

FULL COUNCIL

MOTION ON NOTICE

Date of Council Meeting: - 22 October 2026

Title of Motion: - Motion for the Ocean

Proposer: - Cllr N Ireland

Seconder:- Cllr B Bawden

Supported by: - Cllrs D Tooke, S Williams, K Wheller, A Brenton, W Chakawhata, G Taylor, C Sutton, R Crabb, L Fry, D Taylor, B Ezzard, M Bell, S Holland, J Orrell, S Bartlett, R Hughes, D Sowry-House, C Webb, P Mooney

Motion Narrative and Action Required

Motion for the Ocean is a UK-wide local government initiative, developed by Dr Pamela Buchan, Emily Cunningham MBE and Nicola Bridge through the Local Government Ocean Recovery Declaration. Launched in 2021, it encourages councils to embed consideration of ocean health within decision-making and to support actions that contribute to marine recovery, climate resilience, biodiversity enhancement and sustainable coastal communities.

Dorset Council Motion for the Ocean

This motion sets out a shared commitment to treat ocean recovery as a practical local priority: protecting the marine environment, improving water quality from source to sea, strengthening coastal resilience, and supporting sustainable prosperity for communities whose lives and livelihoods are connected to the coast.

Dorset Council has worked with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council to draw up a Motion for the Ocean and recognises that the marine and coastal environment is fundamental to the economy, identity, health, wellbeing and resilience of Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The councils also recognise that the health of our seas is intrinsically linked to the condition of our rivers, groundwater, landscapes and communities through a connected catchment-to-coast system. We acknowledge the vital role the ocean plays in climate regulation, carbon storage, biodiversity recovery, food security, transport, recreation and tourism, and the importance of these benefits to current and future generations.

They further recognise that coastal and marine ecosystems face increasing pressures from climate change, pollution, habitat loss, flooding, unsustainable

resource use and a declining public connection with the marine environment. As custodians of an internationally important coastline, diverse coastal communities, working harbours and valuable marine habitats, the councils acknowledge their responsibility to protect and enhance the marine environment while supporting sustainable economic prosperity and resilient coastal communities.

MOTION

Therefore, Dorset Council commits to:

1. Working collaboratively with partners, businesses, harbour authorities, educational institutions and communities to support a sustainable blue economy that strengthens Dorset's marine and coastal sectors, promotes innovation and clean marine technologies, and delivers long-term prosperity alongside ocean recovery.
2. Improving ocean literacy and community engagement by supporting schools, colleges, universities and community groups to increase understanding of the marine environment through education programmes, outdoor learning, citizen science, volunteering, communications and awareness-raising activities.
3. Ensuring that relevant council strategies, plans and projects have regard to the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy and contribute, where appropriate, to the recovery of marine, coastal and water-dependent habitats.
4. Supporting the development and implementation of a Marine Nature Recovery Strategy for Dorset and advocating for the introduction of Marine Nature Recovery Strategies in England, working with partners to align marine recovery with local nature recovery priorities.
5. Working with water companies, regulators, government and other partners to improve water quality across Dorset's rivers, estuaries, harbours and coastal waters, and seeking clear plans, targets and transparency for reducing sewage pollution and other sources of contamination.
6. Considering ocean recovery, marine health and the catchment-to-coast environment in strategic decision-making, plans, policies, budgets and investment programmes, ensuring alignment with the councils' climate and nature ambitions.
7. Reducing plastic pollution at source through council policies, procurement practices, communications and community engagement, while continuing to promote behaviour change that reduces litter and waste entering rivers and the marine environment.
8. Promoting nature-based solutions for flood risk management and water quality by supporting sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), natural flood management, permeable surfaces, swales, rain gardens, habitat restoration and marine enhancement measures within relevant infrastructure projects.
9. Encouraging water conservation and climate resilience through rainwater harvesting, sustainable water management and measures that reduce pressure on

drainage networks, improve water quality and enhance resilience to drought and flooding.

10. Working with farmers, land managers, catchment partnerships and environmental organisations to improve water quality, support sustainable land management and strengthen the connection between healthy landscapes, healthy rivers and healthy seas.

11. Using procurement, social value, planning and investment opportunities to demonstrate leadership in supporting marine recovery, nature-based solutions and sustainable coastal development.

12. Reporting on progress through appropriate governance arrangements and working jointly to develop action plans that translate this declaration into practical local delivery.

By adopting this Motion for the Ocean, Dorset Council commits to working with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, and with partners and communities, to protect, restore and enhance our ocean, coastlines, rivers and estuaries for the benefit of nature, climate, local prosperity and future generations.