

Climate Change Sub-Group  
25 January 2022

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the CLIMATE CHANGE SUB-GROUP held on Tuesday 25 January 2022 at 7.30 pm Via Zoom

PRESENT: Councillors D. Richardson (Chair)  
G. Ganney, A. Hellyer, T. Jackson-Mynott, R. Lass, J. Quinton, and J. Weston

ALSO PRESENT Councillor F. Thomson (Executive Member for Housing & Climate Change)

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Head of Environment (D. Reyner)  
Head of Planning (C. Dale)  
Senior Planner (M. Pyecroft)  
Economic Development Officer (L. Devayya)  
Energy Efficiency Officer (V. Appasawmy)  
Landscape and Ecology Manager (O. Waring)  
Housing Development Manager (C. Humphrey)  
Democratic Services Assistant (B. Taylor)

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27. SUBSTITUTION OF MEMBERS

The following substitution of a Committee Members had been made in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

Councillor A. Hellyer for Councillor J. Lake

28. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J. Lake.

29. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2021 was approved as a correct record by the Chair.

30. HCCSP TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Members received a presentation on the Hertfordshire Climate Change Sustainability Partnership Transport action plan. Officers provided Members with a high-level overview of the transport action plan that had been provided at the November group meeting highlighting the role that transport had on emissions and the importance of changing transport usage in the county. Officers set out the objectives and themes of the HCCSP group which included behaviour

change, emission reduction alongside health and economic benefits. Officers informed Members of key strategic actions taken from the plan. These were on changes to assets, premise or services; requiring use of regulatory powers; and encouraging, influencing or facilitating others to change. Officers stated that the action plan would continue to evolve as technology and legislation changed.

The following points were noted:

- Members stated an interested in a plan regarding an improved bus service provision and alternative travel options. Officers stated they would seek an update from HCC for Members.
- Members noted that the East-West rapid transit scheme was a long-term travel plan for the whole county and more information was available online. Members asked about user costs of the East- West rapid transit. Officers stated that the rapid transit was in early stages and would be delivered in stages. Officers stated that would get an update from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) on the user costs.
- Members asked about electric buses and stated the upfront costs should not outweigh the longevity of use. Officers stated that HCC were working on a bus strategy.
- Members sought clarification on the behaviour change campaign. Officers informed Members that the group met fortnightly. The group pulled together the behavioural actions from the other HCCSP action plans. A draft report would be presented to the HCCSP group and HCC had employed a co-ordinator to lead on this.
- Members sought to lead by example by requiring all buses be electric and that all new developments should have 100 per cent EV charge points. Officers stated that government guidelines had not been published on EV charge points on new developments and planning conditions would need to be tied to legal frameworks so that they could apply to individual planning applications.
- Members asked whether the council had visibility of the national grid expansion and capacity. Officers stated they were not aware of the capacity across the borough, and they would engage with UKPN.

#### RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

#### 31. TRANSPORT AND WELWYN HATFIELD LOCAL CYCLING & WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Members received a presentation on the collaboration between Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council which outlined the details to improve the travel network in the borough by looking at key routes. Officers showed Members numerous benefits of the scheme consisting of improved air quality and other health, economic and social benefits. Images were shown to Members with examples of cycling & walking provisions in the borough currently which had been used in the audit assessment. Officers informed Members of the next steps of the Local Cycling & Walking

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infrastructure plan which included recommendations to improve the active travel network, workshops to discuss and refine proposals in late February / early March and a completed document.

Members thanked Officers for their hard work, and they welcomed the information.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

32. ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING POINT UPDATE

Members received a verbal update from the Head of Environment on the Council's EV charge points. Officers informed Members that the EV charge points at various shopping including Westfield, Shoplands, Hollybush and Moorswalk were all operational. Officers explained they were hopeful for up to an additional 40 sites across the borough dependent on whether the Council received funding from the Government and EV charge operator met the remainder of the costs.

The following points were noted:

- Members stated that they had used the charge points.
- Members asked why there was a delay from installation to operation. Officers stated that the funding needed to be used by a certain date, so the installation process was accelerated. However, there was still a need to spend time putting in place the lease agreements and commercial arrangement. It was anticipated that for future charge points there would be less of a delay between installation and operation.
- Members raised their concerns over the low charge rate the instability of the app and the incorrect website labelling. Officers and the Executive Member stated the concerns would be passed onto the EV charge operator and the website updated.
- Members raised whether there should be a borough specific EV policy to help guide the location of EV charging points. Officers stated they followed government guidance on the location of the charge points, which was a stipulation of the funding.
- Members were happy to see 16 more EV charge points in the borough.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

33. GREEN INITIATIVES IN NEW COUNCIL BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS

Members received a presentation which informed members of the various green initiatives that were being incorporated into developments and projects. Officers informed Members of the initiatives which included air-source heat pumps and underfloor heating, water saving devices, PV panels and alternative build

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methods. Officers provided Members with an overview of the net zero carbon project in partnerships with the University of Hertfordshire stating that work was ongoing with a document being produced in the next 8 months. Brief outlines were given on the Eastern New Energy project and the alternative build methods. Officers provided Members with an update on the progress at Minister Close, The Commons and Ludwick Way. The former was on target for a BREEAM very good status and the latter two were incorporating air-source heat pumps, underfloor heating and will have provisions for PV Panels.

The following points were noted:

- Members were happy to see the projects moving forward and asked whether site tours would be provided to Members. Officers stated that site visits would be happening in the near future.
- Members expressed they would like to see developers follow the examples of green initiatives set by the Council owned properties.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

#### 34. WHBC PROJECTS ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Members received a verbal update from Officers on the Council's own Action Plan. Officers informed Members of the progress made on major projects which included:

- The Eastern New Energy LED light project had 21 business registered, with 16 audits completed and 6 grants paid out at a cost of £18,500.
- The decarbonisation scheme would be completed at the Hatfield Swim Centre by the end of January with works at Campus East & Campus West starting after.
- The LAD2 Green Homes scheme had set the managing agent and was waiting for marketing materials to promote the scheme.
- The solar panel bulk buy scheme was going to HCCSP in January with the aim of the scheme starting in the summer.
- The warmer homes grant scheme has signed the statement of intent.
- The energy saving app which the Committee and supported the council being a part of, would be promoted in the 'ONE' magazine.

The following points were noted:

- Members asked to see a report of the grass cutting length at the next meeting. Officers stated that an update would be provided.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted

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35. HERTFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP (HCCSP) UPDATE

Members received a verbal report from the Executive Member (Housing and Climate Change) as the Council's representative to the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP). The Executive Member informed Members that the latest HCCSP meeting included a presentation from the local partnerships on county wide approach to carbon emission reduction. Through the use of emission mapping, four areas were identified: Travel (domestic & commercial), domestic heating and energy efficiency, commercial greenhouse gas monitoring & management and renewable energy installation. From a resident survey HCCSP officers had begun to draft a co-production strategy which would be presented to the HCCSP Board. An update was provided on the Hertfordshire Sustainability Officers Group (HSOG) on the work streams they would work on (Water, Carbon reduction, Biodiversity and Transport) and the new groups of Adaptation and Behaviour change. East Herts District Council provided an update on their EV charging infrastructure stating they had installed charge points on council owned land. They had looked at replacing their fleet of vehicles to electric but were cautious of the costs, a concern shared across Hertfordshire as a whole. The Executive Member felt it was good for information to be shared to all borough and district councils. An update was provided on the net zero strategy and the COP26 reflection and how this would impact HCC. A brief update was provided on the Biodiversity Action Plan which was focussed on habitat enhancement and recognised skills gap which would allow for potential opportunities for traineeships. The Executive Member stated the minutes were in draft form but once they were approved, they would be available on the Member Information Hub.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.37 pm  
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