

Climate Change Sub-Group
8 December 2020

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the CLIMATE CHANGE SUB-GROUP held on Tuesday 8 December 2020 at 6.00 pm in the Via Zoom

PRESENT: Councillors M.Holloway (Chair)

E.Boulton, F.Marsh, H.Quenet, D.Richardson,
J.Weston and P.Hebden

OFFICIALS K.Ng, Chief Executive

PRESENT: N.Long, Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance)
J Harding, Head of Public Health and Protection
C Haigh, Head of Planning
D Reyner, Head of Environment
V.Appasawmy, Energy Efficiency Officer
O.Waring, Tree Officer
L.Devayya, Economic Development Officer

32. SUBSTITUTION OF MEMBERS

Councillor P.Hebden for Councillor S.Wrenn

33. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S.Wrenn.

34. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2020 were agreed as a correct record and noted by the Chairman.

35. HERTFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP (HCCSP)

The Executive Member (Governance, Public Health and Climate Change) advised the group that district councils within the county had spent the last six months determining a base line from which progress could be measured. Councillors were reminded the county had 4 key workstreams. These were:

1. Carbon reduction
2. Transport
3. Water
4. Biodiversity

Climate Change Sub-Group
8 December 2020

It was noted that the Executive Member (Governance, Public Health and Climate Change) and Councillor Quenet had both attended the first HCCSP stakeholder event, held on Thursday 3 December. Of particular note was a presentation from the Wildlife Trust.

The Executive Member (Governance, Public Health and Climate Change) and officers took the opportunity to update the group on the draft Welwyn Hatfield Climate Change Strategy which had been published for consultation and had been sent to over 170 organisations. Members were invited to identify groups who should be engaged with and asked to publicise the consultation.

Members noted the need to provide alternative ways for different parts of the community to engage with the council on this issue, within the context of Covid-19 restrictions and resources available.

It was requested that the Council consider a virtual 'town hall' type event where interested parties can discuss the draft climate change strategy actions with officers.

36. GOVERNMENT 10 POINT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN

Members received a report from the Head of Planning on the Government's new Ten Point Plan. The following points were raised by Members:

- consideration should be given to what actions could be taken with new build projects to increase the level of low carbon heating technologies used as opposed to fossil fuel heating
- the highlighting of 'treeconomics' was welcomed and more could be done in the borough, especially in Hatfield
- biodiversity had been promoted around the borough, but more could be done and there may be merit in the council producing a local biodiversity action plan and providing funding to local civic groups to take action
- Hertfordshire County Council should be encouraged to do more to increase public transport provisions
- Consideration should be given to whether Welwyn Hatfield could put itself forward to host hydrogen neighbourhoods or become a hydrogen town

AGREED:

That the Climate Change Sub Group note the presentation.

37. PUBLIC SECTOR DECARBONISATION SCHEME

Members received a presentation from the Head of Planning on the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which the council was able to bid for funding to undertake decarbonisation projects. Members noted that Officers were preparing potential bids and a report would be brought back to the group at the next meeting.

Climate Change Sub-Group
8 December 2020

AGREED:

That the Climate Change Sub Group note the presentation and send through any thoughts directly to the Head of Planning.

38. DATE OF FUTURE MEETING

Members noted that this was yet to be set, but would take place in January 2021.

39. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for Item 11 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100(A)(3) and Paragraphs 2 (Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual), and 6 (Statutory notice or order) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

In resolving to exclude the public in respect of the exempt information, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

40. ENE LOW CARBON BUSINESS GRANT SCHEME

The following item of an exempt nature were considered

ENE Low Carbon Business Grant Scheme

Exempt report of the Corporate Director ((Public Protection, Planning and Governance) on the proposed process and criteria for providing grants to small and medium sized enterprises to undertake carbon reduction measures. The group was asked to consider the report ahead of consideration and approval by Cabinet.

AGREED

That the Climate Change Sub Group note the report and that the report should go forward for consideration and approval by Cabinet.

Meeting ended at 6.55 pm
JA