**Low Carbon Dorset**

**Schedule Specification**

**Tender for**Evaluation of the   
Low Carbon Dorset programme

1. **Introduction**

[Low Carbon Dorset](https://www.lowcarbondorset.org.uk/) is a three-year programme of activities to help stimulate growth in Dorset’s low carbon economy and reduce its carbon footprint.

The programme offers free technical support and grant funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to businesses, public-sector and community organisations in Dorset.

It aims to help Dorset based organisations to improve energy efficiency, increase the use of renewable energy, and aid the development of new low carbon products.

The programme is led by Dorset Council (DC) and the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

More details can be found on the programme website: <https://www.lowcarbondorset.org.uk/>

We wish to identify a suitably experienced organisation to undertake a summative assessment for the project.

1. **Low Carbon Dorset Programme Aims and Delivery**

The start date for the Low Carbon Dorset programme was September 2016 and the end date is currently set to be March 2021. The programme is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under Investment **Priority Axis 4 ‘Supporting the Shift Towards a Low Carbon Economy in All Sectors’**, specifically:

* **Investment Priority 4a: Promotion of the production and distribution of energy from renewable sources** – with the aim of increasing the number of small-scale renewable energy schemes in Dorset
* **Investment Priority 4b: Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises** – with the aim of increasing energy efficiency in participating SME’s through the implementation of low carbon technologies.
* **Investment Priority 4c: Support energy efficiency, smart energy use in public infrastructure, including buildings, and in the housing sector** – with the aim of increasing energy efficiency in homes and public buildings, including through the implementation of low carbon technologies.
* **Investment Priority 4f: Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies** – with the aim of increasing Innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies in Dorset

Through the Low Carbon Dorset programme Dorset based SMEs, public-sector organisations and community groups can access free support (12 hrs) and a fund pot of over £2.15m to help improve their energy efficiency and develop renewable energy projects. The programme currently has a total value of £6.44m. (£3.22m from ERDF funding and £3.22m from beneficiary match funding).

Dorset Council has recently submitted a bid to secure an additional £4.26m of funding from the ERDF, which will bring the programme value to £14.9m. If the Council is successful in its bid the programme will be extended until June 2023. The Council is hoping to find out in July 2020 whether it will be awarded the additional funds.

**2.1 Programme Aims:**

* Accelerate the deployment of energy efficiency, renewable energy and other technologies and approaches to reduce carbon emissions.
* Stimulate and demonstrate innovation.
* Support different types of low carbon projects and approaches within the Community, Public and Business Sectors.
* Support Biomass technologies as a key renewable energy technology for Dorset with wider benefits and potential for economic growth.

**2.2 Programme Objectives**

**Below are the current programme outputs, these will be increased if we are successful in securing the additional funding:**

* Support over 115 businesses to reduce energy and utilise renewable energy technologies
* Increase Dorset’s renewable energy capacity by at least 4 Mega Watts
* Reduce energy consumption in public sector buildings by over 865 Mega Watts hours/year
* Reduce Dorset’s carbon footprint by over 2,864 tonnes Carbon Dioxide per year
* Encourage development of at least 5 new low carbon products or applications
* Improve the energy efficiency of at least 55 houses.

1. **Overall objectives:**

As part of the contractual requirements of ERDF funding, Low Carbon Dorset is now required to procure a supplier to conduct an impact evaluation of the project, known as a “Summative Assessment”.

The Managing Authority, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Level Government (MHCLG) is seeking to ensure that Summative Assessments are of a high quality and that they will help inform evaluations of the national programme.

With this in mind, the key objectives of this summative assessment will be to:

* Identify whether the programme was relevant for the local context
* Identify the value of the programme to the beneficiaries
* Identify whether expected outputs, outcomes and impact were achieved (including an assessment of equality and diversity)
* Demonstrate the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in delivering the programme.
* Combining the above, assess whether the project provided value for money.
* Identify lessons learned.

The key internal and external audiences for the summative assessment will be:

* External: Key stakeholders including (but not limited to) Dorset Council, MHCLG, HMG and the EU. Their interest will be in demonstrating that the projects funded achieved the intended results and provided value for money as well as learning about the wider benefits of the programme.
* Internal: All the project partners who delivered Low Carbon Dorset including but not limited to Dorset Council and Dorset AONB. Their interest will be in lessons learned for future projects, demonstrating value for money internally and externally, generating case studies and gaining useful economic and environmental insights for internal and external use.

Suppliers are encouraged to be innovative in their proposals and design of the assessment to reflect the nature of the programme, suggesting any additional insights and added value they may be able to provide.

1. **Specific Requirements**

ERDF has recently published updated guidance on the [project evaluation summative assessments](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-european-regional-development-fund-2014-to-2020) which all suppliers must comply with – see links below for latest guidance:

• ESIF GN-1-033 - ERDF Summative Assessment Guidance - [Link to guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/795499/ESIF-GN-1-033_ERDF_Summative_Assessment_Guidance_v3.pdf)

• ESIF GN 1-034 - ERDF Summative Assessment Guidance Appendices - [Link to guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809976/ESIF-GN-1-034_ERDF_Summative_Assessment_Guidance_Appendices_v3__2_.pdf)

The supplier will be expected to undertake a programme evaluation and provide a final summative assessment report together with a summary in line with the requirements of the ERDF summative assessment guidance and further requirements noted within the tender document as well as the above ERDF guidance.

If the Council is successful in securing additional funds and is able to extend the programme by a further 2 years (2021-2023), the extended part of the programme will also need to be evaluated and there will need to be a summative assessment report together with a summary produced for this period. Confirmation of whether this additional summative assessment is required will be known by July 2020.

*(NB the above guidance is subject to change – suppliers are expected to check and comply with latest ERDF guidance as amended.)*

Specific details of Low Carbon Dorset’s requirements are as follows:

**a. ERDF Summative Assessment Logic Model**

The basis of the assessment is taken from a logic model, completed by the programme team in 2019. The subcontractor will be required to refresh and improve this logic model, if necessary, to maximise relevance

(ESIF-Form 1-011 Summative Assessment Logic Model).

**b. ERDF Summative Assessment plan**

A summative assessment plan was completed by the programme team in 2019, however, the supplier will be required to update and improve this plan to ensure that the necessary research can be conducted within the relevant timelines and available budget

(ESIF-Form 1-012 Summative Assessment Plan)

**c. Summative Assessment Final Report Summary - Part 1**

Undertake an evaluation of the programme from its establishment up until Dec 2020 and provide a summative assessment report together with a summary in line with the requirements of the ERDF summative assessment guidance (appendix 3) and in line with the ERDF standard template.

The summative assessment aims to identify and attribute changes achieved by the programme. As detailed within the ERDF guidance (links below), all assessments will need to cover the following key themes:

* Relevance and consistency of the programme - in light of any changes in policy or economic circumstances during its delivery period and appropriateness of programme design.
* Progress of the programme against contractual targets – any reasons for under / overperformance and expected lifetime results.
* The experience of delivering and managing the programme – including lessons emerging from this
* The economic and environment impact attributable to the project – measured in GVA and GHG emissions
* The cost effectiveness of the project and subsequently it’s value for money

The findings of the report will need to be effectively disseminated and communicated to the programme’s stakeholders – the evaluator will be expected to provide summaries of the report’s findings in ways which both meet the ERDF guidelines and meet the needs of the stakeholders.

**d. Updating of Summative Assessment Plan and Logic Model for extended project**

This element is subject to the awarding of further funding from ERDF to Dorset Council.

Providing funding is secured (this will be known by July 2020) and the programme is extended by a further two years, the programme’s Summative Assessment Plan and Logic Model will need to be updated to reflect this extension and any changes in outputs and outcomes.

**e. Summative Assessment Final Report Summary - Part 2**

This element is subject to the awarding of further funding from ERDF to Dorset Council.

Providing funding is secured (this will be known by July 2020) a second Summative Assessment will need to be undertaken for the additional 2 years of programme delivery (2021-2023). A final summative assessment report summary must be produced in line with the ERDF standard template for this period with the same aims as those outlined in the contractual element above **(c. Summative Assessment Final Report & Summary (Part 1 of programme 2017 – 2020).**

It is vital that both summative reports are planned and delivered within the Project Summative Assessment Guidance provided by ERDF (ESIF-GN-1-033\_ERDF\_Summative\_Assessment\_Guidance).

Methodology for obtaining the above requirements should be included in the tender response.

1. **Adding Value**

This Summative Assessment is being undertaken to meet the contractual requirement of the programmer’s funder. However, Dorset Council views this evaluation process as an opportunity to add value to the Low Carbon Dorset programme. And are looking for an evaluator with innovative ideas and mixed methodologies who can meet the requirements of the programme’s funder as well as provide valuable insight into wider impacts of the programme outside of those being reported on to the funder.

It is hoped that this evaluation of the programme will be a valuable tool in future funding bids and will help shape future programmes to come.