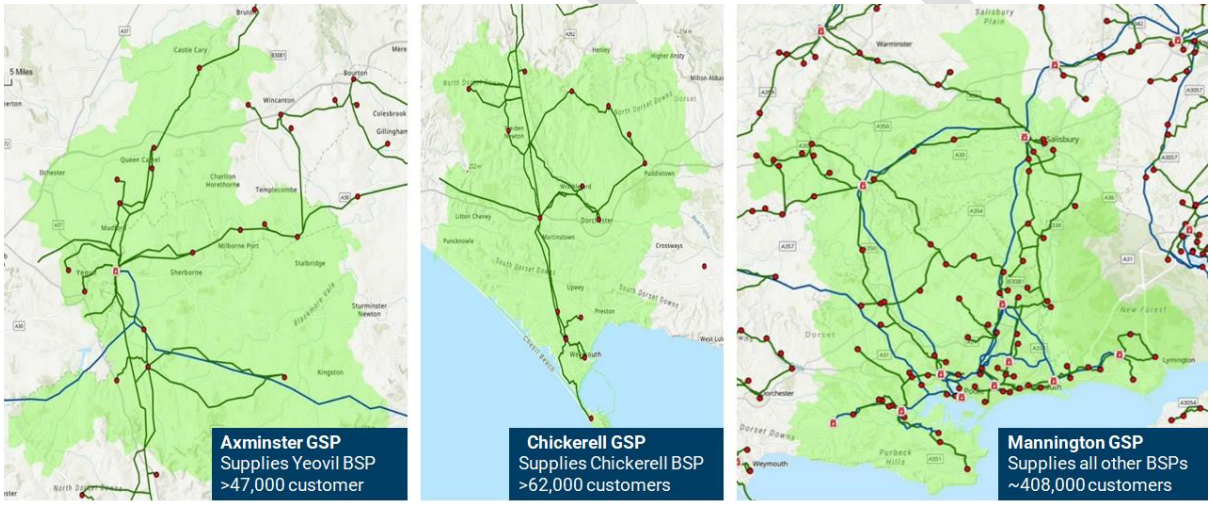


Fig 11. Dorset's three GSP areas with primary substations

8.2. Both DNOs produce up-to-date and detailed interactive maps which show the constraint status, the level in the network where the constraint is, and planned reinforcement works and completion dates. (As that information is liable to be refreshed regularly, the live maps should be consulted rather than the indicative illustrations in figures 11 and 12.)

8.3. Detail on constraints and the current plans to address them are available in the following suite of documents:

- **Online heat maps** (SSEN Network Capacity Map | NGED Network Capacity Map) which show where there's currently headroom capacity, or where it's limited or non-existent. These can help inform developers where connections are more or less likely to trigger reinforcements.
- **Long-Term Development Statements** are annual statements which give a rolling 0-5yr view, showing where is expected to reach capacity in the next 5 years. They're published each November and updated each May.

- **(Distribution) Future Energy Scenarios** which are the annual, scenario-based, long-term projections to 2050 using four scenarios.
- **Business Plans** which are the investment proposals that have to be approved by Ofgem for each 5-year price control period.
- **Network Development Plans** incorporate all of those but give a longer-term 10yr plan to address constraints. But they only show intent as they're subject to the Ofgem's agreement of the underlying Business Plans; and they can be modified if future forecasting justifies such.

8.4. Most of Dorset's network is already showing as constrained or partially constrained. This is inhibiting some project delivery and resulting in the delay, curtailment or cancellation of some projects due to prohibitive costs or delays impairing project viability. Consequently, it is impairing opportunities in areas like Bridport, Weymouth, Portland, Holton Heath industrial Estate, & North Dorset Business Park. According to the DFES, under a central scenario several local substations are likely to totally exceed current capacity by 2030 if not reinforced, and capacity would likely be exceeded at most substations by 2040.

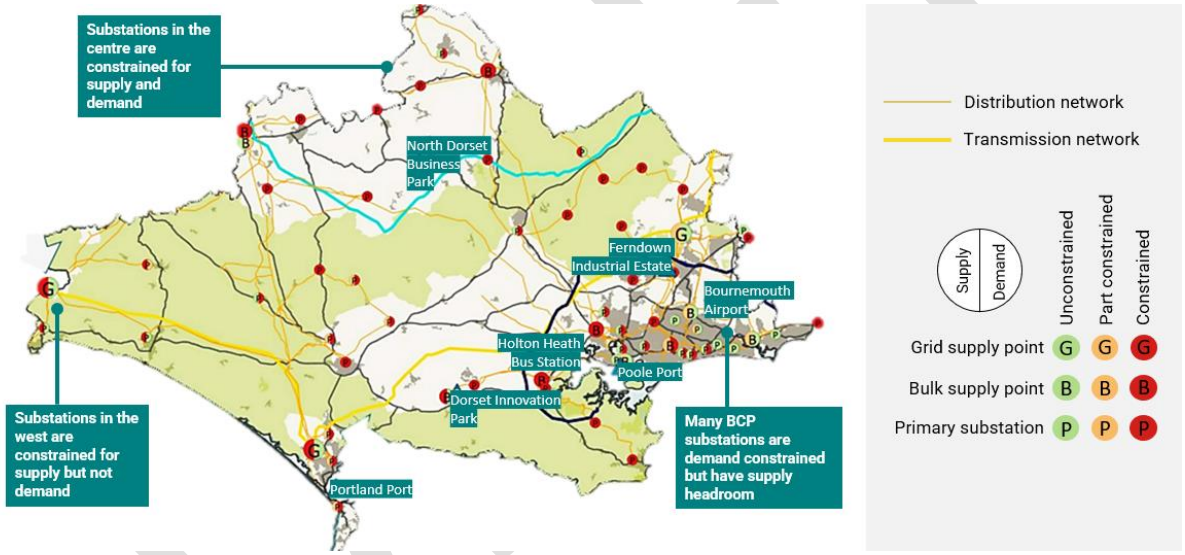


Fig 12. Local constraints currently (2021 analysis)[32]

8.5. It should be emphasised that this information uses best available information on network condition, but further issues can emerge during specific projects. Network operators will undertake detailed feasibility analysis of particular assets on request for a small cost by customers seeking connections, and this can result in further issues being identified. Further delays to delivery can also emerge from issues such as landowner access permissions, consenting processes, or legal matters.

8.6. Addressing our network's constraints will necessitate expansion of substation capacity and the creation of new substations alongside other reinforcements for lines and cables. Demand will also need to be mitigated through new builds standards, retrofit programmes to improve energy efficiency, and flexibility measures.

[32] This diagram is from a 2021 LEP-commissioned Energy Investment Plan that was produced by Regen in 2021, and is included here for illustrative purposes only. The council also commissioned our own assessment of constraints last year as part of the evidence base for the draft local plan. The links to the interactive maps contained in the text provide more up-to-date and dynamic sources of information.

9. What are the primary challenges?

9.1. As noted above, the fundamental issue is one of constrained capacity and consequent delays and costs for connecting new assets. As well as acting as a drag on projects requiring connections and associated investments, it thereby increases the costs of the energy transition.[33]

9.2. Throughout our sessions we heard from a wide range of local stakeholders who identified the contours of these challenges and their impacts – as well as recommending how the council might play a role in resolving them. They told us of many major and minor renewables, EV charger and building retrofit projects they had underway, many of which were running into capacity issues. Some of the key themes noted by stakeholders included:

Issues:

- Extreme delays to 2036 for connection times owing to transmission-level constraints.
- A very lengthy queue for connections, and its congestion with often speculative and unviable projects.
- More strategic projects often being stuck behind less strategic projects in the queue, owing to non-discrimination requirements in the process.
- Delays arising from non-infrastructural factors like wayleaves.
- Customer service issues for connecting customers, such as long waits for quotes or the inefficiency of having to manage non-standardised processes that vary across different network operators.
- Barriers to connecting due to inadequacies how the anticipated impacts of new connections are modelled overestimating risk, particularly for battery storage, and solar PV outside of summer peak periods.
- Requests for significant deposits (e.g. £200k) even for projects that have been given 10-12yr connection dates.
- Lack of upfront clarity about network infrastructure's precise location of condition, with the risk that further significant challenges can emerge once detailed feasibility work for individual connections is undertaken.
- Limited awareness by connecting customers on the extent of competitive demand for individual connections, and thereby of the likelihood of attaining one without incurring significant costs – to inform earlier customer decision-making about siting and the worthiness of sinking resource into an application.

[33] Constraint-driven costs pertain not only to those incurred for grid reinforcement, but also to managing constraints themselves. For example, in some circumstances the network incurs costs of paying renewable generation to be turned off in favour of fossil fuelled generation nearer to sources of demand, as a result of transmission bottlenecks that impair clean energy from being transported to where it needs to be. ESO modelling estimates that these sorts of costs could grow from around £0.5bn/yr in 2021 to peak at £1-2.5bn/yr in the mid/late 2020s, then declining as major transmission network investments come online.

Impacts:

- Reinforcement costs and delays threatening the timeliness or viability of projects – including risks to renewable deployment, business expansion and development.[34,35]
- Significant project cost uncertainties owing to connection costs tending to increase substantially if requoted (sometimes by tens or hundreds of thousands).
- Delayed or deterred investment, particularly in renewable generation.[36]
- Constraints to business growth potential or to the siting and relocation of high-energy using industries.
- Impediments to plant electrification to decarbonise high-energy industry.
- Limits on export rates for renewable generation impairing their income generation potential.
- Systemic incentives to install smaller capacity assets (under 'connect and notify' rules) in order to avoid the risk of connection delays.
- Missed opportunities to install heat pumps when boilers need replacing due to the risk of connection delays (during which period the building would lack heating or hot water), with the result that new gas boilers are instead locked in for the duration of their lifetime.
- Knock-on strategic economic risks, such as for investment in renewables, or to the tourism economy through impediments to EV charger provision or shore power/cruise electrification.
- Risks of exacerbating rural/urban disparities.

Solutions:

- Better evidencing the local need for network investment.
- Forging stronger strategic and collaborative relationships with network operators.
- Supporting better strategic planning of the network at a regional and local scale, to better fit local knowledge and ambition on net zero, development and economic growth.
- Lobbying on key constraints (e.g. Mannington GSP) to aim to expedite upgrades.
- Enabling wider use of constraint mitigation measures, including flexibility measures and energy storage, microgrids[37], alternative low carbon heat sources like geothermal, energy efficiency measures, and renewable colocation.
- Working cross-boundary and at a regional scale to make the case for investment.
- Better embedding the issue within local policy framework and decision-making, particularly planning.
- Exploring the opportunities for innovation projects and of Ofgem innovation funding.

9.3. The remainder of this section aims to unpick the causes underlying these issues further; and sketches the reforms that are emerging to address them. As it notes, there has been substantial reform announced during the course of this review in

[34] And, relatedly, the holistic consideration of grid constraints within government's conception of sustainable development and determination of housebuilding targets.
[35] One participant noted a precedent of one local authority undertaking strategic investment in the grid themselves directly, to mitigate prohibitive costs impairing development in a locality.
[36] One participant told us that they have 10 projects totalling 30MW and £20m+ of investment stalled.
[37] The inquiry heard from the example of the Hazelmead development in Bridport – a site of 54 houses in a grid constrained area with a microgrid. Funded by Low Carbon Dorset and Bristol Energy Cooperative, the project uses a private wire network including a 1.6MW community battery that mitigates the need for grid reinforcement by limiting peak demand from the development.

order to begin addressing many of these challenges. Further detail on the nature of the rapidly evolving policy and regulatory landscape is provided in the appendix.

9.4. A lack of strategic anticipatory investment

9.4.1. Until recently, grid development has only occurred piecemeal and reactively in response to demand (rather than in anticipation of it), and there has been a lack of strategic planning and coordination of energy generation infrastructure deployment with grid upgrades. This owed to the traditional regulatory framework lacking mechanisms to facilitate strategic investment ahead of need.

9.4.2. There has emerged, therefore, widespread acknowledgement of the need to facilitate significantly greater anticipatory investment, guided by strategic network planning. Government and Ofgem are consequently creating a framework for this. Initial steps towards this emerged through the Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) framework[38] which achieved this for offshore wind transmission; and more significantly through the introduction of the RIIO price controls framework.

9.4.3. Of central concern for the future is how well the design of the RIIO framework does at facilitating sufficient levels of strategic investment. Whilst there is strong consensus about the need for greater strategic grid investment – especially for transmission assets – the determination of the level investment is sensitive to two key issues: (i) uncertainties around the pace of deployment for assets like EV chargers and heat pumps, and (ii) increased costs for consumer bills, particularly if those arise from the installation of underutilised network assets.

9.4.4. Some stakeholders emphasise that the level of permitted investment with RIIO is insufficient, and that the costs incurred by customers of overinvesting is small whereas the consequences of underinvestment would be significant.[39] Others, like Citizens Advice for example, have stated that RIIO-ED1 (2015-23) resulted in unnecessary costs for consumer bills due to overestimates of the pace of rollout for things like EVs and heat pumps.[40, 41, 42]

---

[38] The ASTI framework was established in December 2022 and set out a streamlined regulatory approvals process for ~£20bn of transmission projects for connecting offshore wind, which were identified in the Holistic Network Design (an integrated plan for offshore wind).

[39] This is the view, of course, of network operators themselves – as evidenced by the levels of investment sought within their Business Plans being higher than that approved by Ofgem. See also remarks from Regen (Merlin Hyman (2023): Letter from CEO of Regen to Jonathan Brearley, CEO of Ofgem regarding RIIO-ED2,) and Prof. Dieter Helm (2023): Energy network regulation failures and net zero.

[40] Citizens Advice (2022): Response to the Ofgem RIIO-ED2 Draft Determinations consultation

[41] Citizens Advice has raised further concerns about RIIO, including its belief that Ofgem permits excessive rates of returns to network operator shareholders, sets weak targets, and underestimates the value of their assets. The BEIS Select Committee has also called on Ofgem to tackle profits and set a more rigorous annual performance process. Throughout our inquiry, several members also raised the question of whether industry was sharing enough of the costs. As noted in the main body text, the impact of ED2 on consumer bills was flat compared to RIIO-ED1 despite greater investment, due in part to greater strictness on returns; whilst for RIIO-T2 there was a lower allocated return on equity and debt than RIIO-T1. RIIO-ED2 also established a Return Adjustment Mechanisms to ensure that if networks outperform their targets, a greater proportion of this is shared with customers. Opportunities to further address such issues would likely be possible through future consultations on future price control period design and allocation determinations.

[42] We could also add here an issue of how well network operators perform in utilising their allocations. The BEIS Select Committee notes, for example, that NGET underspent its capex budget by 23% (£1bn) in 2013-2020 (the RIIO-ET1 period).

9.4.5. Ofgem aimed to better manage the uncertainties involved in forecasting the rollout of low carbon tech within RIIO-ED2, by lowering the allowances and instead introducing mechanisms that will release further funding if the need arises (i.e. if the pace of EV or heat pump deployment triggers it).

9.4.6. Consequently, Ofgem's final determinations for RIIO-ED2 (the current 2023-2028 period for distribution networks) doubled the amount permitted for investment compared to the previous period to £22.2bn.[43] That was, however, £2.9bn lower than that sought by DNOs, with the component for reinforcement 17% lower than sought – but the uncertainty mechanisms should unlock contingent funding above that baseline if required. The cost to bill payers of RIIO-ED-2 (~£100/yr) was kept the same as for RIIO-ED1, with the growth in investment mostly deriving from operational efficiencies or cuts to network operator profits.[44] In October Ofgem also released its framework for RIIO-[45]

9.4.7. Given the strategic importance to Dorset of both the levels of grid investment and the impacts on consumer bills, participants emphasised to us that Dorset Council has a strategic interest in ensuring we do all we can to support networks operators where possible to evidence the case for investment in future RIIO price control periods and within the opportunities provided by the RIIO-ED-2 uncertainty mechanisms. This will in part concern strengthening engagement and data sharing with them, but may further involve work on strategic energy planning, as noted below. The council may have a related interest in engaging in future Ofgem consultations on the design of future RIIO price control periods, including the currently open consultation on RIIO-3 for transmission.[46]

[43] Ofgem (2022): RIIO-ED2 Final Determinations Overview document
[44] The RIIO-2 process also strengthened engagement compared to RIIO-1 through consultations, open hearings with DNOs, engagement with Consumer User Groups, convening customer engagement groups, and membership of consumer representatives on a RIIO-ED2 Challenge Group.
[45] Decision on frameworks for future systems and network regulation | Ofgem
[46] RIIO-3 Sector Specific Methodology for the Gas Distribution, Gas Transmission and Electricity Transmission Sectors | Ofgem

9.5. A lack of strategic network planning

9.5.1. The lack of a mechanism for anticipatory investment in part owed to the lack of strategic network planning which could inform decisions on what to build, where and when. Long-term network planning will be crucial to alleviate constraints, and to inform consenting and investment decisions that will support the deployment of grid infrastructure, renewable generation and electricity storage assets.

9.5.2. The introduction of the RIIO framework has begun addressing this through the role of Business Plans which, as mentioned, strongly rely on strategic forecasts for how generation and demand is projected to evolve. Network operators will only invest if they can recover the costs, so they must robustly evidence clear need to Ofgem through these plans.

9.5.3. There is, however, an opportunity to significantly strengthen strategic network planning, and thereby the case than can be made to Ofgem to evidence the need for investment. This would be valuable both for future price control periods, but also could help unlock within-period opportunities arising from the new uncertainty mechanisms mentioned above.

9.5.4. Nationally several key reforms are emerging to strengthen strategic network planning, most centrally:

- The forthcoming creation in 2024 of an independent, impartial and publicly owned 'Future System Operator' (FSO), to assess, advice and strategically plan the whole cross-vector energy system across electricity and gas. It will build on the ESO role by managing the system in real time as well as undertaking strategic planning.[47]
- The creation of a Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP) and then Central Strategic Network Plans (CSNP) – comprehensive transmission network plans for electricity and gas, to be developed by the FSO that will effectively determine a pipeline of transmission infrastructure projects.[48]
- The forthcoming development of Regional Energy Plans by the recently announced Regional Energy System Planners, which Local Authorities will have a role in. The plans will consider whole energy system needs (electricity, gas, heat networks, hydrogen etc.) at a regional scale.

9.5.5. These national- and regional-scale strategic plans will mark a significant step forward to guide investment, and the regional-scale plans in particular present a good opportunity for the council to input and better evidence the case for local investment.[49]

[47] The Energy Act establishes is statutory basis and net zero duty. Its obligations will be set out in licenses and regulated by Ofgem, which will also assess its business plans and performance and allocate its funding as with other network stakeholders.

[48] The CSNP will be informed by modelling supply and demand (akin to the FES forecasting mentioned earlier), needs and options analysis, and cost benefit analysis. Ofgem has already undertaken an Electricity Network Planning Review on the shape of the CSNP: Decision on the initial findings of our Electricity Transmission Network Planning Review | Ofgem

[49] For a helpful overview of local authority perspectives on regional energy plans, see Regen's 2023 Planning the regional energy system to support local delivery of net zero – Research on local authority perspectives

9.5.6. However, there remains a risk that this suite of plans will still lack granular, local-scale insight on need. This can in part be addressed through enhancing engagement and data-sharing with network operators to inform their forecasting work. There are already strong examples of the council sharing data on aspects such as housing development targets, and it may be considered whether there are opportunities to enhance this engagement further in conversation with the network operators.[50]

9.5.7. The ultimate need is to provide a robust basis for network operators to evidence to Ofgem where, when and how a local area requires investment. Network operators require a high level of certainty and specificity to justify their case to Ofgem. Working together to provide that will therefore be key.[51]

9.5.8. In part for that reason, some local authorities have created – or are in the process of creating – Local Area Energy Plans LAEPs. These are medium/long-term, strategic, granular (i.e. postcode-level), cross-vector plans for the local energy system in a specific area – bringing together national and local datasets with local stakeholder engagement insight to identify decarbonisation pathways for a locality. As whole-system plans, they consider electricity, heat and transport as well as how energy is generated, stored, transported and used.

9.5.9. LAEPs are collaborative plans co-developed through extensive engagement with local authorities and other public sector bodies; energy generators, network operators, and suppliers; local renewable developers and low carbon tech deployers; developers; industry; and consumers and communities. Local authorities are well placed to convene these stakeholders alongside other expert input from network operators to develop a plan – and to establish governance for its delivery.

9.5.10. A well-evidenced plan with strong local buy-in can help steer the design of local projects and investments for low carbon tech deployment, and to clarify and justify the case for targeted network investment. Accordingly, the ENA and network operators are very supportive of their creation.

9.5.11. To be impactful, LAEPs must consider and inform network operator investment planning, be dynamic or iterative in response to the evolution of the energy system, and be realistic about the pace of delivery. There are multiple methodologies for developing LAEPs – including that from Energy System Catapult[52] and other more bespoke approaches. But broadly, they encompass stakeholder engagement, baseline data analysis, scenario modelling, and the identification of a preferred decarbonisation pathway.

[50] The need to clarify local ambition is illustrated by one participant citing a 'chicken and egg' problem whereby one area (not in Dorset) found that their DNO's Business Plan understated local capacity needs due to them having no renewables projects in the pipeline – whereas the reason there were no projects in the pipeline was because of a lack of capacity, not due to lack of ambition.
[51] Illustrative of this kind of work is Regen's work on the Isle of Wight, where they worked with SSEN to develop evidence on what would happen if there were additional capacity, to inform the investment case for an additional subsea cable. See: Isle of Wight – Network Investment Study - Regen
[52] Energy System Catapult – Local Area Energy Planning

9.5.12. Around 66 councils have now created a LAEP or are in the process of doing so.[53] Examples of LAEPs already developed include those of Greater Manchester[54], Bristol, Peterborough[55] (funded by Innovate UK's Prospering for the Energy Revolution programme), and North Yorkshire & York[56] (funded by the UK Community Renewable Fund and City of York). Other LAEPs are currently in development, such as in Cornwall[57] (funded by its devolution deal), Somerset[58] and in BCP. It should be noted that these involve a wide variety of methodologies, granularities, and thereby costs.

9.5.13. The is currently no formal requirement to create – nor a statutory role for – LAEPs in England[59], akin to Local Plans or Local Transport Plans. Nor, consequently, is there a prescribed, standardised method. Government's latest statement on LAEPs appears to have been its March 2023 response to the Independent Review of Net Zero, whereby it stated that it "has work underway to consider the role of Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) in delivering net zero and in supporting efficient network planning. This includes engaging with Ofgem as part of its ongoing governance review into local energy institutions…". However, Ofgem's decision on that review merely stated that "our proposal does not prescribe the use of the LAEP methodology by LAs and this is an area of consideration for government." Nevertheless, participants in the inquiry stressed that a lack of duty to create one does not mean that we should not do so.

9.5.14. Officers informed the inquiry that they believe there is value in having a stack of nesting national, regional and local energy plans – and that local energy planning would give helpful granularity. But they noted that they have been cautious about how to approach developing a LAEP owing to the costs involved, the lack of a clear formal role and the expectation that such may have been clarified during the recent reform announcements. Accordingly, the Sustainability Team signed up to become one of five pilots to trial a new geospatial energy planning tool developed by SSEN as a first step.[60] It is the first geospatial energy planning tool designed specifically to support local authority decision-making – complete with extensive spatial datasets, forecasts and modelling on matters from constraints to low carbon tech.

9.5.15. Conversation are also underway with the SW Net Zero Energy Hub and local authorities to identify potential opportunities for more cost-effective engagement approaches. Owing to the likely staff resource required to progress such, and to examine these issues further, an energy officer is soon to be recruited to the sustainability team.

9.5.16. Given the importance of well-informed strategic planning to inform future investment decisions, participants emphasised that Dorset Council has a clear opportunity to

[53] Energy System Catapult maintains a map of these areas.
[54] Local Energy Market - GM Green City
[55] Peterborough Local Area Energy Plan
[56] City of York Local Area Energy Plan
[57] Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Area Energy Plan
[58] Somerset Wide Energy Plan – Scrutiny Committee report
[59] The Welsh Government has committed to each local authority creating a LAEP, and in Scotland there is a duty on local authorities to create a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES).
[60] SSEN Distribution trains first councils to use new LENZA planning tool. LENZA was developed by SSEN through its Regional Energy System Optimisation Planning (RESOP) programme during 2023.

strengthen data-sharing with network operators to inform their business plans; to actively prepare to play a strong role in the emerging system for developing regional plans; to further examine the most cost-effective means to develop a local area energy plan; and to better engage network operators in the creation of our own strategic plans.

9.6. Inadequate connection queue processes

9.7. The queue for connecting to the grid has grown considerably over recent years to almost 400GW worth projects.[61] Connection date offers are 5yrs later than the requested date on average, whilst 40% of projects are offered dates of 2030 or beyond (with some as late as 2037). This impairs the allocation of capacity and decision-making on network upgrades, it can drive up costs, and it disincentivises investment in new generation or storage infrastructure.[62]

9.7.1. Much of the problem lies with the transmission network, but the impacts aren't confined there – as where projects connecting to the distribution network might impact the transmission level, approval must be given by National Grid ESO. This can result in distribution-level projects having to join the transmission queue.[63]

9.7.2. Moreover, the delays have in turn given rise to a practice of 'connection banking', where speculative 'zombie' projects are submitted solely to secure a place in the queue even if not viable. To illustrate: the amount of low carbon generation capacity within the queue is currently around 3x that needed to decarbonise – but National Grid ESO estimates a very high attrition rate with only 30-40% of those projects likely to be developed with the rest mostly speculative.[64]

9.7.3. There are several issues with the traditional process:

- As per its licence condition, the ESO doesn't discriminate on factors like a project's development status or viability (i.e. its likelihood of connecting).
- There is a low threshold for proving ability to deliver in order to enter the queue.
- Contracts impose limited obligations for developers to progress on time.[65]
- Developers can delay termination by delaying their completion date through a modification application.

9.7.4. A significant part of the blame for this is widely agreed to inhere in the 'first come, first served' queuing policy which currently results in slow or stalled projects blocking the way for more viable projects. Whilst progression milestones have to be hit for projects connecting to the distribution network since 2017, there has been no such requirement for transmission projects. It is therefore widely recognised that reforming

[61] According to National Grid ESO, there was a 10x growth in annual application offers provided to generators in the four years to 2022. There are over 250GW of generation projects in the transmission queue alone (cf. 80GW already connected), and the total number of transmission connection offers made in 2022 were 85% higher than in 2021 – whilst the number for Q1 of 2023 exceeded the total for the entirety of 2022.
[62] National Grid Electricity System Operator, GB Connections Reform Case for change, December 2022
[63] For commentary on transmission constraints, see Regen (2022): Seven solutions to the rising cost of transmission network constraint management. Approvals from National Grid ESO are sought through the Statement of Works process: What are Statement of Works, Project Progression, Appendix G and Modification Applications?
[64] National Grid Electricity System Operator, GB Connections Reform Case for change, December 2022
[65] Failure to complete by the completion date isn't an 'event of default' that entitles termination – and whilst it is possible for failure to meet the 'commissioning programme commencement date', that is typically 2yrs later than the completion date.

queue processes is essential to enable the deprioritisation or removal of speculative and slow projects, so that more viable projects can advance more quickly.

9.7.5. Two key reform efforts have begun to address this problem:

- **Industry action:** In mid-2023 industry set out two key action plans – the ESO's 5-point plan and the ENA's 3-point plan – which amongst other issues will help to reduce queue times through means like a queue amnesty, better impact modelling, and means to terminate stalled projects.
- **Government/Ofgem action:** During the course of this inquiry government released a Connections Action Plan to improve queue access and management processes – with an ambition to cut connection dates to be no longer than 6 months after the sought connection date, compared to the current average of 5 years. It sets out six areas of action, including raising entry requirements to deter speculation, new powers to remove stalled projects, and dropping the first-come-first-served policy through triaging.[66]. The first terminations from the queue are expected in early 2024.

9.7.6. These reforms are only just being implemented so it will take time to see if they have their intended effects, but if effective could go some significant way to addressing some of the challenges we heard from local participants. There is scope for Dorset Council to examine whether we could work better with network operators to support efforts to implement these actions in order to rapidly free up local capacity. It is also apparent that the queue reforms don't address the issue raised locally (noted in 9.2) that certain strategic stakeholders aren't prioritised in the queue due to non-discrimination rules, so this may be an issue to lobby on for further reform.

9.8. Poor coordination and sub-national governance

9.8.1. Some delays and inefficiencies derive from inconsistency in planning and delivery across institutions and across vectors (gas and electric), resulting in further inefficiencies and delays. This means that there is a patchwork of plans which make inconsistent forecasts, as well as little accountability and inconsistent engagement with local authorities.

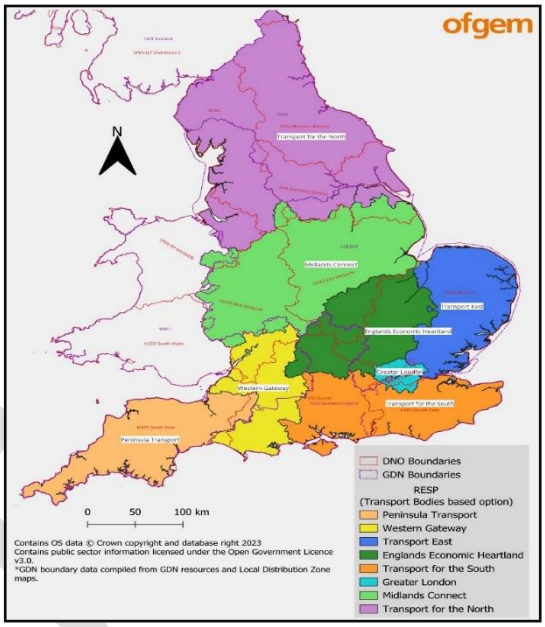
9.8.2. Whilst there are facilities like sub-national transport bodies that provide statutory transport governance, there is no equivalent for the energy system which enables strategic coordination and democratic input. This is a barrier to enabling joined-up strategic planning and investment.

9.8.3. In December Ofgem determined new arrangements for sub-national governance following consultation.[67] It has decided to introduce *Regional Energy Strategic Planners* (RESPs).

[66] Ofgem also strengthened measures to improve connections service performance through the RIIO-ED process, including larger penalties and rewards, new target-based rewards for connecting smaller connections, and strengthened incentives on handling larger and complex connections (like housing developments or distributed generation).

[67] This followed a following a 2022-2023 review based on the findings of its Call for Input, responses to its consultation proposals, and activity mapping of the key functions.

9.8.4. RESPs will be a new form of regional governance with responsibility for developing and delivering regional energy plans. These will reflect place-based insights and priorities and coordinate local engagement. They will convene local authorities with networks and other key stakeholders – and will provide support local authorities with advice, data and tools.



9.8.5. 10-13 RESPs will be established nationally, following the boundaries of sub-national transport bodies. For Dorset, this would correspond to the footprint of our Western Gateway sub-national transport body (the yellow region in the map).

9.8.6. Designs for their role, operations and implementation will be developed in 2024, with trials, further engagement and consultation towards their establishment in late 2025 or early 2026.

9.8.7. Participants emphasised to us that there is a strong opportunity to play a strong role in Regional Energy System Planners; to reflect on how we can most effectively give voice to local communities and stakeholders through those boards; and to proactively engage to influence their design and implementation throughout 2024. Several participants emphasised the significance of the opportunity they provide to strengthen relationships with network operators and unlock more strategic energy planning. It is also likely that Dorset may have a strategic interest in the South West (Peninsula) RESP, so might also seek to engage Ofgem to question the approach to cross-RESP coordination – and whether we might attain participation in, or observer status for, that RESP once it is established.

9.9. Poor infrastructure build times

9.9.1. Grid infrastructure development which qualifies as 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' (NSIP) has been subject to consenting delays that have played a role in delaying infrastructure build times – and thereby aggravated the wait times for consents dependent upon them. These challenges have been highlighted by both the National Infrastructure Commission and government's Electricity Networks Commissioner.

9.9.2. The challenges identified have included outdated National Policy Statements, consenting delays reaching an average of 4yrs, inadequate engagement (including insufficient local authority capacity to engage with the process), and inconsistent and ineffectual approaches to community benefits for communities which host transmission infrastructure.

9.9.3. Government has consequently pursued reforms to the NSIP regime more broadly, to speed up consents through streamlined processes, enhancing community

engagement, and improving resourcing.[68] Most of the reforms are expected to come into effect by April 2024.

9.9.4. Additionally, in November government released an action plan for accelerating transmission infrastructure specifically – aiming to cut build times from 12-14yrs to 7yrs.[69] It outlines commitments (as mentioned above) on strategic network planning, improving designs and standards, fast-track consenting and streamlined regulatory approvals, new guidance on compulsory purchase and land access rights, and a more strategic approach to supply chain and skills – including a Green Jobs Plan to be published in 2024. It also was accompanied by further detail on the arrangements for community benefits for communities hosting transmission infrastructure, and a national comms campaign to better inform communities on the need, opportunities and benefits of new grid infrastructure.

9.9.5. The constraints of a location or area are a consideration in local planning decision making, as an aspect of sustainable development. Assessment of the potential for strategic energy infrastructure (such as wind and solar energy development) will be undertaken in the preparation of the new Local Plan, considering factors such as technical potential for development, and landscape sensitivity. The Council will also seek the views of energy operators when preparing the Local Plan, with a view to understanding how grid capacity may affect its approach to development. The NPPF was revised and published on 19 December 2023 in response to the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act coming into force,[70] but this was too late for this inquiry to examine whether it may have implications for grid infrastructure specifically.[71]

9.9.6. Both local authorities and communities are important consultees in the NSIP process. Accordingly, there may be opportunities to consider whether there are opportunities to better engage in any future grid NSIP consenting processes, whether our communities might gain from the new community benefits regime, and whether local policy and decision-making could learn from the NSIP reforms' integration of strategic network planning. Additionally, we should maintain awareness of how elements of the transmission action plan – including the national comms campaign and green skills plan – develop and could be utilised at the local scale.

9.10. Nascent flexibility markets

9.10.1. As we have noted previously, upgrading grid infrastructure is only one half of the job of efficiently managing grid capacity. Just as important is enabling flexibility services. Smart and flexible systems will cut the need for new grid infrastructure, particularly regional flexibility markets. It is estimated that smart and flexibility tech (such as storage and smart charging) could save £10bn/yr by 2050 by reducing generation

[68] A recent policy paper overviewing progress on the reforms broadly is available here: Getting Great Britain building again: Speeding up infrastructure delivery - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[69] Some stakeholders did emphasise that this remains a long time, and therefore emphasised pragmatism about there being no quick fixes on grid infrastructure deployment.

[70] Calls to reform the NPPF for net zero have been made by multiple stakeholders, including within Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net Zero and Spatial planning for climate resilience and Net Zero (CSE & TCPA) - Climate Change Committee (theccc.org.uk)

[71] The Act did incorporate a duty on the Secretary of State to consider climate change within the development of National Development Management Policies, but the impact of this is presently unclear.

and grid needs.[72]

9.10.2. Both the ESO (for transmission) and DNOs (for distribution) procure flexibility services and are considering how to facilitate more low carbon tech – including through the ENA's Open Network Programme.[73] However, these markets are still nascent for low carbon assets, with barriers around inconsistent rules and processes, poor data and digitisation, and ineffective market signals. Mainstreaming demand-side response measures will also be dependent upon the wider installation of smart meters[74], and by the forthcoming 2025 rollout of 'market-wide half hourly settlements' that will enable more time-of-use tariffs for consumers.

9.10.3. As regards the ESO, it first established a winter Demand Flexibility Service in 2022/23 where consumers were given financial incentives to cut usage at peak times, and which saw over a million participants and a 2GWh cut in demand. It also operates a Local Constraint Market at the England/Scotland border, where it auctions supply requirements to generation or storage asset owners like grid-scale batteries and EV charger aggregations.[75] The ESO is now undertaking a review of its Demand Flexibility Service following its success, whilst Ofgem aims to make demand flexibility universal and automatic in the future to simplify customer participation.

9.10.4. Importantly, DNOs are also playing a growing role in procuring flexibility services, and thereby the nurturing of regional flexibility markets – and there have been now been several local flexibility market trials nationally. This marks a shift in their functions to take on more operational roles in local balancing.[76] Flexibility was better embedded within RIIO-ED2, with new funding mechanisms and incentives to encourage a Flexibility First approach. Ofgem also encouraged DNOs to submit business cases for network monitoring equipment rollout in RIIO-ED2, subsequently approving £167.54m for this. This is enabling better digitisation and data necessary to unlock flexibility.[77]

9.10.5. Importantly, Ofgem has also now clarified that it will create a new flexibility market facilitator to establish common rules, processes and standards for flexibility (ESO and DSO) markets and monitor their implementation, to improve the procurement of flexibility services. This is due to launch in 2025/26.

9.11. The future of flexibility markets is also importantly tied to future reforms to the wholesale electricity market, which are being reformed through government's Review of Electricity Market Arrangements that launched in 2022. Of central interest is the consideration of whether to introduce locational pricing rather than having uniform national wholesale electricity prices, in order to incentivise flexibility assets like energy storage (as well as electricity generators and major sources of demand) to

[72] Government's 2021 Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan and Energy Digitalisation Strategy sets out its approach.
[73] Open Networks: developing the smart grid - Energy Networks Association
[74] Smart meters enable low carbon technologies to be integrated into homes and the energy system and provide access to smart tariffs, which will allow consumers to save money by shifting their energy use from peak times. Government's estimate is that smart meters will cut £5.6bn from household bills during the rollout The smart meter rollout is a national programme of work, with a government framework that sets installation targets for energy suppliers.
[75] National Grid ESO: Local Constraint Market
[76] What is sometimes called the DNO-DSO transition – i.e. they are shifting from just being a network owner to regional *system operators*, akin to the national ESO. In December Ofgem decided that DNOs would retain responsibility for DSO functions (i.e. real time distribution network balancing operations for system reliability and safety), rather than establishing legally separate DSOs.
[77] DNOs will implement reforms to enhance their capabilities on things like data and digitalisation in line with their DSO strategies, with accountability through RIIO-ED2, license conditions and a DSO incentive.

locate in particular places. If implemented this would allow wholesale prices to vary by location based on factors like local generation capacity, network constraints and demand – which could potentially incentivise flexible assets to deploy at more constrained locations. This is an area of ongoing review.

9.12. For smaller, decentralized consumers, intermediaries called 'aggregators' will also likely be needed to combine flexibility offers into saleable products for network operators. Whilst aggregation is common nationally, they're not in local markets – but there may be opportunity for local businesses, community energy groups, or entities like housing associations to play a role in providing aggregation services as these markets develop.

9.13. There is an opportunity to better consider the nurturing of local flexibility markets and technologies to help mitigate grid capacity constraints, and to ensure that local households and businesses can benefit from the opportunities they provide. Dorset Council should maintain a watching brief on the evolution of the Demand Flexiblity Service, and engage our DNOs on opportunities to better nurture or trial schemes – including examining the potential role for local aggregators. Where opportunities arise we might also engage through future consultations on the design of the wholesale electricity markets as regards locational pricing.

10. Implications and recommendations

10.1. Dorset Council is and will continue to play a central role in the delivery of net zero locally – including through the leadership, policy frameworks, planning and investment required to support the deployment of low carbon technologies.

10.2. Alongside our role as a Local Planning Authority and Local Transport Authority, this means that we have a critical strategic interest in the future evolution of the energy system. Yet, unlike with transport and development – systems which are critically dependent upon the energy system – we currently play a much more peripheral role in strategically planning the local energy system.

10.3. Energy infrastructure needs to be seen through the same lens as other strategic infrastructure, with investment better aligned to local knowledge, ambition and decision-making. Our ambitions for net zero, development and economic growth will therefore require us to play a much more central role in local energy planning in the future – and strengthening our collaboration with energy networks will be essential for this. In so doing, we will be able to both better facilitate network investment aligned to our strategic ambitions, and maintain more efficient and collaborative operational relationships with network operators to smooth delivery.

10.4. Network operators explicitly recognise the importance of local energy planning and the importance of closer collaboration with local authorities. Accordingly the ENA and individual network operators are developing new processes, tools and roles specifically to strengthen such collaboration.[78]

[78] See, for example, ENA (2023): Collaborating for local net zero planning and delivery: "As network operators, we are committed to supporting the net zero transition – to facilitating the change that is needed through investment, innovation and collaboration. Network operators are ready to support local authorities with their net zero plans, and the range of services and offerings available for local authorities have been growing at a fast pace in recent years."

10.5. There is clear intent from network operators to further strengthen relationships with local authorities so that we can better collaborate, innovate, and develop capacity and capability. This means that we can reasonably expect further work to emerge over the coming years that will build on aforementioned data and planning tools through additional improvements on data sharing, visualisation, training and guidance, and processes. Our relationships will no doubt evolve as we reflect on our ways of working and develop new forms of good practice. Our trialling of SSEN's LENZA tool is a strong demonstrator of the willingness and opportunity for closer collaboration.

10.6. It is essential that we strengthen our relationships with network operators. Whilst we already provide some data to inform their forecasting, and whilst there are good operational links with projects like our public EV charger programme – there is also much opportunity to strengthen our links in other areas. In particular, we must establish better two-way flows of information with network operators through regular, iterative, long-term engagement. Stronger, ongoing relationships with network operators are needed in each of the following respects:

- Strategic: Co-developing policy or strategies in well-established areas (e.g. planning, transport, housing, economic growth, net zero); strengthening our input into their forecasting work; developing new strategic local or regional energy plans; providing regular opportunity for strategic conversations about barriers or opportunities; and collaborating to co-develop innovation projects to unlock innovation funding through Ofgem's Strategic Innovation Fund and UKRI.[79]

- Operational: The planning and delivery of low carbon technology deployment projects (e.g. EV chargers, building retrofit) and development – including on barriers to approvals or consents[80]; and strengthening support for vulnerable residents (e.g. on access to flexibility opportunities etc.).

[79] The ENA's Smarter Network Portal is an extensive repository of case studies of SIF-funded innovation projects, alongside relevant news, data and events. Projects involving network operators and councils include, for example, RetroMeter (a methodology for measuring energy and cost savings for retrofit), Re-Heat (trialling techniques to mitigate domestic electrical heating demand growth), Charge Collective (research on underinvestment in public charging infrastructure in potentially left-behind areas), LEVEL (a standard and specification for temporary portable EV chargers to meet short-term demand in specific locations). They also highlight numerous hydrogen innovation projects with gas network operators.

[80] Ensuring early engagement with network operator surgeries and the detailing of locations, dates, funding status and volumes for connecting assets can help to better explore options, identify lower cost or more rapid alternatives, clarify costs and timeframes, and ultimately enable smoother connections.

This review therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. **Establish regular quarterly strategic meetings with network operators**, to address strategic challenges and identify areas for collaboration or innovation. This should clarify single points of contact to coordinate meetings, facilitate data sharing, seeking or provide feedback on our respective plans, and identifying joint skills or comms opportunities. This may include brokering or facilitating strategic meetings between network operators and key local stakeholder groups like developers.

2. **Seize the opportunity of Regional Energy System Planners** by proactively engaging now to influence their design and implementation, and by reflecting on how we can most effectively give voice to local stakeholders. Also seek clarity from Ofgem on our potential participation in the SW (Peninsula) RESP.

3. **Strengthen the evidence on local investment need** to supporting network operators' case for investment, by continuing to pursue a cost-effective route to Local Area Energy Planning – building on the strong opportunities of the LENZA trial and by co-developing an approach to engagement where possible.

4. **Ensure that grid constraints and constraint mitigation measures are embedded in our strategies, policy and decision-making**, by better utilising emerging data and tools to inform our strategies/plans, decision-making, and delivery programme design – in particular, to engage network operators on our emerging plans and using the LENZA tool to inform discussions.[81] This should also consider any wider but linked socio-economic risks or opportunities, such as from flexibility markets.

5. **Explore the opportunities of Ofgem's Strategic Innovation Fund[82] and our devolution asks** to actively develop, trial and deliver new processes, tools and approaches with network operators – particularly for flexibility.

6. **Lobby our MPs, government, Ofgem and network operators** on key grid issues such as expediting critical transmission infrastructure upgrades, queue prioritisation, and customer service improvements.

[81] Network operators are making available key datasets, analysis and tools on things like capacity and constraints, technology uptake forecasts, and customer vulnerability. There is a strong opportunity to better embed the insight within these into our plans and operations, including through wider use and application of: Emerging tools like SSE's Local Energy Net Zero Accelerator (LENZA) and UKPN's Your Local Net Zero Hub; datasets available through SSEN's Data Portal and NGED's Connected Data Portal, as well as the ESO's data portal; and Mapping, including SSEN's network maps, and NGED's network maps.

[82] https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-policy-and-regulation/policy-and-regulatory-programmes/network-price-controls-2021-2028-riio-2/network-price-controls-2021-2028-riio-2-riio-2-network-innovation-funding/strategic-innovation-fund-sif

Appendix: 1: National policy and regulatory reform

As noted above, the above challenges are very much recognised by Government, Ofgem and industry – and they have therefore prompted a programme of significant but complex policy and regulatory reform. This appendix outlines chronologically the major elements particular to the grid from the last couple of years. As the dates indicate, this reform is very recent and still emerging, and so is still being implemented and embedded – but there appears to be clear enthusiasm from Government, the regulator and industry alike to resolve the systems challenges through these actions.

The following list outlines those policies of most direct relevance to the grid specifically.[83] However, it should be emphasised that many broader policy and regulatory areas – from energy generation to building standards –will critically interact with the grid.[84]

British Energy Security Strategy (April 2022): The BESS strategy sets the government's overarching approach for a more affordable, clean, low carbon and secure energy system – with a central ambition to decarbonise the electricity system by 2035 (subject to supply security). As well as setting measures, objectives and milestones for energy generation, it set out key commitments on networks, storage and flexibility – guided by an expected doubling of demand by 2050.[85] It emphasised planning ahead of need and flexibility as priorities, making the following key commitments:

- Establishing a Future Systems Operator.
- A strategic framework on how networks will deliver net zero.
- Appointing an Electricity Networks Commissioner as an advisor.
- A network blueprint through a Holistic Network Design (HND) and Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP).
- Updating the National Policy Statements to recognise these in the planning system.
- A Strategy and Policy Statement for Ofgem that emphasises strategic investment.
- Speeding up connections to distribution networks.
- Cutting delivery of transmission infrastructure build times in half.
- Consulting on community benefits for network infrastructure.
- Developing policy to encourage investment in all forms of flexibility and widening use of flexible tariffs.
- Ensuring new homes have smart meters by 2024 (in advance of the Future Homes and Building Standards).

[83] Further to the following, there is also an ongoing programme of reform to network charges. See Network charging and access reform | Ofgem and it Open letter on strategic transmission charging reform | Ofgem.
[84] For example, the 2025 Future Homes and Building Standards aims to set building standards that will make new builds 'zero-carbon ready' – meaning that no further retrofitting work will be needed for new buildings to produce zero carbon emissions as the grid is fully decarbonised. This illustrates the point that decarbonising buildings is also contingent upon decarbonising the grid. Moreover, government's consultation emphasises the importance of cutting peak electricity demand to limit the costs of grid upgrades – and illustrates how measures such as rooftop solar PV and heat networks with thermal stores can cut peak demand.
[85] The network aspects are only one component of the strategy. On generation, it also sets ambitions for 50GW of offshore wind (including 5GW floating) by 2030 (from 14GW presently); a fivefold increase in solar PV to 70GW by 2035; 24GW of nuclear by 2050 (from 6GW presently); and 10GW of hydrogen production by 2035. The strategy was criticised for shortcomings on energy efficiency, offshore wind, long-duration energy storage, and its commitment to expand North Sea production – as well as a lack of new fiscal measures to respond to increased global competition for green investment following the announcement of major US and EU packages.

- Undertaking a Review of Electricity Market Arrangements for wholesale markets; and continuing the retail electricity market review.

Holistic Network Design & ASTI Framework (July 2022): The HND marked a step-change towards more strategic transmission network planning. It set out for the first time a strategic transmission network plan to facilitate offshore wind specifically.[86] Subsequently, an Accelerating Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) Framework was launched to expedite projects within the HND under streamlined regulatory approval and funding processes.[87] Whilst focused on needs for offshore wind specifically, these represent a major step towards strategic network planning and investment – particularly towards a more comprehensive Centralised Strategic Network Plan for the transmission network. Ofgem will review ASTI framework to assess its possible extension, which it will consult on in 2024.

Electricity Network Strategic Framework (August 2022): This outlines Government and Ofgem's joint vision for the network, with more detail on policy and regulatory reform towards realising an efficient, smart, digitised, strategically planned, efficiently built and cost-effective grid. It was also accompanied by modelling of demand, generation, capacity, investment, and consumer & economic impacts.[88] The framework notes the vision, progress and actions across a range of areas, including committing to future action on:

- Strategic network planning and the creation of the FSO
- Cutting constraints
- Enabling strategic investment
- Accelerating transmission infrastructure build-times
- Increasing competition and innovation
- Reviewing planning and consenting processes and land rights
- Connections charges and customer experience standards
- Facilitating flexibility and digitising the system
- Reviewing network charges

Powering Up Britain Energy Security Plan (March 2023): This constitutes sets out government's latest plans for energy security and net zero, aiming to double domestic generation capacity and decarbonise power by 2035. Regarding the grid it aims to ensure investment at pace and scale – prioritising reform for accelerating infrastructure, anticipating need, and maximising flexibility. It includes commitments to:[89]

- Develop an action plan to accelerate transmission infrastructure build time by at least 3 years and halve the duration of the end-to-end process (informed by the Electricity Network Commissioner's recommendations).
- Develop an action plan on reform to accelerate distribution and transmission network connections.
- Consult on a Strategy and Policy Statement for energy, incorporating strategic network planning, anticipatory investment, and accelerating network build and connections.

[86] Reforms pertaining to the offshore transmission network constitute a particular and broader stream of work within Government's Offshore Transmission Network Review, which launched in 2020. The OTNR's broader set of outputs includes measures like the OCCS grant scheme for offshore projects to develop options for transmission infrastructure. For an overview, see Offshore Transmission Network Review: summary of outputs - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).
[87] Ofgem (2022): Decision on accelerating onshore electricity transmission investment
[88] Electricity networks strategic framework Appendix I: Electricity Networks Modelling (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[89] The following omits policy relating to interconnectors.

- Improve the planning process by publishing a revised networks National Policy Statement for networks which refers to strategic network plans (for NSIP); and responding to the onshore wind and NPPF consultations.
- Respond to the call for evidence on land rights and consents reform, and support legislation for a new landowner dispute resolution mechanism for transmission infrastructure.[90]
- Introduce guidance on appropriate levels and forms community benefits for network infrastructure, following its earlier consultation, to empower communities and ensure consistency.
- Consult on the FSO role, licenses and update on its implementation, towards its development of a full CSNP for the entire electricity network in 2025.
- Support moves to strengthen anticipatory investment through Ofgem's review of future price control processes.
- Further develop a blueprint for offshore wind connections, conclude the Offshore Transmission Network Review & publish a Future Framework.
- Further consultation through the Review of Electricity Market Arrangements programme.

Industry Action Plans (March/April 2023): Two key industry action plans were released in mid-2023:

- At the transmission level, the ESO's 5-point plan includes an amnesty for 45GW of projects (i.e. to terminate or reduce agreed capacity without penalty); amending its Construction Planning Assumptions to improve modelling of transmission-level impacts; improvinf modelling of storage asset impacts (e.g. by assuming that they don't export at times of peak generation and import at times of peak demand); inserting progression milestones into connection agreements, to enable termination for stalled projects; and offering 'non-firm' connection options for storage assets (i.e. allow them to connect sooner by agreeing not to import or export under certain conditions).[91]
- At the distribution level, the ENA's 3-point plan includes measures to insert milestones into demand contracts and pre-2017 generation contracts[92] and better enforcing them; improving interactions with the transmission network; and improving provisions and impact assessments for storage assets.[93]

In the short-term, transmission capacity of 100GW should be freed by the ESO's 5-point plan, improving connection dates for some customers by 2-10yrs (with new offers to be made from Q4 2023); and 39GW should be freed at the distribution level by the ENA's 3-step plan. Further action and long-term reform needs to be undertaken, so this is an ongoing area of work. For instance, the ESO's broader transmission connections reform project is considering wider reforms to create mechanisms that would enable progress-dependent accelarated connection dates as well as limited application windows for more strategic evaluation of applications in batches.[94]

Draft Strategy and Policy Statement for energy policy (May 2023): The draft SPS for energy sets out government's strategic priorities, sought outcomes, and roles and responsibilities. Ofgem and the FSO must undertake their functions with regard to it. It incorporates strategic network planning, anticipatory investment, and accelerating network

[90] This was subsequently enacted as the Electricity Transmission (Compensation) Act 2023
[91] Our five-point plan | ESO (nationalgrideso.com)
[92] Milestones are already in place for generation agreements that have been made since 2017.
[93] Energy networks launch action plan to accelerate grid connections – Energy Networks Association (ENA)
[94] For more information see the ESO's Connection Reform Programme.

build and connections. The consultation on the draft closed in August 2023, and government is now reviewing responses.

Energy Act 2023 (October 2023): The Act establishes a net zero duty for Ofgem alongside its consumer protection duty, which came into effect on 26 December 2023. It also establishes the legal basis for the creation of the Future System Operator; enables competitive tendering for the build, ownership and operation of the onshore grid[95]; creates a new governance framework for energy codes to empower Ofgem to set the strategic direction for how the rules governing the system evolve to drive change; and contains measures on smart meters and appliances.[96]

Reform of land rights and consents for network infrastructure (ongoing): Network operators often need to access private land to install, maintain and upgrade assets in order to facilitate new connections or undertake maintenance. Consequently, challenges arise from the hinderance or prevention of network infrastructure build owing to land rights and consents. The costs and timescales associated with negotiating access or purchase agreements are very unpredictable and can result in costs or delays for connecting projects. The relevant processes regard:

- Land access for overhead line installation (voluntary wayleave or easement or necessary wayleave access agreements).[97]
- Land purchase for substation installation (freehold/leasehold purchase or CPO).
- Planning permission for overhead lines (s37 of the Electricity Act or a Development Consent Order under the Planning Act 2008).
- Planning permission for substations (Town & Country Planning Act, with Permitted development rights for those 29m^3 or less).
- Planning permission for certain overhead lines (development consent order as NSIP)

In September 2022 government sought evidence on whether current processes need reform to ensure the efficient, cost-effective and fair delivery of network infrastructure.[98] This recognises the need for an appropriate balance of network operators' needs with protections for landowners and local stakeholders. Work is now underway on measures, including reforms to the CPO process following adoption of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. The response to the call for evidence is due in spring 2024, and a working group will be established.[99]

NSIP Action Plan (Feb 2023): Some grid infrastructure development qualifies as 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' (NSIP), the planning regime for which is handled nationally. The National Infrastructure Commission has noted a likely increase in the volume of NSIPs broadly, and we might expect this particularly for the grid given the issues noted. This Action Plan sets out a programme of reform, broadly aiming to speed up consents

[95] Energy Security Bill factsheet: Competition in onshore electricity networks - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[96] The Act also contains measures to cut network charges for energy intensive industries and 'special merger' measures regarding whether company mergers could prejudice Ofgem's ability to set price controls.
[97] Wayleaves (temporary) and easement (permanent) agreements (and associated compensatory payments) are initially sought through voluntary negotiation. It is not compulsory for landowners to negotiate, so network operators may alternatively pursue necessary wayleaves, or redesign or scrap a project. Applications for necessary wayleaves are determined by the Secretary of State.
[98] The process for some overhead lines was out of scope for the call for evidence as they fell under the separate NSIP reform programme, as outlined below.
[99] Relatedly, Parliament subsequently legislated to introduce a new dispute resolution mechanism for compulsory land acquisitions for transmission infrastructure. Electricity Transmission (Compensation) Act 2023

through streamlined processes, better community engagement, and better resourcing.[100,101] Most of the reforms expected to come into effect by April 2024. Both local authorities and communities are important consultees in the NSIP process, and reforms that may be of most local interest regarding the grid include:[102]

- Strategic direction: The National Policy Statement (NPS) for electricity network infrastructure has been reviewed, setting out the strategic needs case to inform decision-making. Amongst other things, it now explicitly links decision-making to strategic spatial energy planning. It came into force in January 2024.[103]
- Fast-tracking consents: Reform to the consenting process includes proposals for a fast-track route for eligible projects meeting quality standards, and aiming for a non-statutory 12-month target timescale from acceptance to decision.
- Resourcing engagement: Recognising time and resource barriers to engagement, government has proposed further innovation & capacity building (including a new round of the Innovation and Capacity Fund) and new guidance on forming agreements with applicants for recovery of engagement costs (given agreed service levels). For communities, it proposes better guidance on expectations for community engagement and introduction of an earlier milestone to examine its adequacy.
- Community benefits: Recognising the need for more consistency in the provision of benefits for communities hosting infrastructure, government has proposed to strengthen the community benefits regime. Detail on proposals for electricity transmission network infrastructure specifically was subsequently outlined in late 2023, as detailed below.

Community Benefits for transmission network infrastructure (November 2023): Following consultation in March 2023, government has proposed new guidance on the levels and form of benefits for communities hosting new transmission infrastructure – to ensure greater consistency and to empower communities in their discussions with developers. It has determined to adopt a bill discount for properties closest to infrastructure of up to £10k per property over 10 years, alongside wider community benefits of £200k/km for overhead lines, £40k/km for cables, and £200k per substation. It is now working on implementation and plans to publish voluntary guidance in 2024 – whilst exploring options for a mandatory approach in 2024.

The Transmission Acceleration Action Plan (November 2023): This action plan responds to the recommendations of the Electricity Network Commissioner.[104] It aims to significantly cut end-to-end build time for transmission infrastructure from 12-14yrs to 7yrs. The

[100] This is set out in the 2020 National Infrastructure Strategy, 2021 Transforming Infrastructure Performance Roadmap, 2023 NSIP Action Plan and the operational reform consultation proposals. Elements are being trialled through the Early Adopters Programme. The reforms were motivated by consent wait times reaching an average of 4yrs, which government aims to cut to 2.5yrs. The activity is in part informed by recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission (see Government's response) and the Electricity Networks Commissioner. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and the Energy Act 2023 provide the statutory basis for the reforms.

[101] Reforms are also underway to the environmental consenting process. See: Environmental Outcomes Reports: a new approach to environmental assessment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[102] A recent policy paper overviewing progress on the reforms broadly is available here: Getting Great Britain building again: Speeding up infrastructure delivery - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[103] National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). There are accompanying statements on other types of energy infrastructure. For the full list see: National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[104] The commissioner's August 2023 report contains the 43 recommendations of Nick Winser (appointed as commissioner in July 2022) on accelerating transmission infrastructure build times. It incorporates recommendations on strategic planning, design standards, planning approval, supply chain, people & skills, outage planning, and end-to-end process. Government has agreed with those recommendations.

programme of work is expected to cut delays, constraint costs, and could increase investment by £15bn over the decade. The effect for consumer bills is expected to be a net saving of £15-25/yr on average per household between 2024-35.[105] The Action Plan will be governed by a new minister-chaired forum, aligned to that for the Connection Actions Plan. The plan contains measures including:

- Improving strategic spatial planning for the network through the creation of a Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP) to determine the optimal location of infrastructure, as the basis of short- and long-term Centralised Strategic Network Plans (CSNP). Work is now underway to develop an SSEP, with the first iteration focusing on power and hydrogen. The longer-term CSNP will thereby be produced every three years from 2026 and consider long-term investment to at least 2050; whilst the short-term CSNP will be produced annually with a 12yr horizon.[106]
- Improving and standardising design standards, with new design principles that clarify options in order to better enable discussions with host communities, underpin fast-track consenting, and support more automated designs.
- Streamlining regulatory approvals processes by determining the strategic need, design and delivery body for projects at the earlier strategic planning stage (i.e. CSNP creation), such that CSNPs effectively create a pipeline of projects.[107] Competition will also be introduced for the delivery of such projects through tendering.[108]
- Reforming planning processes by updating the National Policy Statements, creating a fast-track consenting process for eligible grid projects, and publishing new guidance on compulsory purchase and land access rights for Transmission Owners.
- A more strategic approach to supply chain and skills by enabling earlier engagement through strategic network planning; establishing a supply chain forum; investing through the Green Industries Growth Accelerator; publishing a Green Jobs Plan in 2024; and undertaking workforce planning and recruitment for NSIP consenting.
- Communities and engagement: Strengthening the community benefit regime and improving public understanding of grid infrastructure by establishing a new entity with industry and regulators to deliver a comms campaign on grid need, benefits and careers.
- Optimise outage planning with the ESO/FSO to lower risks to project delays.

Connections Action Plan (November 2023): This plan addresses the processes for providing connection offers and managing the connections pipeline. Its ambition is for transmission connection dates to be on average no more than 6 months than the requested date, down from 5yrs – with a significant majority receiving their sought connection date (up from 14% presently).[109] Urgent action to deliver on the plan is needed, at the latest by 2025. The Plan sets out six areas of action for delivery in 2024, overseen by a new Ofgem-chaired Connections Delivery Board:

- Raising entry requirements for transmission connections and deter speculative applications, such as by requiring landowner authority at the application-stage.

[105] This is the net impact on bills that considers savings from reduced constraint costs alongside the costs of grid investment.
[106] Ofgem consulted on the CSNP framework in 2023. Environmental impacts of projects will be considered upfront as part of the CSNP.
[107] The first full CSNP is due in 2026, so this will initially use the transitional CSNP due to be published early 2024. This is akin to the HND/ASTI process mentioned above. This was confirmed in Ofgem's framework for RIIO-ET3 (the period starting 2026), with the plan for this is set out in Ofgem's Future Networks and Systems Regulation review – and the December 2023 Sector Specific Methodology Consultation.
[108] See government's consultation response: Competition in onshore electricity networks - GOV.UK
[109] Many connection dates are of course contingent on infrastructure upgrades, which is why the action plan must be considered alongside wider reforms regarding strategic investment and infrastructure build times.

- Removing stalled projects by requiring milestones that must be hit in transmission connection contracts; and reviewing and improving enforcement of existing milestones in distribution connection contracts.
- Changing how the impact of connections is assessed and enhancing use of flexibility (including flexible connections) to enable more efficient use of available capacity.
- Moving from a first come, first serve queue to one that prioritises more viable projects through a triage process in order to enabling better allocation of capacity.
- Improving data, processes, obligations and incentives to improve both customer service and customer understanding of network condition.
- Developing longer-term process models that align with emerging strategic planning and market reforms.

Ofgem has accordingly implemented new rules that enable the ESO to introduce milestones to new, modified and existing connection contracts and to terminate any not hitting them. Milestones are set for 'Conditional Progression' (initiating and securing consents & permissions, securing land rights) and 'Construction Progression' (submitting design works, submitting a construction plan, committing to a project and commencing construction). The ESO will notify of the intent to terminate and give a grace period of 60 days for the project to evidence progress.[110] The first terminations are expected in early 2024, which Ofgem estimates could unlock 400GW of capacity.

Ofgem decision on local energy institutions and governance (December 2023): Ofgem has decided upon new arrangements for enhanced sub-national governance of the energy system, in response to concern about institutional gaps, a lack of accountability, misallocation of functions and poor coordination.[111] The review emphasised that system planning, flexibility markets and real time operations need to be performed by accountable, coordinated and clearly defined institutions. It decided to:

- Introduce Regional Energy Strategic Planners (RESPs) as a new form of regional governance with responsibility for developing and delivering regional energy plans, reflecting place-based insights and priorities. There will be 10-13 of them established across the country, using the boundaries of sub-national transport bodies.[112] They will convene local authorities with networks and other key stakeholders – and will provide support local authorities with advice, data and tools. Designs for their role, operations and implementation will be developed in 2024, with trials, further engagement and consultation towards their establishment in late 2025 or early 2026.
- Creating a flexibility market facilitator that will establish common rules, processes and standards for flexibility (ESO and DSO) markets, improves the procurement of flexibility services and monitors their implementation.[113] The ESO and DNOs will remain responsible for procurement within the framework set by the facilitator. Detail and a transition plan will be developed towards launching the facilitator in late 2025 or early 2026.
- Retaining DNOs as having responsibility for DSO functions (i.e. real time distribution network balancing operations for system reliability and safety), rather than creating

[110] Failure to meet Construction Progression milestones may result in termination at the ESOs discretion (exercised in line with forthcoming guidance). Exceptions to termination are allowed in circumstances such as Force Majeure, delays caused by a third-party not reasonably avoidable, planning appeals and third-party challenges to consents, and delays caused by the TO/ESO.

[111] This followed a following a 2022-2023 review based on the findings of its Call for Input, responses to its consultation proposals, and activity mapping of the key functions.
[112] For Dorset this would correspond to the footprint of our Western Gateway sub-national transport body.
[113] Ofgem will further consult on whether the role should be undertaken by the FSO or Elexon.

legally separate DSOs. DNOs will implement reforms to enhance their capabilities on things like data and digitalisation in line with their DSO strategies, with accountability through RIIO-ED2, license conditions and a DSO incentive.

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme

Meeting Date: 28 March 2024

Report Title	Aims and Objectives	Lead Officers / Members	Other Information
Planning Transformation Programme - Overview	To provide the committee with an overview of the Planning Transformation Programme including progress and priorities	Mike Garrity – Head of Planning Cllr David Walsh – Portfolio Holder for Planning	
Performance Scrutiny	To review the most recent performance information and use this to agree items to add to the committee forward plan for further analysis	David Bonner – Service Manager – BI & Performance Cllr Jill Haynes - Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development & Transformation	

Annual items:

- Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan update – September
- Corporate Complaints Team – Annual Report - November

Bi-annual items:

- Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology – progress report – July and November

Alternate meeting items:

- Performance Scrutiny – informal session held before each committee occurrence - July, November, March

Informal Work of the Committee:

Date	Topic	Format	Members	Lead Officers	Other Information
Quarterly	Review of the committee's performance and risk dashboards	Informal meeting	All committee members	David Bonner – Service Manager Business Intelligence & Performance	Review of the dashboards to identify potential future areas for review by the committee

The Cabinet Forward Plan - February to May 2024
(Publication date – 12 FEBRUARY 2024)

Explanatory Note:
This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Cabinet and Council. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions
Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions of the Cabinet which are likely to -

a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (***Thresholds - £500k***); or
b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

In determining the meaning of *"significant"* for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Cabinet Portfolio Holders 2023/24

Spencer Flower	Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
Gary Suttle	Deputy Leader and Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy
Ray Bryan	Highways, Travel and Environment
Jill Haynes	Corporate Development and Transformation
Laura Beddow	Culture and Communities
Simon Gibson	Economic Growth and Levelling Up
Andrew Parry	Assets and Property
Byron Quayle	People – Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help
Jane Somper	People - Adult Social Care, Health, and Housing
David Walsh	Planning

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
2024					
March					
Procurement Forward Plan Report - Over £500k (2023-2025) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** The Council defines a key decision, in terms of procurement activity, as those with financial consequence of £500k or more. This report will provide notice of the planned/known procurement activities that Cabinet will need to make a key decision on for 2024/25.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **12 Mar 2024**		Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Dawn Adams, Service Manager for Commercial and Procurement* *dawn.adams@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Chief Executive (Matt Prosser)*
Grid Capacity Task & Finish Group **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** The final report of Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee's grid capacity task and finish group, which was established to review the strategically significant	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **12 Mar 2024**	Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee 26 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment	*Antony Littlechild, Sustainability Team Manager* *antony.littlechild@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Carl Warom, Climate and Ecological Policy and Project Manager* *carl.warom@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
issue of Dorset's constrained grid capacity. The report will summarise its findings and recommendations for the future.					
Family Hub network development **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** This report outlines proposals for the development of Dorset's Family Hub Network Model in line with requirements of the DfE's Grant funded Transformation Programme, local need and strategic priorities.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 12 Mar 2024**	People and Health Overview Committee 6 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Elizabeth Saunders, Interim Corporate Director of Commissioning elizabeth.saunders@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Allocation of S106 Funding for Community facilities at Mampitts Green, Shaftesbury **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** To determine the award of s106 developer contribution funding for the delivery of community facilities at Mampitts Green, Shaftesbury	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 12 Mar 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Planning	*Andrew Galpin, Infrastructure & Delivery Planning Manager andrew.galpin@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Mike Garrity, Head of Planning mike.garrity@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*
Community Infrastructure Levy - Exception Circumstances Policy for the Purbeck area **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open**	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 12 Mar 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Planning	*Andrew Galpin, Infrastructure & Delivery Planning Manager andrew.galpin@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
To agree and adopt the draft order.					
Poole Harbour Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund Award **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** Highlighting the recent award of funds from the DLUHC Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund for delivery of nutrient mitigation across the Poole Harbour catchment to enable development and the arrangements for spending the fund.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **12 Mar 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Planning	*Terry Sneller, Strategic Planning Manager* *terry.sneller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*
Dorset Council's Response to Hampshire County Council Minerals and Waste Plan Update - Final Consultation **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** Hampshire County Council are undertaking the final consultation on their Minerals and Waste Plan update before it is submitted for Examination. This report sets out Dorset Council's response for Cabinet's consideration and approval.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **12 Mar 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Planning	*Mike Garrity, Head of Planning* *mike.garrity@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Place*
Local Development Scheme Update	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **12 Mar 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Planning	*Mike Garrity, Head of Planning*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Key Decision - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** To consider a report on a update of the Dorset Council Local Plan Development Scheme.					*mike.garrity@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Terry Sneller, Strategic Planning Manager terry.sneller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*
Children's Sufficiency Strategy **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - Open	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 12 Mar 2024**	People and Health Overview Committee 6 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Elizabeth Saunders, Interim Corporate Director of Commissioning elizabeth.saunders@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Leisure Contracts **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Fully exempt** To seek approval to extend the leisure contracts at Blandford Leisure Centre and the Ferndown Leisure Centre.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 12 Mar 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities	*Paul Rutter, Service Manager for Leisure Services paul.rutter@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*
April					
June					
Quarter 4 Financial Monitoring 2023/24	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 11 Jun 2024**		Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial	*Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Key Decision - No **Public Access** - **Open** To consider the Quarter 4 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25.				and Capital Strategy	*sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)*
BCP Local Plan consultation response **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** Proposed for change set out in an Invest to save business case.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **11 Jun 2024**		Portfolio Holder for Planning	*Terry Sneller, Strategic Planning Manager* *terry.sneller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Place*
July					
Youth Justice Plan 2024/25 **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** Annual approval of the Youth Justice Plan.	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **9 Jul 2024**	People and Health Overview Committee 13 Jun 2024	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*David Webb, Manager - Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service* *david.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Extra Care Housing Strategy & Accommodation with support programme **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** To present the Extra Care Housing Strategy, seek	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **9 Jul 2024**	People and Health Overview Committee 13 Jun 2024	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Adam Fitzgerald, Building Better Lives Programme Manager* *adam.fitzgerald@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Adults*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
endorsement from Cabinet, and to brief members on the Accommodation with Support programme.					
September					
Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring 2024/25 **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** To consider the Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 10 Sep 2024**		Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)*
Draft Contaminated Land Strategy **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** Draft Contaminated Land Strategy and report of consultation findings on the draft strategy.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 10 Sep 2024**	Place and Resources Overview Committee 6 Jun 2024	Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities	*Steven Horsler, Environmental Health Officer steven.horsler@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Janet Moore, Service Manager for Environmental Protection Janet.Moore@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*
October					
Growth & Economic Regeneration Strategy	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 15 Oct 2024**	Place and Resources Overview Committee	Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and	*Jon Bird, Service Manager for Growth and Economic*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Key Decision - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** To consider and agree a refresh of the Council's strategy for economic growth. This will encompass the functions to be taken over by the Council from Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership in accordance with devolution and promote the needs and actions required to drive forward the economy in the Dorset Council area.			12 Sep 2024	Levelling Up	*Regeneration* *jon.bird@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration* *nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Lead for Place Directorate (Jan Britton)*
November					
Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** To consider the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **12 Mar 2024**		Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial* *sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)*
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and budget strategy - update **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open**	**Decision Maker** **Cabinet**	**Decision Date** **19 Nov 2024**		Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial* *sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director,*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Other Committee(s) consulted and Date of meeting(s)	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
To receive a budget update for 2025/26.					*Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)*
January 2025					
Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring 2024/25 **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** To consider the Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 28 Jan 2025**		Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)*
Budget strategy and medium-term financial plan (MTFP) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - **Open** To consider a report and recommendation of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Assets.	**Decision Maker Cabinet**	**Decision Date 28 Jan 2025**	People and Health Scrutiny Committee Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee 17 Jan 2025 16 Jan 2025	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial sean.cremer@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Corporate Development - Section 151 Officer (Aidan Dunn)*

Private/Exempt Items for Decision
Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
   (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd Forward Plan
For the period 1 MARCH 2024 to 10 JULY 2024
(Publication date – 30 JANAURY 2024)

Explanatory Note:
This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions
Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions which are likely to -

a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (***Thresholds - £500k***); or
b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

In determining the meaning of *"significant"* for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Committee Membership 2023/24

Spencer Flower	Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
Gary Suttle	Deputy Leader / Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy
Jane Somper	Adult Social Care, Health and Housing
Laura Beddow	Culture and Communities
Byron Quayle	Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Standing Items for Consideration				
February				
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 27 Feb 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Jonathan Price, Corporate Director for Commissioning* *jonathan.price@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Adults*
Dorset Council Organisational Update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 27 Feb 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Jonathan Price, Corporate Director for Commissioning* *jonathan.price@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Adults*
Care Dorset Update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 27 Feb 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Executive Director, People - Adults*
Care Dorset 5 Year Strategy **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 27 Feb 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Executive Director, People - Adults*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
July				
Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Open	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 1 Jul 2024**	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy	*Jonathan Mair, Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer* *jonathan.mair@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Adults*
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 1 Jul 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Jonathan Price, Corporate Director for Commissioning* *jonathan.price@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Adults*
Dorset Council Organisational Update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 1 Jul 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Jonathan Price, Corporate Director for Commissioning* *jonathan.price@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, People - Adults*
Care Dorset Update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date 1 Jul 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Executive Director, People - Adults*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Annual Reports				
Annual Performance Update for Council **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** -	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd**	**Decision Date**	Portfolio Holder for People - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	*Executive Director, People - Adults*

Private/Exempt Items for Decision
Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
   (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

This page is intentionally left blank

The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE) Forward Plan
For the period 1 MARCH 2024 to 30 JUNE 2024

Explanatory Note:
This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions
Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions which are likely to -

a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (***Thresholds - £500k***); or
b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

In determining the meaning of *"significant"* for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Committee Membership 2023/24

Spencer Flower	Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
Gary Suttle	Deputy Leader / Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy
Jane Somper	Adult Social Care, Health and Housing
Laura Beddow	Culture and Communities
Byron Quayle	Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
Standing items for consideration				
March				
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Open	**Decision Maker** **The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date** **11 Mar 2024**	Councillor Byron Quayle	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Dorset Centre of Excellence Annual Performance Report November 2023 **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** To consider the annual performance report.	**Decision Maker** **The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date** **11 Mar 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Dorset Council Commissioning Report **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker** **The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date** **11 Mar 2024**	Councillor Byron Quayle	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
DCoE - Report of the Chair of the Board **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date 11 Mar 2024**	Councillor Byron Quayle	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
June				
Review of Terms of Reference **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Open	**Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date 10 Jun 2024**	Leader of the Council	*Chris Harrod, Senior Democratic Services Officer chris.harrod@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Monitoring Officer (Jonathan Mair)*
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date 10 Jun 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Dorset Council Commissioning Report **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date 10 Jun 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Portfolio Holder	Officer Contact
DCoE - Report of the Chair of the Board **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Part exempt	**Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date 10 Jun 2024**	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*
Annual Reports				
Annual Performance Report to Council **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - Open	**Decision Maker The Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence (DCOE)**	**Decision Date**	Portfolio Holder for People - Children, Education, Skills and Early Help	*Executive Director, People - Children (Theresa Leavy)*

Private/Exempt Items for Decision
Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
   (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

This page is intentionally left blank