

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee – Draft scope for review

Review topic	Grid Capacity
Suggested method for review	<p>Task and finish group – 8 members to include the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee. To include committee and wider (non-executive) Council membership.</p> <p>To report back to the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee.</p>
Lead Officer	<p>Steven Ford – Corporate Director TID and Environment Antony Littlechild – Sustainability Team Manager</p>
Reason for undertaking the review	<p>This is a complex, technical and strategic issue - Dorset has a highly constrained grid network.</p> <p>There is limited local input into decisions, which are bound by a series of complex ‘price control’ rounds of investment and regulation by Ofgem. Grid matters have a large impact on the local area and priorities of Dorset Council and underpin the council’s net zero ambitions as articulated in its climate and ecological strategy and action plan, its development plans and the wider economic aspirations.</p> <p>Reports have highlighted that grid capacity in Dorset is already constrained and a likely barrier to low carbon investment and the delivery of Dorset’s net zero ambitions as well as economic growth in the area. An inability to connect renewable energy at the scale required is a serious inhibitor to the decarbonisation of energy. Grid issues are already known to have affected the delivery of several Dorset Council programmes.</p> <p>There is a need to better understand the implications of the grid constraints and what the future plans are for the network. Given the complexity and interrelationships that are involved in the regulation, oversight and operation of the grid, it is felt that a review into the current and planned position would be beneficial to understand the next best steps and bring the discussion into a public forum.</p>
Key issues to be examined	<p>To gain a wider understanding of grid capacity issues and better understand the grid constraints in Dorset (as well as regionally and nationally) and future plans in place.</p> <p>To explore how grid capacity issues and constraints affect Dorset Council’s role and ability to deliver its services, functions and ambitions, in particular in the following areas:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dorset Council's role as a Planning Authority 2. Dorset Council's economic development activities and employment provision 3. The impact on the Dorset Council Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy and the ability to deliver the action plan and net zero ambitions. <p>To understand the challenges on the ground for local stakeholders.</p> <p>To provide the opportunity for councillors to hear from the main stakeholders in the electricity network and to question them about their role in the system, their responses to the challenges highlighted and their future plans for Dorset.</p>
<p>Information sources and potential witnesses</p>	<p>To review reports and research undertaken in this area.</p> <p>To include a range of internal witnesses (officers and portfolio holders) and external witnesses including local stakeholders and main stakeholders in the grid network.</p>
<p>Links to Council Plan priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our natural environment, climate and ecology • Creating sustainable development and housing • Driving economic prosperity
<p>Timescale for review</p>	<p>To be determined once initial information gathering has been undertaken.</p>