

Public Participation at the meeting

Public Question from Mr Stephen Godsall, Resident of Alderholt, to the Cabinet Member for Planning regarding agenda item 8 relating to the Local Plan

How will the Council's decision to declare a Climate Emergency affect spatial planning policy, and in particular will development now be located where there is good access to employment and services?

Statement from Ms Irene Statham, resident of Dorchester, in relation to Climate Change

I would like to congratulate Dorset Council on passing the motion declaring a climate emergency at the first full council meeting on May 16th.

Some of the implications of passing this motion became clear to me when reading the copy of "Dorset Council News" last week. A third of a column was devoted to the climate emergency and it talks about developing "a programme that puts sustainability at the heart of our organisation". However, I was unable to find any reference to climate change under any other heading, including extensive sections on the local plan, housing, highways and employment.

Clearly it is early days.

I understand that cabinet members and their portfolios were decided before the motion was passed. But in the light of the declaration of the climate emergency I would suggest that there should be an explicit portfolio for "climate and ecological emergency" so that there is a voice in cabinet ensuring that all cabinet decisions are examined from this point of view. I would further suggest that merely adding it to the already substantial portfolio of 'Highways, Transport and Environment' would be an inadequate measure.

Today the Forward Plan is being considered and I cannot spot any reference to Climate Change, let alone to the Climate Emergency. This is the level of scrutiny that a cabinet member with an explicit portfolio could offer.