



Welcome

This is our two-year plan, which sets out our priorities for 2022 to 2024. It is a summary of our Strategic Delivery Plan which sets out in detail, how we will deliver these priorities over the next two years.

It isn't a list of the hundreds of services that the council provides, nor does it detail all the huge progress we have made since the council was created in 2019. Achievement of our initial objectives set out in the LGR prospectus is something to be particularly proud because of the huge challenges during the pandemic. This is now our bold and ambitious look *forward*. It identifies the key priorities we want to focus on during the next two years. It is our commitment to you, our residents, and our partners.

Dorset responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with compassion and bravery, and that has given us a renewed sense of determination and ambition. I am optimistic that we can look back with pride having delivered the objectives set out below. We ask you to judge our success accordingly. Democracy is an important part of our society. The administration will stand on our record of achievements. We have worked hard and been able to fulfil the needs and aspirations of the communities of Dorset.

Local Ward Councillors play a key role in supporting their communities and ensuring that the local voices are heard; and issues both individual and community-wide are dealt with in an effective and timely manner. Do keep them informed about local issues which affect you. Offer constructive challenge and by working together we can continue to make Dorset a great place to live, work and visit.

The same can be said about the strong and productive partnerships we have established with key stakeholders helping to create bold and ambitious relationships which deliver the best outcomes for the people of Dorset.

Thank you,

Cllr Spencer Flower

Leader of Dorset Council

Leadership mission statement

As advocates for Dorset residents, we will continue to be bold and ambitious to ensure that we achieve the best outcomes for residents. We will continue to lobby Ministers and Dorset Members of Parliament on a regular basis to ensure a fairer deal for Dorset from Government.

Our vision for 2022 - 24 is centered on the following aims:

1. **Dorset Local Plan** – Take a different approach to Local Plan preparation by being far more strategic, including a two-year extension for having an approved plan. To continue to work with Homes England and the New Communities Team to deliver a sustainable garden town within the Dorset area.
2. **Housing for local people**- Develop progressive relationships with developing registered providers operating in Dorset, working together deliver affordable housing to rent for local people. Build on our investment in council owned temporary accommodation to substantially reduce the dependance on bed and breakfast for those who are homeless and need our support in the short term.
3. **Climate and Ecological Strategy** – Deliver on our agreed policy and commitments and establish bidding capability to attract Government funding to enable the council to progressively meet its net zero target by 2040.
4. **Adult Social Care** - Develop and deliver reform to cope with increased demand at a stable or mitigated cost level.
5. **Children’s Services** – Continue radical reforms with the roll out of the £37.5m SEND invest to save programme and commit to 2020-2023 Children’s Plan and the Strategic Alliance for Children & Young People
6. **Assets and Property** – Drive the disposal and repurposing programme and develop a master plan with services to maximise the potential of the Dorset Centre of Excellence in Shaftesbury.
7. **Working with the Integrated Care System** – Getting a better deal for Dorset Council as equal partners by establishing place as the key platform, bringing early intervention to social care. This will this ensure the best outcomes for those who need our support and offer the best opportunity for this to come at an affordable cost to the council and the NHS.
8. **Community Safety** – Working closely with Dorset Police to ensure we achieve the best outcomes when dealing with local crime and anti-social behaviour. Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to make Dorset the safest county in the country.
9. **County Deal** – Working with BCP, submit a bid to Government for a County Deal for the whole of the County of Dorset, in collaboration with the Dorset LEP, to enhance and drive economic development and the skills agenda and attract additional Government funding into Dorset.
10. **Digital Innovation** – Continue to pioneer new technologies and create the foundations of a longer-term economic development. Work to safeguard and encourage job retention and growth, through direct action and through positive engagement to the private sector.

Understanding Dorset

Population

Dorset Council area has a population of 380,000 residents, 30% of whom are aged 65 and older (compared to 19% in England and Wales).

Dorset is an attractive place, and many people choose to retire here. It has a large population of older people, and relatively low birth rates. Currently there are over 7,000 people in Dorset living with dementia, and the number is increasing. Younger people often move away from the area. The population continues to grow slowly, driven by people moving into the county and longer life expectancy. The greatest part of population growth is among over 65s. Dorset's working age population is expected to see a marginal decline over the next 25 years.

The Dorset rural idyll can conceal hidden deprivation. There are significant areas of deprivation, mostly in urban areas (mainly Weymouth and Portland) and also in the east of Dorset in Ferndown, Wimborne and Verwood and also some rural deprivation due to isolation and difficulty accessing housing, transport and essential services. Crime is generally low in Dorset, although anti-social behaviour and rural crime are an ongoing problem.

The population is predominantly white British, with 4.4% of our residents from ethnically diverse communities.

Natural, geological and historic environment

Dorset's natural environment is a great asset.

95 miles of coast in Dorset and Devon are classified as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site – the only one in England. Over half of Dorset is covered by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation; 7% of Dorset is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest; and Dorset has one of the largest areas of protected lowland heath in Europe.

These designations together mark Dorset as a special place but also present challenges in terms of available land for delivering housing and employment development.

Dorset also has a rich historic environment, with one in twenty of all the protected ancient monuments in England, a well preserved pre-historic landscape and around 10,000 listed buildings.

Economy and infrastructure

Employment in Dorset is high but, like the UK, our economy has a productivity gap. Manufacturing, health, retail, education and hospitality are all big employers in Dorset. 20,000 businesses are based in Dorset: 86% are micro firms and fewer than 1% are large firms. Dorset's economy is worth around £8.1 billion and provides 147,000 jobs. Dorset has an above average number of advanced engineering and manufacturing businesses, but there is also a continuing seasonal, low skill, low wage economy with tourism and agriculture significant industries. The area is rich in valuable minerals, including stone, sand/gravel and oil.

Earnings are below average and house prices are high with affordability issues for many young people and keyworkers.

Dorset has no motorway but over 2,500 miles of roads. 96% of premises in the Dorset Council area have access to superfast broadband. 13% of premises in the Dorset Council area have access to full-fibre broadband.

The pandemic in Dorset

Over 25,400 people in Dorset (approximately 7% of our population) had to shield. Sadly between 2020 and 2021 589 people in Dorset died within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test. The council and its partners provided a wide range of support, including:

- Handling 34,559 calls through our COVID-19 contact centre, coordinating food parcel and prescription deliveries, practical help with everyday tasks and befriending
- Administering £250 million of government grants to support local businesses
- Accommodating 49 rough sleepers and homeless households as part of the "everyone in" initiative
- Delivering 2,025 food packages and helped local COVID-19 support groups
- Working with partners to provide nearly 600,000 vaccines
- Vaccinating 96% of care home staff including agency staff

Partners and partnerships

The pandemic has changed how we live, work and think, and one thing it has proved is just how much more we can achieve by working together, across sectors and organisations, to protect those in greatest need. Hundreds of organisations responded to the crisis, including voluntary and community groups, town and parish councils, nurseries, schools and colleges, health and social care providers, registered housing providers and the police, not to mention residents. We need to keep that energy and spirit of collaboration alive as we move towards a 'new normal', and focus on delivering the priorities described below.

We can't do this in isolation. Key partners include organisations in the health and social care economy, voluntary and community organisations, education providers, the local business community, Dorset's Local Nature Partnership, digital infrastructure providers, the Jurassic Coast Trust, Dorset Wildlife Trust, the National Trust, Natural England, Homes England, Dorset Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, Community Land Trusts, Public Health England, colleagues in the Integrated Care System, Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (and subsequent bodies), Dorset Healthcare Trust, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the ambulance service, transport providers, the Armed Forces and probation services.



Our values, behaviours and principles

Delivery of our priorities is undertaken in line with our core organisational values. As an organisation we will continue to work with and for residents according to our principles and behaviours.

Our values

- We are an advocate for Dorset on a local, national and global stage
- We work together with our communities and our partners to make things happen
- We put people first and design services around their needs now and in future
- We are open, accessible and accountable
- We use time and money wisely
- We value people and build on their strengths

Our behaviours

Responsibility • Respect • Recognition • Collaboration



Our equality objectives

- Fostering good relations with and within the community
- Developing and supporting a diverse workforce
- Developing, commissioning and delivering inclusive and responsive services

Our principles



We are committed to opposing Modern Slavery and recognise the role we can play as a public sector organisation in its identification and disruption. As such, we have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of Modern Slavery and we are committed to acting ethically with integrity and transparency in all that we do, whether alongside our internal workforce or externally with partners and suppliers.

Our long-term vision and transformation plan

Our priorities focus on key areas for 2022-24 but our big plans for Dorset don't end there. This shorter-term vision is supported by medium and long-term plans to enable Dorset to think 'bigger and bolder' in our aspirations with and for Dorset residents.

- **Short term:** Priorities for remainder of this political administration 2022 – 24
- **Medium Term:** Priorities for the following 5 years 2024 – 2029
- **Long-term:** Our aspirations for 2029 and beyond

This longer-term vision will see Dorset develop our already exciting plans to work with our health partners on our integrated care system '[Our Dorset](#)'.

We have joined up to tackle all the things that affect our health and wellbeing, make real change, and improve things for our communities. These plans will accelerate during the short-term and are critical for us to successfully deliver our long-term aims.

Our transformation plan aligns to the following principles to ensure a consistent #onecouncil approach to change. Our approach is to empower the organisation to think big and 'be the change you want to see' with customers at the heart of all that we do.

1. **Being more commercial** – modernising the way we operate to ensure we are business friendly, behaving in a more business-like way and commissioning as one council.
2. **Transforming the customer experience** – working together to design and deliver modern, accessible services to our customers.
3. **Delivering climate and ecological priorities** – ensuring our change programme delivers in line with our climate and ecological strategy.
4. **Making the best use of our assets and leading economic growth** - reviewing the Dorset Council estate to ensure best use and value of assets and driving economic growth adopting a focus on places and spaces.
5. **Implementing a digital, intelligent, data led approach** - using our data to help us predict demand and improve our prevention agenda.
6. **Shaping the Integrated Care System** – working with partners to transform together as we remove traditional divisions between services, so people and communities get the support and care that they need.

Our priorities for Dorset

Our priorities for 2022-24 are designed to help describe how we will continue to strive to make Dorset a great place to live, work and visit.

We remain focused on improving the lives of **people** in Dorset as well as protecting and enhancing our local **places**.

Some of our priorities are key enablers for others and to successfully meet these, we will work harder to work together as #onecouncil, making it easier and quicker for residents to access the services they need.

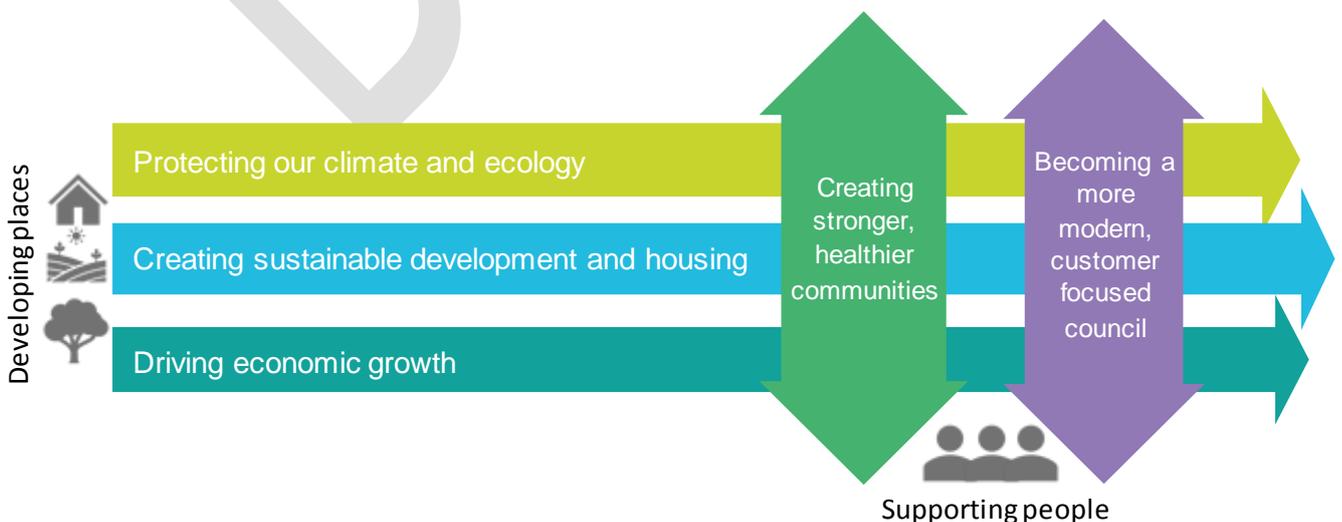
These priorities have been developed to reflect our key areas of focus over the next two years and are collectively established from the following:

- The local political vision and manifesto
- Our transformation principles
- Planned improvement of our core services
- Response to legislative change or government initiatives

Dorset Council also builds flexibility into planning to enable us to respond quickly during times of emergency or crisis. For 2022-24 this includes, but is not limited to, leading a local response to the following:

- The covid-19 pandemic response and recovery
- The war in Ukraine and the provision of asylum to families
- The cost-of-living crisis and the impact of this on residents and businesses in Dorset

This document is a summary of our Strategic Delivery Plan which sets out in detail, how we will deliver these priorities over the next two years. Key actions for each priority are monitored and reported on quarterly to the Dorset Council Cabinet and annually in a report prepared for all Dorset Councillors, residents, businesses, and our partners.



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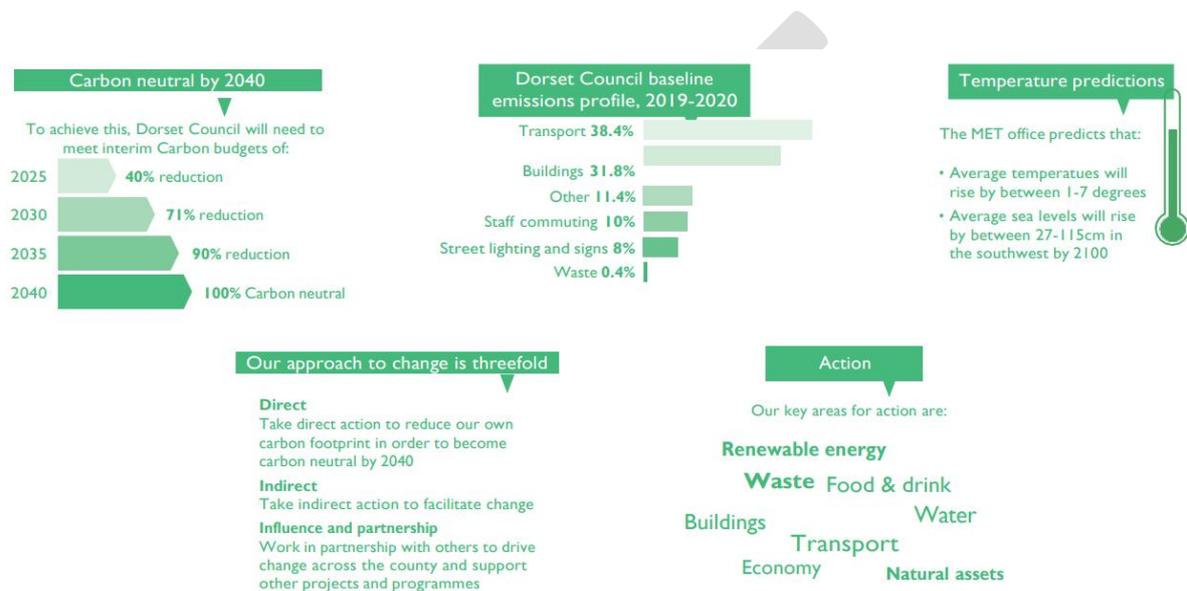
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Protecting our climate and ecology

We will improve access to and use of Dorset’s environment in a sustainable way which protects it for future generations

Dorset Council will take the necessary decisions and actions to be carbon-neutral by 2040, reverse the decline of our natural places by 2030 and provide leadership to the whole of Dorset to become carbon-neutral including adaptation by 2050.

Dorset Council’s focus in this priority is ensuring that the council meets its net zero target by 2040.



Dorset Council declared a climate and ecological emergency at its first Full Council meeting and in July 2021 adopted a strategy and action plan setting out how the council will respond.

This commits us to taking direct action across our operations to become a carbon-neutral Council by 2040, and through our wide ranging services and partnerships, to facilitate the changes required for the whole of Dorset to become carbon-neutral by 2050, and to protect and enhance biodiversity across Dorset.

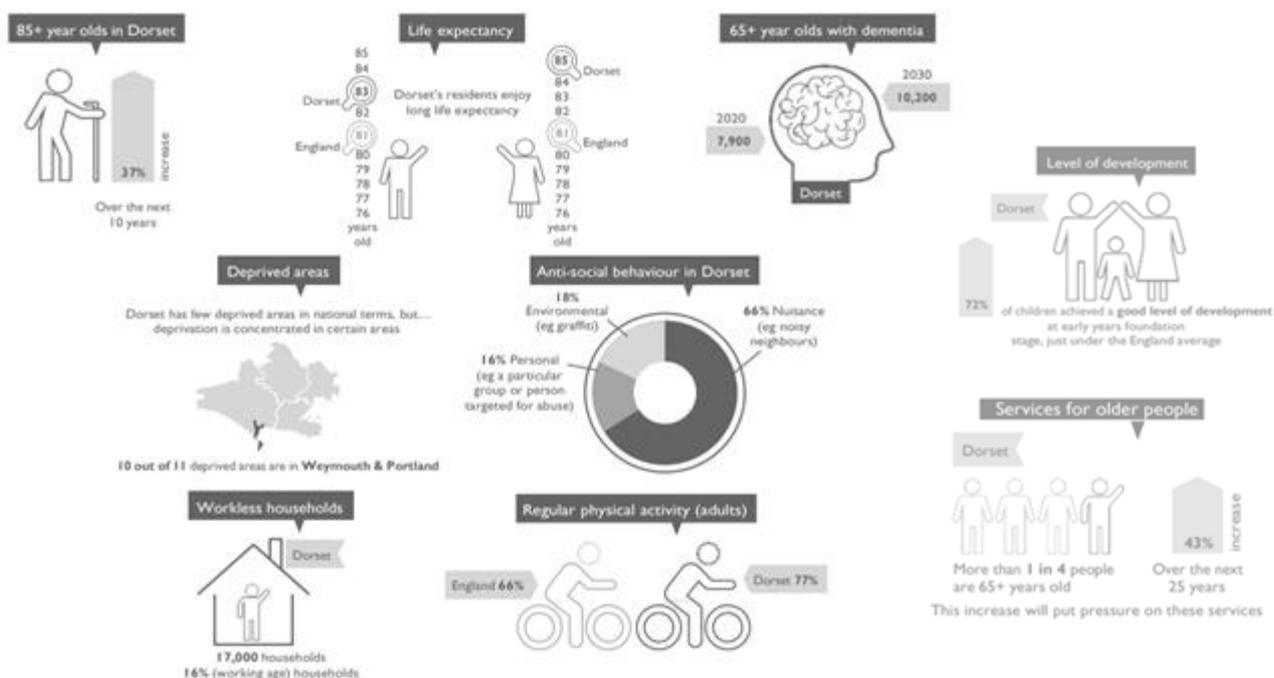
The strategy set the direction of travel over nine areas: buildings and assets, waste, water, economy, transport, natural assets, food and drink, and renewable energy.

Our detailed ambitions and the delivery plan to support this priority are set out in our strategic delivery plan.

Creating stronger, healthier communities

We will enable our residents, working with partners, to develop strong networks of support and maintain strong communities. Dorset Council will improve wellbeing and reduce inequality through collaboration between public services, community leaders and residents.

To be added by end June: 1 or 2 high level metrics for this priority



This priority is focussed on people: those most vulnerable where the council has a duty to protect, and our communities and the power of our collective effort.

The pandemic has intensified the challenges many vulnerable adults and our children and young people face, and there are widespread concerns about the impact on babies and the very youngest from lost learning, families facing job losses and diminished income, and the impact of social distancing and lockdowns on mental health and wellbeing.

One of the most positive things to have emerged from the pandemic has been the speed and determination of communities, voluntary and community groups, town and parish councils, local shops and other organisations to support those who need it.

Local council budgets have reduced every year for over a decade now and the reality is that we cannot continue to provide everything residents, businesses and visitors want and need, so it is more important than ever that we find the best way of working together, and help communities to help themselves.

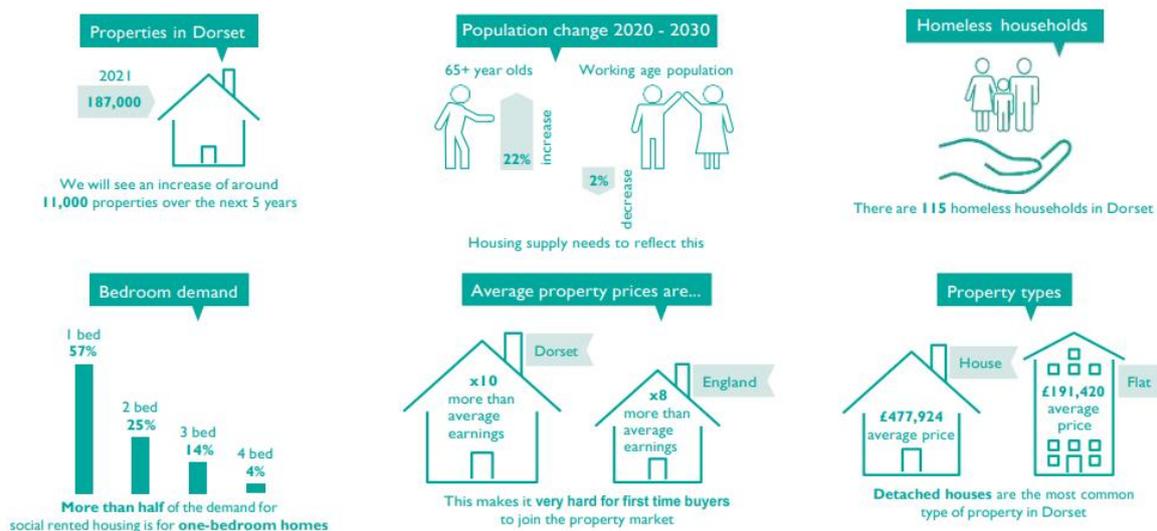
Whether by volunteering for a local group, standing for your local town or parish council, making a donation to a local food bank, offering your time and expertise to a local initiative or simply learning more about your local community, everyone can do something. The council will continue to support new community groups and initiatives to help make this happen.

Our detailed ambitions and the delivery plan to support this priority are set out in our strategic delivery plan.

Creating sustainable development and housing

We will work with government, registered housing providers, community land trusts and local housing partners to deliver affordable, suitable and decent housing in a more effective legislative framework

To be added by end June: 1 or 2 high level metrics for this priority



COVID-19 has put enormous pressure on housing services. The pre-existing shortage of suitable land for housing development, combined with the legal requirement to house everyone who was homeless during the pandemic, and problems with the supply chain in the construction industry, have added considerably to a service that was already under enormous pressure.

We must also monitor whether changing work practices is putting additional pressure on market housing – purchase and rents – from people moving into Dorset. Working with partners and private owners will be critical in coming months and years to prevent homelessness and reduce reliance on short term or poor quality temporary accommodation.

As Dorset Council develops its bold long-term vision from 2022 – 2050 we will take a different approach to Local Plan preparation by being far more strategic, including a two-year extension for having an approved plan. We will continue to work with Homes England and the New Communities Team to deliver a sustainable garden town within the Dorset area.

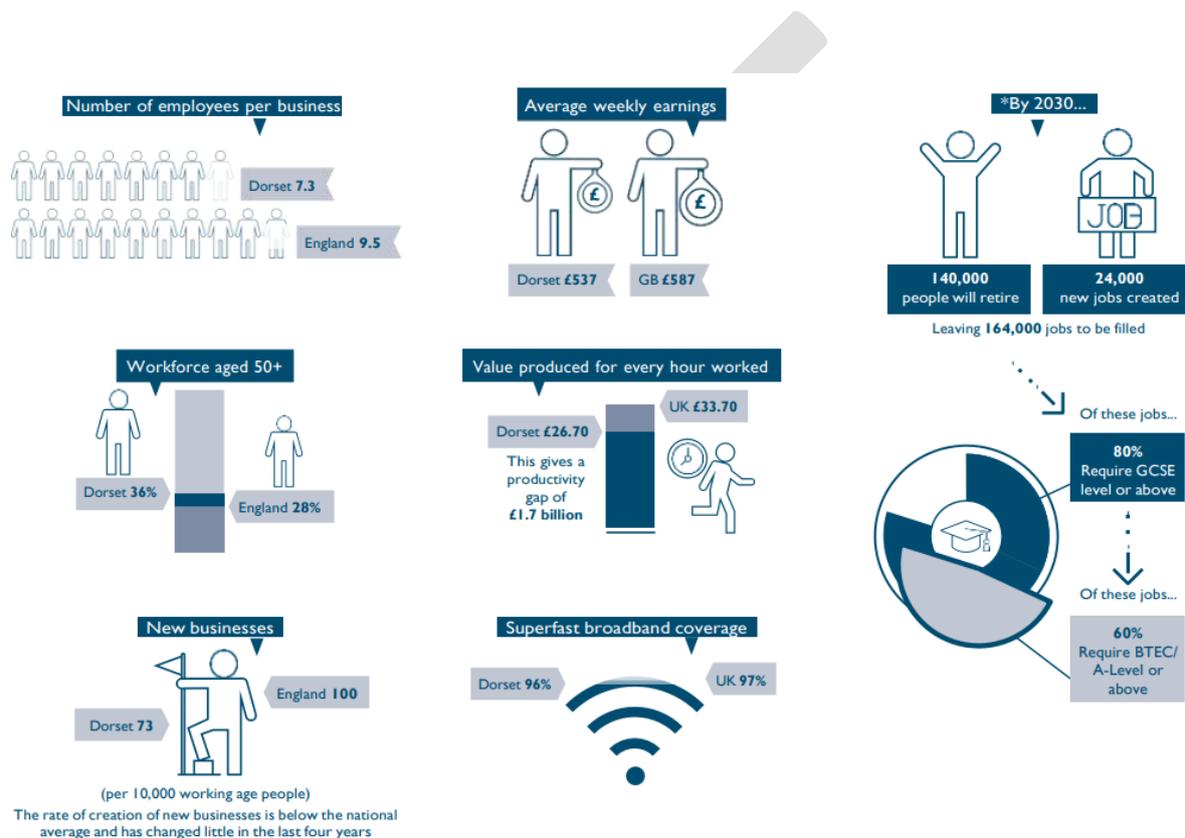
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Driving economic growth

We will deliver sustainable economic growth, increasing productivity and the number of high-quality jobs in Dorset, creating great places to live, work and visit.

Dorset Council will create the right conditions to create a highly skilled workforce matched to high-quality jobs, helping businesses stay, start, grow, and be attracted to Dorset.

To be added by end June: 1 or 2 high level metrics for this priority



COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Dorset's economy, though precisely what those impacts are, and how long they will last, will take years to fully understand. The council has worked hard to ensure local businesses have received government grants, distributing over £250m in just 12 months.

The pandemic has accelerated flexible and remote working for many people, and this has enormous potential to support Dorset's low-carbon economy and promote digital skills in future. We need to work together to build on this opportunity, drive the roll out of full fibre technology and 5G to enable people to travel less and access opportunities online so that Dorset's economy can become stronger and more environmentally sustainable

Our detailed ambitions and the delivery plan to support this priority are set out in our strategic delivery plan.

Becoming a more modern, customer focused council

We will create a modern, customer focussed council with our residents, communities and partners with an emphasis on innovation

To be added by end June: 1 or 2 high level metrics and infographics for this priority

Dorset Council is modernising the way it operates to ensure we are efficient and more accessible for residents and achieve best value for money. We will improve customer experience by simplifying and joining up the ways we work as much as we can. We want residents to be able to access the information and support they need quickly and easily via means that are most suited to them, including a consistent digital offer.

We want to attract the most skilled people to work with us and will use opportunities that remote working has provided during the pandemic to do this.

Further embedding a principle of engagement with our communities and embedding tools will enable us to continue to make community-informed decisions. This will enable us to demonstrably increase the reach of our services within the community across different groups who may need different levels of support.

Our detailed ambitions and the delivery plan to support this priority are set out in our strategic delivery plan.