

**Annual Meeting of Council
12 May 2022**

Questions submitted by Councillors

Question 1 – submitted by Cllr Maria Roe

In May 2019 Dorset Council declared not only a climate change emergency but also an ecological emergency. Dorset Council has many opportunities to show leadership on strengthening and protecting the natural environment.

Since November 2019 I have been trying to find out what Dorset Council's policy is on the use of glyphosate. I have had many discussions and emails with officers and I have had many different and conflicting responses. Some officers tell me that glyphosate is only used under statute to maintain hard surfaces and highways and used in exceptional circumstances to control pervasive weeds such as Japanese knotweed.

In November 2021 at the Places and Resources Scrutiny Committee the Climate Change & Ecological Emergency Strategy Progress report stated definitively that glyphosate will now only be used as a management tool for highway verges. However, this is quite clearly not the case as glyphosate is used on SANGs quite liberally. Where I live it has been sprayed down by the riverbank, around drain covers, 2 foot strips around a children's play area, around information boards, around the base of trees. I have been told that using Roundup ProVantage, which is readily available in supermarkets, will not have an adverse impact on bees and other insects, animals, or people. The last email I received stated that the Roundup herbicide has been one of the most trusted herbicides in the world for more than 35 years.

The reality is that it is highly toxic, and the science is being undermined. In 2020 and 2021 a landmark court cases have been taking place in the United States against Monsanto and the new owner Bayer. Settlements of 100,000 Roundup lawsuits of \$10.9 billion and \$2 billion for personal injury have been made for people suffering from cancer.

Professor Dave Goulson from the School of Life Sciences at the University of Sussex has for many years warned of the dangers of using glyphosate. The University of Birmingham published research in December 2020 where they tested keystone species and found that even at approved regulatory levels glyphosate causes significant DNA damage, embryonic development failure and interferes with the metabolism and gut function of animals.

My question is - what is Dorset Council's policy on the use of glyphosate?

Question 2 – submitted by Cllr Kelvin Clayton

The Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy states that it "has a key role in lobbying government for clear policy and financial support required for the transition to a zero-carbon future". The Notice of Motion, proposed by the Leader of the Council, and approved at the last Council, calls for the Council to urge "the Government to introduce an energy policy with the principal objective of securing energy self-sufficiency from as early a date as possible, utilising whatever forms of energy generation sourced from within the UK are necessary to this end". Unless the latter is restricted zero-carbon energy, how does it intend to do both?

Question 3 – submitted by Cllr Belinda Bawden

Article 5.2(b) of the Council's Constitution states that it is the responsibility of the Chairman of Council "to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently with regards to the rights of Members and the interests of the community".

Do these rights of Members include the right to speak in opposition to a Notice of Motion?

Question 4 – submitted by Cllr Alex Brenton

Since declaring a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019, Dorset Council has made substantial changes to the way the council operates, working towards being Carbon Neutral by **2050**. There is a welcome expansion of renewable energy schemes, the transport fleet is changing the use and procurement of vehicles.

However, there is one area where Dorset is **not** preparing for a low carbon future and that is in Planning Policy and Procedure. We are still permitting new buildings which are not fit for the next 30 years. They are neither Carbon Neutral in building techniques or use by residents.

As a Planning Committee we are constantly told that we **CANNOT demand** Carbon reduction measures as we have **no policy, and we cannot have a Policy until the Local Plan is agreed and accepted and even then it is subject to Government Building regulations which may or may not encourage these measures.**

In our Planning Officers reports we have a nod to Climate Change – usually indicating whether there is a bus service or train station nearby, as though lower car use is the only solution.

If we can ask for biodiversity and environmental surveys, why can we not ask for a Dorset Protocol NOW which demands information before the application is accepted.

On: -

Building techniques which reduce wastage and excess concrete use,

Solar energy capture from roof tiles or garden array,

Passive heat systems – ground or air source heat pumps,

Rainwater collection and storage and reuse,

Permeable outside ground coverings (drives and patios)

Most Councillors on Dorset Planning Committees believe we urgently need a Policy on Carbon Footprint of all new buildings. **When can we expect this to be delivered?**

Question 5 – submitted by Cllr Alex Brenton

Every new building involves more impermeable covered space increasing rainfall run off and every dwelling produces sewage. Natural England is concerned that mitigation measures to stop Eutrophication are not enough. In the meantime, planning permission will only be granted if Dorset Council can be satisfied that it will not lead to an adverse effect upon the

integrity of a protected habitat as a consequence of the impact of nutrient enrichment upon water quality.

All properties in my ward drain eventually into the Poole Harbour basin. **Can I assume that as our pumping and treatment plant in Lymington Matravers already overflows regularly and cannot cope with existing flows that NO New Buildings will be permitted in Lymington Matravers for the foreseeable future?**