

The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State
Minister for Energy, Clean Growth &
Climate Change
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Date: 29 April 2022

✉ cllrspencer.flower@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Sent via email

handsq@parliament.uk

minister.hands@beis.gov.uk

Dear Minister

Dorset Council was created as a new unitary authority on 1 April 2019. At the first full Council meeting of Dorset Council on 16 May 2019 it agreed to declare a climate emergency. Extensive work was taken forward following that resolution. In July 2021 Dorset Council adopted its Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy. This strategy sets out how Dorset Council intends to take forward the necessary actions to deliver a carbon-neutral Dorset by 2040.

This matter continues to be at the forefront of the Council's thinking. At the most recent meeting of the full Council on Thursday 14 April 2022 two motions were considered on the matter of climate and ecological sustainability. As a result of this the Council has resolved to raise certain matters with you and also with the Minister for Planning and the Local Government Association. In this letter I am setting out those matters and whilst writing to you as the Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change. I am copying this letter to Rt Hon Stuart Andrew Minister of State for Housing who has responsibility for planning and Cllr James Jamieson Chairman of the Local Government Association as our resolution also calls on their support in the matters which we have raised.

Dorset Council is mindful of the current experience of global conflict and uncertainty. We therefore urge Government to introduce an energy policy with the principal objective of securing permanent UK energy self-sufficiency from as early a date as possible, utilising whatever forms of energy generation sourced from within the UK as are necessary to this end, including wind, solar and hydrogen. The Council calls on the Government still to meet its declared 2050 net zero carbon target, through a continuous reduction in the reliance on fossil fuels and by strategies designed to alter present patterns of energy demand and consumption and the promotion of sustainable energy sources.

In the shorter term, we urge the Government to introduce flexibilities when considering the need for national energy self-sufficiency. This will recognise the serious, long-lasting national security implications of the instability that accompanies the present but unavoidable need to import energy, and which is also a principal driver in the cost-of-living crisis now facing this country.

I am currently in dialogue with the DLUHC Secretary of State Michael Gove and the Housing Minister Stuart Andrew about the forthcoming Planning White Paper. Dorset Council would strongly recommend that the Government includes in the forthcoming Planning White Paper proposals for a review of the Minerals section of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order that Planning Authorities may have due and proper regard to the implications of climate change when preparing Local Plans and other planning policies.

Dorset Council is a member of the Local Government Association and we have worked closely with the LGA to draw upon best practice in setting up our new planning service. Through the LGA we have engaged with other councils in the discussions we have had about the Government's forthcoming Planning

White Paper. The Council calls upon the Local Government Association to reinforce the national case for changes that will enable Local Planning Authorities to have significantly greater influence in the determination of planning applications relating to the extraction of minerals in their areas.

Dorset Council works closely with its neighbouring councils on a wide range of matters. In support of our resolution, we will reach out to our neighbouring and near-neighbouring principal authorities, Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole, Cornwall, Devon, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire to seek their support in the matters which we have set out in this letter. We would respectfully request Government to engage both directly and through the LGA with these councils on those matters set out in this letter which are of mutual concern.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Flower', written in a cursive style.

Cllr Spencer Flower

Leader – Dorset Council

cc: The Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP Minister of State (Minister for Housing)
Cllr James Jamieson Chairman Local Government Association
Michael Tomlinson MP
Simon Hoare MP
Richard Drax MP
Chris Loder MP