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Ref. No.	
Category: (Y/N)	
People	
Place	Yes
Corporate	
In Constitution	

Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy 2020 to 2024

Policy Details

What is this policy for?	The Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy sets out our ambitions to enable clean, inclusive, sustainable and good quality economic growth across the whole Council area, and thereby bring improved standards of living, quality of life, health, and wellbeing for all of Dorset's residents, ensuring we have great places to live, work and visit
Who does this policy affect?	Dorset's residents Dorset businesses and business organisations and networks
Keywords	Economic Growth Strategy, Digital infrastructure, People and skills, Business environment, Innovation/ideas, Place, Transport infrastructure
Author	Name: David Walsh Job Title :Economic Growth Regeneration Service Manager Tel: 01305 224254 Email: david.b.walsh@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Does this policy relate to any laws?	
Is this policy linked to any other Dorset Council policies?	Industrial Strategy Dorset Local Industrial Strategy Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Dorset Council Plan 2020- 2024
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	The strategy intends to have a positive benefit to all the protected characteristics including Dorset Council area characteristics, however, until the action plan is developed and implemented, it is unclear what the actual outcomes will be for the different protected characteristic groups. Therefore, when assessing the impact of this strategy in Section 3 of this EqIA there is not enough information to make an informed decision and therefore have suggested its impact is unclear.
Other Impact Assessments	Climate implications The strategy acknowledges the commitment of the Council to the climate and ecological emergency, and officers have been collaborating to align both strategies and action plans. The Economic Growth Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable and clean growth, with many measures designed to progress towards a zero-carbon economy Risk Assessment Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: Low Residual Risk: Low

Status and Approvals

Status	Live	Version	
Last review date	28 th July 2020	Next review date	2024
Approved by (Director)	John Sellgren, Executive Director of Place	Date approved	28 th July 2020
Member/ Partnership Board Approval	Cabinet	Date approved	28 th July 2020

Cabinet

28 July 2020

Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr G Suttle, Economic Growth and Skills

Local Councillor(s): All Cllrs

Executive Director: John Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

Report Author: David Walsh

Title: Economic Growth Regeneration Service Manager

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

- a) To approve the draft Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy
- b) To authorise the Portfolio Holder to make any further, minor amendments required following consideration by Cabinet

Reason for Recommendation: One of the priorities in the Dorset Council Plan 2020-2024 is to 'deliver sustainable economic growth, increasing productivity and the number of high-quality jobs in Dorset, creating great places to live, work and visit.' A prosperous and inclusive local economy is vital to achieving the strategic priorities of the Council. The Economic Growth Strategy explains how the Council will seek to deliver this priority and will be accompanied in due course by a detailed action plan.

1. Executive Summary

The Economic Growth Executive Advisory Panel has overseen the development of the draft Strategy, taking into account a broad range of evidence, national and local policy reviews, and a programme of business engagement. The Panel has also considered the implications of Covid-19 and the climate and ecological emergency declared by the Council in this final draft.

The Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy sets out our ambitions to enable clean, inclusive, sustainable and good quality economic growth across the whole Council area, and thereby bring improved standards of living, quality of life, health, and wellbeing for all of Dorset's residents, ensuring we have great places to live, work and visit.

It builds on the Dorset Council Plan and has been developed following engagement with Dorset businesses and business organisations and networks. The strategy is informed by constantly evolving national and local policy, and complements strategies such as the Modern Industrial Strategy, the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy, and the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

This strategy presents the Council's priorities to:

- Enhance Dorset as a place to do business and attract inward investment
- Support the creation and growth of new sustainable business and in turn support high quality job creation
- Improve transport and digital connectivity across the area
- Enhance aspirations and skills to improve social mobility

The strategy is structured around six foundations for sustainable and inclusive economic growth: -

- Digital infrastructure
- People and skills
- Business environment
- Innovation/ideas
- Place
- Transport infrastructure

The draft strategy at appendix 1 focuses on content rather than presentation. The final document will be presented in the Council's house style and include updated and appropriately amended graphics following approval by Cabinet.

Following approval of the draft strategy a detail action plan will be developed to implement the strategy. This will be subject to regular review as the full implications of Covid-19 become apparent, and new policy and interventions are introduced related to the pandemic, Brexit and other significant events.

2. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with the strategy. Actions arising from the strategy will be delivered through a combination of committed resources, securing external funding and bids for additional funding as and when appropriate.

3. Climate implications

The strategy acknowledges the commitment of the Council to the climate and ecological emergency, and officers have been collaborating to align both strategies and action plans. The Economic Growth Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable and clean growth, with many measures designed to progress towards a zero-carbon economy.

4. Other Implications

As stated in 3 above, the Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable economic growth. This includes a focus on inclusive growth to ensure that all elements of the Dorset community benefit from an overall increase in prosperity and opportunity. Dorset Council will not achieve the ambitions of the strategy acting in isolation and will need the support and collaboration of a broad range of national and local partners, including the voluntary and community sectors.

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

The EqIA was signed-off by the Equality and Diversity Action Group on 16th July, subject to some minor amendments, and will be reviewed again once the Action Plan has been drafted.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy

8. Background Papers

The draft strategy is based upon a significant evidence base, including: -

- [Dorset Insight Economy Topic Data](#)

- [State of Dorset report](#)
- [Dorset Local Industrial Strategy Evidence Base](#)
- [Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset Local Transport Plan](#)
- [Dorset Council Plan 2020-2024](#)

Appendix 1: Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy 2020-30

July 2020



[Diagram to be amended/updated]

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1 Introduction

The Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy sets out our ambitions to enable clean, inclusive, sustainable and good quality economic growth across the whole Council area, and thereby bring improved standards of living, quality of life, health, and wellbeing for all of Dorset's residents, ensuring we have great places to live, work and visit.

It builds on the Dorset Council Plan and has been developed following engagement with Dorset businesses and business organisations and networks. The strategy is informed by constantly evolving national and local policy, and complements strategies such as the Modern Industrial Strategy, the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy, and the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

This strategy presents the Council's priorities to:

- Enhance Dorset as a place to do business and attract inward investment
- Support the creation and growth of new sustainable business and in turn support high quality job creation
- Improve transport and digital connectivity across the area
- Enhance aspirations and skills to improve social mobility

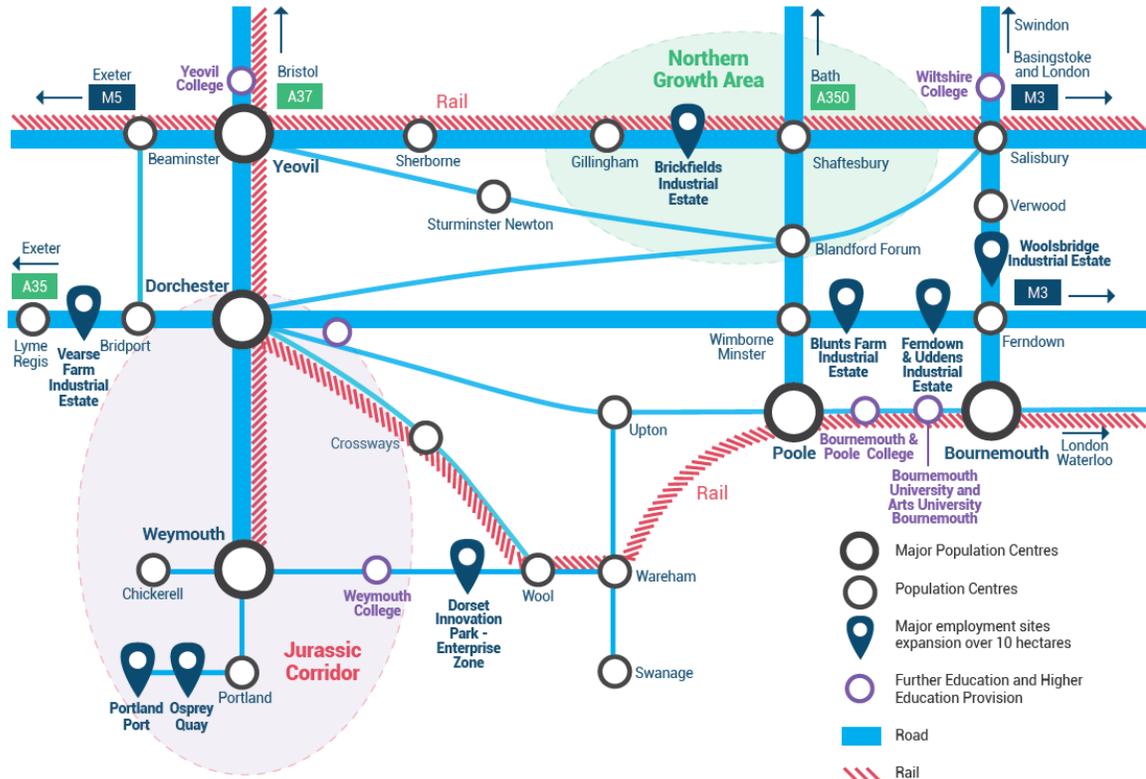
Recent events such as Covid-19 and the declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency have shown that this Strategy and the forthcoming, accompanying Action Plan will need more frequent reviewing and updating than usual to take account of on-going impacts and policy responses. Work already started pre-Covid-19, including driving the roll out of full fibre broadband technology and 5G mobile communications in Dorset to enable people to travel less and access opportunities online has become more urgent and important than first imagined. We need to maximise technology so that 'jobs move to people, rather than people moving to jobs'.

Our response to the impact on our livelihoods of Covid-19 especially in the shorter term and proactive steps to respond to the climate and ecological emergency in the longer term will heavily influence the council's decisions and actions for the foreseeable future.

We cannot do this on our own and will work closely with a host of organisations and people to develop, deliver, and monitor the Action Plan to deliver this Strategy.

Cllr Gary Suttle

Portfolio holder for Economic Growth and Skills



[Diagram to be amended/updated]

3 Climate and Ecological Emergency

The economy and environment are closely linked, with climate change being one of the biggest threats to economic stability: heatwaves reduce workforce productivity; sea level rise, wildfires, flooding and high winds damage property and communities, impact human health and productivity, and negatively affect sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism; and damage to other countries around the globe affects the supply chain to UK businesses. The World Bank is warning if we don't do something immediately, climate change could push 100 million more people into poverty by 2030.

In Dorset, between 2005 and 2017, carbon emissions from Transport have risen 10% and Agriculture by 1%. Emissions from Industry have reduced by 7% and now stand at 23% of Dorset's carbon footprint or 433kt of carbon produced in 2017.

The Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) sector is slowly growing. According to the Government 2017 Clean Growth Strategy, the low carbon economy could grow 11% per year between 2015 and 2030, which is four times faster than the projected growth of the economy as a whole.

In May 2019, Dorset Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and a Climate Change Action Plan has been approved.

By 2050 we will need to develop a circular economy in Dorset - an economy based on reducing raw material use and reusing and recycling materials. Businesses have a key role by making products and materials more efficiently, reusing them and making sure wastage is designed out and re-use designed in. New raw materials should be sustainably sourced. This also offers economic opportunities for the recycling and reclaim of waste materials for future use.

A zero-carbon economy is one where emissions from the commercial and industrial sector are reduced to zero while the economy thrives. To achieve a zero-carbon economy in Dorset, businesses will need to reduce energy consumption and increase self-supply of renewable energy, reduce water use and increase the use of electric or hydrogen powered vehicles, as well as finding ways to travel less.

4 Covid-19 Respond, Recover, Reset

The immediate economic effects of the Covid-19 -crisis are becoming clearer:

- The shutdown of the tourism and leisure sector in Spring 2020, and the impact upon aviation and marine sectors is likely to affect Dorset significantly in the short term, however
- It is not likely to be one of the worst affected areas of the UK in the longer term, as Dorset usually has high levels of employment, a relatively balanced economy, and has proven resilient in recent recessions.

There will however be some sectors, areas, and elements of the community that are hit harder than others:

- Tourism and aviation/marine engineering are of concern in the medium term,
- Towns, particularly coastal towns, are likely to suffer more than other parts of Dorset
- Younger people and BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) are likely to suffer more from the longer-term economic scarring effects than older people

It is too early to tell how places and sectors will change in the medium and longer term as a result of Covid 19. For example, the recent trends for businesses to relocate to regenerated urban cores, city centre apartment living, and increased use of public transport have all been stopped in their tracks. It is not clear whether these are temporary pauses or longer-term changes in behaviour. The strategy will be reviewed frequently to check it is relevant to tomorrow's reality and enables a reset situation more sustainable and inclusive than before the pandemic.

Covid-19 recovery is being coordinated by the Local Resilience Forum and includes a Dorset Council-led working group focussed on the economy. While the local economic policy framework is fit for purpose in the longer term, there are a series of tactical and operation actions to help Dorset residents and businesses minimise the negative effects of Covid-19: -

Phase	Objectives	Timeline	Actions	Council Lead
Respond	Health first – save lives, minimise longer term economic damage	March- June 2020	<p>Informing government of local need</p> <p>Providing advice and information to local businesses and third sector organisations</p> <p>Administering business rates rebates/rebilling</p> <p>Administering government grants to local business and organisations</p>	<p>Economic Growth Comms</p> <p>Revenues and Benefits</p>

			Monitor unemployment numbers and respond as appropriate to general increase or significant business redundancies	
Recover	Restart the economy	May-December 2020	<p>Preparing “oven ready” capital projects for government funding</p> <p>Providing advice and information on how to safely reopen businesses: Government guidelines (e.g. Covid Safe), regulatory advice, industry standards (e.g. Good to Go)</p> <p>Working with Towns and Business Improvement Districts to safely reopen High Streets and Town Centres</p>	<p>Economic Growth, Transport</p> <p>Comms</p> <p>Economic Growth, highways, transport</p>
Reset	Help shape a stronger, greener more inclusive economy	August 2020 – Ongoing	Implement and update Council strategic plans for sustainable, inclusive, clean economic growth, through improved digital and transport infrastructure, an upskilled workforce, enhanced business offer, support for innovation	Economic Growth

5 Digital Infrastructure

Digital connectivity plays a key role in both improving productivity and addressing environmental challenges. The roll out and utilisation of full fibre technology and 5G will enable people to travel less and access opportunities. The impact of Covid-19 has demonstrated the absolute necessity to have reliable, resilient and up-to-date digital infrastructure to support economic activity and provide community services. The infrastructure and ability to exploit its potential are essential to enable inclusive growth and prosperity and realise the vision for clean economic growth.

What will we do?

- Complete the Superfast programme by 2021
- Ubiquitous full fibre by 2028/2033
- Stimulate investment from private sector to create a Digital Place
- Trial 5G delivery in rural areas
- Support digital inclusion among residents and businesses
- Support the most vulnerable offline residents to access services remotely
- Develop digital skills across Dorset at scale
- Provide Digital Leadership across Dorset, including creating effective and informed partnerships

How will we do it?

- Manage existing Openreach contracts
- Promote demand-led voucher schemes including the Rural Gigabit Connectivity Programme
- Support commercial full fibre delivery e.g. through asset re-use
- Work with BDUK and suppliers to develop an innovative Outside-in final 10% - 20% solution
- Deliver the 5G Rural Dorset testbed and trial programme
- Deliver the Routes to inclusion programme and Digital Hotline
- Enable the offline population through targeted, supported distribution of hundreds of devices
- Upskill 1,000 frontline staff as embedded digital champions
- Explore the opportunity to create a Dorset Digital Skills Partnership and Digital Academy for Dorset including a fibre-training facility
- Build Dorset's Digital Network
- Collaborate with local and national digital initiatives

6 People and Skills

Investment in people and skills is crucial to delivering clean and inclusive economic growth and increasing resilience against future economic shocks such as Covid-19. We will work with partners to enhance aspirations, particularly among young people, and the progression routes to high level achievement. Raising aspirations and developing skills sets are crucial to improving social mobility and overcoming deprivation. There are issues of concern across Dorset, and very evident in the more populated areas of Weymouth and Portland.

The full impact of Covid-19 on employment in Dorset over time will be closely monitored, and actions plans amended accordingly to respond to increases in unemployment numbers or changes in skills requirements.

The age structure of the current workforce means that a high proportion of people will retire over the next ten years and people their essential skills must be trained, and new skills developed to reflect advances in technologies, production and service delivery.

Investment in skills will be informed by the requirements of the key sectors for Dorset, reflecting either gaps in labour supply, the need to increase productivity, or enhance environmental performance.

What we will do?

- support the growth of new and existing businesses, and in turn support skills development and high-quality job creation
- enhance people's aspirations and skills to improve social mobility, independence and prosperity
- support growth in Dorset's low carbon economy and skills
- monitor the impact of Covid-19 on unemployment numbers and respond as appropriate to specific business losses or a general rise in unemployment

How we will do it?

- Enable information, advice and guidance and deliver inspirational events to inform young people, parents and carers of local opportunities and progression paths
- Raise young people's aspirations and develop links between schools and business
- Secure resources to prevent and reduce 16- and 17-year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or jobs without training
- Deliver the Council's commitment to developing young people's employability skills and careers plans
- Raise skills levels, especially priority sectors, including enhanced provision of further and higher education
- Facilitate a Dorset Apprenticeship Strategy with a focus on increasing starts, focusing on higher and degree level apprenticeships

- Deliver the Council's own workforce Apprenticeship Strategy and work with partners to deliver it
- Enable growth of good quality jobs at Dorset Innovation Park, our designated Enterprise Zone
- Support growth in key sectors, including advanced engineering/manufacturing, agritech, maritime commercial opportunities, aquaculture, tourism and the care sector
- Stimulate local business opportunities, innovation and skills development through council procurement of goods and services
- Promote apprenticeships to develop the council's own workforce, and work with partners to improve the creation and take-up of apprenticeships across Dorset
- Develop a multi-agency response to any significant increase in unemployment

7 Business Environment

Our aim is to ensure local businesses have access to high quality support when needed, to encourage the creation of new sustainable businesses, the growth of existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the area.

Several important sectors have the potential to drive growth in Dorset if quality and competitiveness can be maintained and improved. Opportunities to increase the value of these sectors will be identified and developed.

Table 1: Key sector prospects

Dorset Prospects	Key Sector	Growth Scenario
Potential to provide significant growth	Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing	Scope for strong local growth in high and medium-high technology manufacturing Focus on aerospace marine and defence
	Construction	Increase in jobs and productivity likely providing availability of skilled and adaptable workforce met
	ICT services	Productivity anticipated to grow above national average Support and infrastructure critical for all sector growth
Potential to increase contribution to growth if local challenges addressed	Health and social care	Significant job growth anticipated, particularly with e-health and e-care solutions
	Land based industry	Agri-tech and aquaculture priority sectors for investment and development of workforce skills
	Tourism and leisure	Job numbers to remain steady, investment to improve the Dorset 'offer' improving visitor experience, productivity and quality of employment opportunity

Intervention required to mitigate negative effects on Dorset economy	Financial and professional services	Marginal falls in jobs and GVA anticipated, reflecting national trends
	Public Administration and defence	Likely to experience continuing reduction in jobs and investment without local intervention
	Retail	Jobs fall anticipated in line with national trends and changes in retail patterns, especially towards online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced requirement for multiples to have presence in smaller locations

What will we do?

- Create an environment that encourages enterprise and business start-ups
- Ensure local businesses have access to high quality business support services
- Provide access to key information regarding the business impact of Covid-19, Brexit and environmental issues
- Dedicate resource to support existing and emerging Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- Develop the 'Visit Dorset' brand to support the visitor economy and promote sustainable tourism
- Support potential growth sectors, and sectors more severely impacted by Covid-19 (see table above)

How will we do it?

- Establish a business communications and engagement programme in order to understand local business needs and signpost support
- Liaise closely with business support providers to ensure the right services are accessible and meet the needs of the local business community across Dorset
- Work with existing Business Improvement Districts to support their programmes of activity and engage with businesses seeking to establish new BIDs
- Provide an interactive employment and commercial database
- Fund a post with Dorset Chamber to provide EU exit information for businesses
- Deliver the Low Carbon Dorset programme

8 Ideas/innovation

Innovation will be critical if Dorset is to recover quickly from the anticipated recession resulting from Covid-19. Dorset businesses spend less and have fewer people employed in research and development activity than the UK average, in part as there is no university in the Dorset Council area, therefore levels of innovation are lower than national comparators. This reduces the competitiveness and productivity of Dorset business. Increasing levels of successful innovation is key to increasing productivity and achieving clean and inclusive growth.

All businesses recognise the importance of innovation to good business practice. However, the introduction of appropriate innovation can be challenging for small businesses and securing funding in a competitive environment can be challenging for larger firms. The Council will work with partners to enable innovation to increase productivity, provide higher skilled jobs and work towards a zero-carbon economy.

What will we do?

- Secure investment in and development of the Dorset Innovation Park (DIP) advanced engineering, defence and cyber security cluster
- Develop and promote Dorset as a location for the growth of agritech and aquaculture
- Increase food productivity and security through technological development
- Drive innovation through the Council's procurement of goods and services
- Develop and promote Dorset as a location for the growth of clean and green technology
- Develop and promote Dorset as a location for the growth of technology to meet the challenges of an aging population

How will we do it?

- Promote the Dorset Innovation Park, attract and assist companies to relocate to the Park
- Deliver the Defence Innovation Centre and maximise the catalytic opportunity to attract further investment in the Park
- Deliver phase II of the Innovation Centre at Dorset Innovation Park
- Promote existing innovation offers and collaborate on development of future schemes
- Collaborate with regional universities on Industry/Academia collaboration
- Promote inward investment in Dorset to innovative sectors and companies
- Encourage incubation of innovative business

9 Place

Place based interventions are essential to aid recovery from the impacts of Covid-19, improve environmental performance and enhance Dorset as a place to work and visit, building upon the acknowledged assets of the area. Investment in place will be informed by need, opportunity and the ambition to achieve inclusive growth to ensure all elements of the community benefit from increase in prosperity.

Shaping place will require the collaboration of communities and a broad range of organisations to make meaningful changes. This will also require a clear and positive planning policy framework, to be established through the emerging Local Plan for Dorset.

Balanced growth will be crucial to improving sustainability and progressing towards zero-carbon. This will require investment in a range of supporting infrastructure, especially to ensure sufficient, reliable and increasingly green power supply across Dorset.

What will we do?

- Support sustainable development for economic growth
- Reduce commuting imbalance in targeted areas
- Work with local and national partners to enable prosperity and vibrancy in Dorset's towns, including rejuvenation of the 'High Street' where appropriate
- Lobby for increased investment to enhance power supplies across Dorset
- Secure investment in coastal resorts and delivery of improvement programmes
- Facilitate community led local development where appropriate, including LEADER type programmes utilising national resources

How will we do it?

- Enable economic growth in the Southern Dorset Corridor (aka Jurassic Corridor) to improve social mobility, reduce commuting and increase productivity
- Enable economic growth in the Northern Growth Area to ensure balanced growth of housing and employment opportunities
- Supporting the development of the 'blue and green' economies, realising the environmental assets and addressing rural remoteness and disadvantage
- Evaluate the benefits of establishing a joint venture delivery body to achieve sustainable economic growth and regeneration of key sites
- Drive investment in economic growth through the outcome of the Council's property and assets review
- Enable the provision and take-up of workspace, utilising tools such as our interactive employment and commercial database
- Link to the development of the new Local Plan for Dorset to ensure a positive planning framework emerges to provide consistency and certainty to underpin sustainable economic growth

10 Transport Infrastructure

Improvements to transport infrastructure will create healthier lifestyles, better access to jobs, combat the climate emergency and improve air quality. This will lead to a fitter and more active workforce, improved environment and reduced congestion on the roads.

What will we do?

- Improve north-south road and rail links
- Reduce congestion and improve air quality
- Maintain current bus and rail services provision including access to education
- Improve reliability of journey times through more efficient use of existing transport network
- Facilitate healthier lifestyles through modal shift to active travel, i.e. walking and cycling
- Work with the Western Gateway Sub-Regional Transport Body to write the Regional Transport Strategy
- Review the Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset Local Transport Plan

How will we do it?

- Work with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and other partners to implement sustainable transport initiatives using £79m from the Transforming Cities Fund – including improving walking and cycling to Ferndown Ind Estate and other employment sites across south east Dorset.
- Encourage engagement with the Dorset Business Travel Network, including promotion of workplace travel plans to increase sustainable travel
- Promote Car Share Dorset to reduce single occupancy car use
- Work with providers to install more publicly available EV (electric vehicle) charging points
- Encourage more home working/virtual meetings to reduce the need to travel
- Work with rail and bus service providers to maintain and where possible, improve services
- Utilise Government funding for resurfacing and reconstruction work on roads (£9.1m funding in 2020 from Department for Transport)
- Reduce carbon emissions by using low energy asphalt on all resurfacing schemes and new construction projects, such as cycleways
- Review the Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset Local Transport Plan, which will include: -
 - Access to Gillingham – improve access to housing and employment sites within the Gillingham Southern Extension including providing a new road link between A30 and B3081 west of Shaftesbury
 - Safety and capacity improvements on the A35 Dorchester Bypass at Stadium and Monkey's Jump roundabouts
 - A354 Corridor improvements
 - Dorchester Access to Growth – a package of cycle improvements
 - Provide Express Bus services to Verwood, Ferndown, West Moors and Wimborne

- Improve railway stations including provision of travel interchange facilities at Wareham and Wool

11 Implementation, Monitoring, and Review

Implementation

The Strategy outlines the high-level approach to achieving our priorities. An Action Plan will be developed based on this Strategy identifying specific actions, outputs, and timelines for their achievement. This plan will be constantly monitored and amended as appropriate as the full impact of Covid-19 on the Dorset economy is realised, and opportunities arise to make meaningful interventions in line with strategic priorities.

There are three absolute prerequisites to achieving the economic ambitions of the Council: -

- Enhanced digital infrastructure, full fibre technology and mobile connectivity, serving the whole of Dorset
- Securing additional funds and inward investment to deliver transformative schemes
- Improved capacity and reliability of power supplies and networks to drive growth, especially at key employment sites and preferably from green energy sources

Dorset Council

As a major employer and provider of services across Dorset the Council has an obligation and the ability to influence local economic growth. The purchase of goods and provision of services will seek to maximise the beneficial impact of the investment for the local economy. Economic and social considerations will inform procurement and contracting decisions, and we will drive innovation and improve skills with our suppliers.

We are recognised as a Cornerstone Employer by the Careers and Enterprise Company and will invest in its staff and with partners to raise aspirations, improve skills and support the delivery of apprenticeships.

The Council provides many services which impact directly and indirectly upon the business community. These include regulatory services such as Trading Standards and licensing, economic intelligence, low carbon advice and support, planning, highways, waste and recycling. We will enable growth aligned with this strategy and always strive to provide consistency and certainty to aid investment decisions of partners and businesses across Dorset aligned to the priorities of the Council.

Complementarity

The new Dorset unitary council has been developing policy and priorities on several inter-related topics, including the climate and ecological emergency, rural access to services and the new local plan. It is essential that these policies, their associated action plans and implementation programmes, complement each other to achieve the ambition of the Council.

Collaboration

Our ambition for the future of Dorset, and the development of the local economy, cannot be achieved by the Council working in isolation. We need the support and engagement of the people of Dorset and the business community. We will continue to engage with businesses through individual relationships, working with clusters, and through business networks and organisations.

We have a vital role to play providing a strong voice for Dorset, and will work with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership to secure resources for economic growth. We will liaise with our Members of Parliament to inform and influence Government policy and actions.

Place making underpinned by economic growth and prosperity requires collaboration with Town and Parish Councils, community and voluntary groups and a broad range of sector or location focused bodies. Innovative approaches to delivery will be explored within the national policy and funding context, including development partnerships with appropriate organisations. More details about who we will work with to enable economic growth will be included in the action plan.

Monitoring

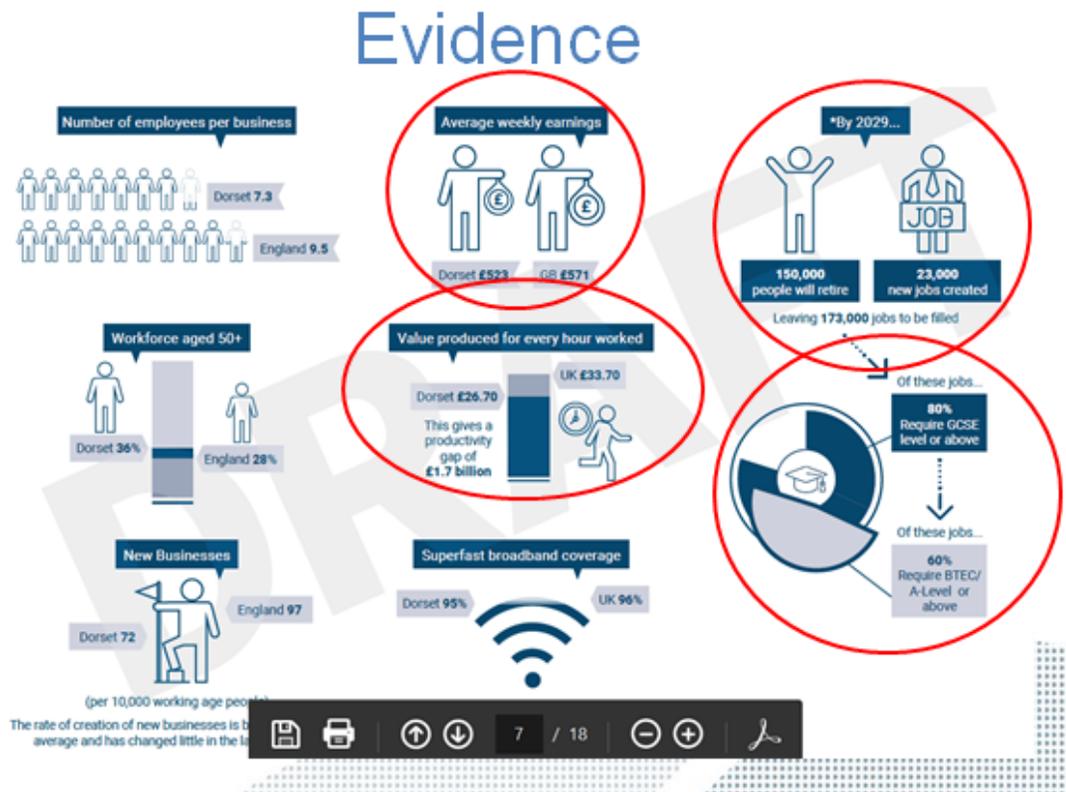
Many of the actions needed to deliver this strategy rely on collaboration with partners, and securing external funding, which will come with their own monitoring and evaluation requirements depending on the funding organisation and collaboration partners. Many projects will also contribute to the Local Industrial Strategy or other Dorset focused strategies. In general duplication of reporting is to be avoided. Where Dorset Council undertakes an action without partners or external funding, reporting and monitoring will be based on Dorset Council's own Project and Programme Management tools.

Review

Action plans would normally be reviewed annually, but in the light of the unprecedented pace of changes and uncertainty brought about by Covid-19 and Brexit, both the Strategy and proposed Action Plan will need to be reviewed more frequently by the Council.

12 Evidence Base

The principal source of evidence for this strategy is available from Dorset Insight (see link below), which presents a broad spectrum of data drawn from a wide range of published sources. The key relevant data sets are summarised in the State of Dorset report and Dorset Local Economic Assessment



13 Links and references

For in-depth data and analysis please see:

[Dorset Insight Economy Topic Data](#)

[State of Dorset report](#)

[Dorset Local Industrial Strategy Evidence Base](#)

[Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset Local Transport Plan](#)

[Dorset Council Plan 2020-2024](#)

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Before completing this EqIA please ensure you have read the EqIA Guidance Notes

Title	Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy		
Date assessment started:	13/09/2019	Version No:	4.1
		Date of completion:	24 July 2020

Type of Strategy, Policy, Project or Service:

Is this Equality Impact Assessment (please put a cross in the relevant box)

Existing:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Changing, update or revision:	<input type="checkbox"/>
New or proposed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (please explain):	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this Equality Impact Assessment (please put a cross in the relevant box)

Internal:	<input type="checkbox"/>	External:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Both:	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Members of the assessment team:	Tim Brown Freddie Amos Jon Bird Rachel Shefford Dave Walsh

Step 1: Aims

<p>What are the aims of your strategy, policy, project or service?</p> <p>The Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy (EGS) sets out our ambitions to enable clean, inclusive, sustainable and good quality economic growth across the whole Council area, and thereby bring improved standards of living, quality of life, health, and wellbeing for all of Dorset's residents, ensuring we have great places to live, work and visit.</p> <p>This EGS presents the Councils priorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Dorset as a place to do business and attract inward investment • Support the creation and growth of new sustainable business and in turn support job creation • Improve transport and digital connectivity across the area • Enhance aspirations and skills to improve social mobility <p>The strategy intends to have a positive benefit to all the protected characteristics including Dorset Council area characteristics, however, until the action plan is developed and implemented, we are unclear what the actual outcomes will be for the different protected</p>
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characteristic groups. Therefore, when assessing the impact of this strategy in Section 3 of this EqIA we do not have enough information to make an informed decision and therefore have suggested it is unclear.

What is the background or context to the proposal?

The EGS sets out the key economic growth priorities and actions for Dorset Council. Before the creation of Dorset Council in April 2019 each District Council and Dorset County Council had their own economic growth strategies.

Step 2: Intelligence and Communication

What data, information, evidence and research was used in this EqIA and how has it been used to inform the decision-making process?

The principal source of data used to inform both the EGS and EqIA is *Dorset Insight*, which presents a broad spectrum of data drawn from a wide range of published sources. The data reports reviewed for this EqIA were: Population, Economic deprivation, Economic Inclusion and the overall *State of Dorset report*.

What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your proposal will have an impact on?

The Dorset Insight reports covering the Dorset Council area highlighted, for example:

- The proportion of the population of working age is in decline, whilst 65+ is in steady growth.
- The Dorset Council area overall has a high rate of economically active residents and a low unemployment rate.
- Average weekly earnings are below the South West average.
- Weymouth & Portland contains communities with nationally very high levels of deprivation including employment deprivation and income deprivation as shown on the index of multiple deprivation (IMD) (<https://apps.geowessex.com/insights/Topics/Topic/Deprivation>)
- The proportion of workers in Dorset with Level 4+ skills (e.g. Higher National Certificate HNC) is lower than the South West average despite demand increasing for higher skills to fill jobs.
- The proportion of businesses finding it hard to find skilled employees is rising.
- Workers and learners in rural areas find it hard to use public transport due to availability and cost.

What engagement or consultation has taken place as part of this EqIA?

Dorset Council ran 6 events targeting business owners and managers. The events were promoted using social media, Dorset Councils' business and economy newsletter and via business groups and support organisations.

The events were held at the following locations during November/ December 2019:

- Sturminster Newton
- Wareham
- Dorchester
- Weymouth
- Bridport
- Wimborne

Voting handsets were used at these meetings to gather immediate feedback on a range of topics. c140 delegates voted on a range of questions relating to the local economy raised at the events.

In order to include the views of individuals, businesses and organisations unable to attend the events an online survey was also open from December to February. The survey was promoted using social media, Dorset Councils' business and economy newsletter and via business groups and support organisations. The survey was completed by 12 business owners, 2 employees on behalf of a business and 14 'other' (councillor, resident or organisation).

Is further information needed to help inform this proposal?

No

How will the outcome of consultation be fed back to those who you consulted with?

The EGS will be made available on Dorset Councils' website with hardcopies accessible at council offices. It will be promoted via social media, Dorset Councils' business and economy newsletter and via business groups and support organisations.

Step 3: Assessment

Who does the service, strategy, policy, project or change impact?

- If your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option. Please cut and paste the template accordingly.

For each protected characteristic please choose from the following options:

- Please note in some cases more than one impact may apply – in this case please state all relevant options and explain in the ‘Please provide details’ box.

Positive Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact on a large proportion of protected characteristic groups • Significant positive impact on a small proportion of protect characteristics group
Negative Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disproportionate impact on a large proportion of protected characteristic groups • Significant disproportionate impact on a small proportion of protected characteristic groups.
Neutral Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Age:	Positive
What age bracket does this affect?	All ages but particularly young people approaching or entering the workforce.
Please provide details:	<p>The Action Plan will include the following activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable information, advice and guidance and deliver inspirational events to inform young people, parents and carers of local opportunities and progression paths • Raise young people's aspirations and develop links between schools and business • Secure resources to prevent and reduce 16- and 17-year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or jobs without training • Deliver the Council's commitment to developing young people's employability skills and careers plans • Raise skills levels, especially priority sectors, including enhanced provision of further and higher education • Facilitate a Dorset Apprenticeship Strategy with a focus on increasing starts, focusing on higher and degree level apprenticeships • Deliver the Council's own workforce Apprenticeship Strategy and work with partners to deliver it

Disability:	Unclear
Does this affect a specific disability group?	No
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.

Gender Reassignment & Gender Identity:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.

Pregnancy and maternity:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.

Race and Ethnicity:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.
Religion or belief:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.
Sexual orientation:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.
Sex:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.
Marriage or civil partnership:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.
Carers:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.
Rural isolation:	Positive
Please provide details:	The Strategy includes action specifically designed to address rural isolation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable economic growth in the Southern Dorset Corridor (aka Jurassic Corridor) to improve social mobility, reduce commuting and increase productivity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable economic growth in the Northern Growth Area to ensure balanced growth of housing and employment opportunities • Supporting the development of the 'blue and green' economies, realising the environmental assets and addressing rural remoteness and disadvantage • Deliver the 5G Rural Dorset testbed and trial programme • Maintain current bus and rail services provision including access to education
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Single parent families:	Unclear
Please provide details:	The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.

Poverty (social & economic deprivation):	Positive
Please provide details:	One of the aims of the EGS is to enhance aspirations and skills to improve social mobility. A range of actions focussed on supporting young people has been identified (as shown in 'Age' above). In addition, support will be provided for economic growth priority areas (Jurassic Corridor and Northern Growth Area) and low pay sectors (e.g. the care sector).

Military families/veterans:	Unclear
Please provide details:	<p>The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the Action Plan.</p> <p>Dorset Council promotes the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure all members of the armed forces community are treated fairly.</p>

Step 4: Action Plan

Provide actions for **positive**, **negative** and **unclear** impacts.

If you have identified any **negative** or **unclear** impacts, describe what adjustments will be made to remove or reduce the impacts, or if this is not possible provide justification for continuing with the proposal.

Issue	Action	Person(s) responsible	Deadline	How will it be monitored?
Consultation and engagement on the strategy	Hold a series of business consultation events across Dorset during Nov & Dec 2019	Tim Brown		
Input from EAP	03/07/2020			
Cabinet approval	23/07/2020			
Action plan to be developed	Post strategy approval for September 2020			
EqIA to be updated on the formation of the Action plan and consideration to be given to EqIAs for specific programmes of activity.	Following Cabinet approval			

Step 5: EqIA Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA:	Tim Brown	Date:	24 July 2020
Equality Lead:	Susan Ward-Rice	Date:	26 August 2020
Equality & Diversity Action Group Chair:	Dr David Bonner	Date:	26 August 2020