

Climate Change Sub-Group
18 January 2023

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the CLIMATE CHANGE SUB-GROUP held on Wednesday 18 January 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Via Zoom

PRESENT: Councillors D. Richardson (Chairman)
A. Hellyer, M. Holloway, J. Lake, R. Lass, G. Moore,
J. Quinton

ALSO Councillor S. Kasumu (Executive Member, Environment & Climate
PRESENT: Change)

OFFICIALS Service Director (Property Maintenance and Climate Change) (I. Hancock)
PRESENT: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Economic Development)
(G. Sampson)
Service Manager (Asset Management, Building Repairs and Climate
Change) (M. Croft)
Landscape & Ecology Manager (O. Waring)
Principal Planner (implementation) (M. Pyecroft)
Parking & Playground Services Manager (E. Robova)
Democratic Services Assistant (V. Mistry)

19. SUBSTITUTION OF MEMBERS

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

Councillor M. Holloway for Councillor J. Weston

20. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J. Weston.

21. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022 were approved as a correct record by the Chair.

22. LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Report of the Executive Director (Place) on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) sets out, in detail, required improvements in the active travel network in an area which would enable projects to be brought forward more quickly than would otherwise be the case, by providing evidence of need and having the principle of the

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improvements agreed in advance. It would also act as a ready-made evidence base for any funding opportunities. An LCWIP for both Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield is specifically identified in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, and over time will enable Hertfordshire County Council as highways authority to help deliver or facilitate an improved active travel network with a consequent increase in use.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP's) are a relatively recent development, being introduced by the Department for Transport in 2017. Their purpose is to set out, in detail, required improvements in the active travel network in an area which enables projects to be brought forward more quickly than would otherwise be the case, by providing evidence of need and having the improvements agreed in advance.

An LCWIP for Welwyn Hatfield has been led by Hertfordshire County Council, who have also provided the majority of the funding, though Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council have worked with the County Council on it, and provided a contribution of £10K from the Council's Climate Change Fund.

LCWIP's are being prepared across the county: one for Watford was completed and adopted in January 2022; St Albans and North Herts are due for completion shortly and others are underway. Undertaking Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for both Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield is specifically identified in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

The final document will be taken to Hertfordshire County Council's Environment and Transport Panel on 31 January 2023 for adoption, so that it will become official policy. In order to demonstrate support at Borough Council level, the County Council have asked that Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council support the document to demonstrate local agreement, and to support the vision of implementing cycling and walking schemes across the Borough.

The following points were noted:

- Members asked if the council already has funding or if the council are waiting for government grants. Officers are looking at first stages and seeing what might be funded. Opportunities through Section 106, developer contribution or through Department for Transport funding. The council are better placed to actually make an informed decision as to where money should be spent. One of the challenges with active travel infrastructure is that getting a really comprehensive network is quite difficult.
- It was noted that the next phase of work in the town centre is due to start in a couple of weeks which would extend the site way down Fretherne Road and put in new crossings across Howardsgate. The intention is to look at the route, at the roundabout on Broadwater Road and Bessemer Road as soon as possible. Members stated that if it could be demonstrated to link into other roads for instance, the improvement of segregation along Broadwater Road would be good.

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- Members asked if there were any implications or consequences for planning policy that should be considered as this infrastructure develops or is it more specific to a network for Welwyn Hatfield. Officers stated that this is something that is going to be proposed for adoption by Hertfordshire County Council so it will inform their deliberations on planning decisions. When planning applications come to their Highways officers, they are consulted on. This will provide officers with evidence as to where the improvements should be funded to facilitate more active travel.

RESOLVED:
(unanimous)

- (1) The Climate Change Panel noted the proposed final Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) document and the results of the consultation.
- (2) The Climate Change Panel recommended that Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's support for the final Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan document is agreed by the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change using his delegated powers, to enable it to be used as an evidence base for delivery of future active travel schemes.

23. EV2 PROGRESS UPDATE

Members received an update from the officers on the EV2 Progress Update.

The council's current EV provision comprise of 16 double chargers across eight sites, this currently provides 32 individual charging points. The council recently applied for funding in order to facilitate installation of additional EV chargers across the council's car parks in order to increase the infrastructure within the borough.

The funding was approved and the on-street residential charge point scheme and this is being funded by the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV). The recently approved funding can provide up to 192 additional EV bays across 23 sites. A combination of single and double chargers were selected. The single charges were selected for the council's multi-storey car parks due to their slimmer design. The scheme that will fund this project was designed to support the delivery of EVs and help ensure the transition is integrated to wider local transported community needs across locations by residents who are unable to arrange for their own off-street chargers due to the lack of off-street parking provisions. Locations where additional chargers can be installed were therefore determined by the funding requirements and the agreed capacity available and viable locations and this included a requirement for them to be primarily in a residential areas where most of the properties do not benefit from off-street parking. The scheme does not support charge points intended to be used primarily by commuters or visitors and the destinations style locations such as shopping centres.

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OZEV approved EV chargers for up to 192 bays in the following wards:

Haldens – up to 20 bays
Handside – up to 12 bays
Hatfield Central – up to 26 bays
Hatfield South West – up to 8 bays
Howlands – up to 10 bays
Panshanger – up to 36 bays
Peartree – up to 52 bays
Welwyn East – up to 8 bays
Welwyn West – up to 20 bays

This totals to 192 bays where electricity is provided by 105 charging units. 87 double chargers were selected which will provide electricity to 174 bays and 18 single chargers, which is 18 bays, 6 of them for Hatfield Multi-Storey car park and 12 for Campus West car park.

It was noted that the OZEV scheme has the following criteria to be met whilst chargers are in operation under the scheme and only fast chargers that are eligible for funding, in this case it is 7 kilowatts an hour charger. All the locations where the chargers are need to be accessible 24/7 and they must remain free overnight so residents can charge without paying the pay and display fee between 6pm in the evening to 8am in the morning. Also all the bays need to be restricted to a maximum stay of 4 hours, Monday to Sunday. As part of this project the council will be looking to increase EV provisions for Blue badge holders, with a plan to introduce 4 electric vehicle disabled bays, two in Hatfield Multi Storey car park and two in Campus West car park. These bays will be designed as a standard disabled bays with an addition of an EV provision.

The following points were noted:

- Members asked if the bays, are going to be on the streets, council owned car parks or some other destination. Officers stated that on street parking and EV charging falls under Hertfordshire County Council so these will be in Council car parks and any off street bays.
- Members thought that council car parks are classified as destination charging points and not an overnight residential charging points. If they are destination charging points they should be 22 kilowatts and not 7 kilowatts. The borough may have too many EV charging points concentrated in council car parks which are not ideally placed for residents. Officers stated that the car parks in the scheme are not just in the town centre, there are also small car parks which are affiliated with housing schemes and some in neighbourhood shopping parades so these are not all destination car parks. Some of the car parks are a conglomeration of off street bays which may be considered as on street parking.
- Members requested a map and a list of where all these parking provisions are and to have more information on the scheme. Members also asked if

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they were able to provide comments as Ward Councillors on useful alterations. Officers said that sites plans can be provided for each location but they would not be able to comment on the plans. The scheme has been to Cabinet and the funding for sites has already been approved by OZEV who are supplying the funding. The council are not in a position to select sites that are not approved by OZEV.

RESOLVED:
(unanimous)

That the update be noted.

24. GENERAL UPDATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Members received a verbal update from Officers on how the council is doing with Climate change plans.

Officers said that the recruitment of a Climate Change Officer has commenced. The deadline for applications was midnight 18 January 2023. There were nine applications submitted. Interviews are planned for Thursday 26 January 2023.

The gap analysis which was instructed prior to Christmas is still underway and is going to help the council identify any gaps in information which will assist with writing any strategies. This will provide a list of actions which the council can then add to the action plan and will allow the council to track these actions through to completion.

It was noted the council is hoping to achieve ISO 50001 standards as a result of starting the process of the gap analysis.

Officers are currently drafting an update to the Climate Strategy which they aim to have completed by the end of January 2023. This requires a lot of collaboration from various internal teams at the council to ensure that their services are taken into consideration. The updated strategy will be brought back to the Climate Change Sub Group once completed.

The council has an updated climate action plan. This will be shared with the group after the meeting and officers would appreciate any comments back by Monday 23 January. This is due to the requirement of the action plan being uploaded to the council website by the end of January 2023, so this is in time for the next round of the Climate Emergency UK evaluations of local authorities. Any new actions can be added to the plan by request via officers if it is deemed appropriate and in line with the Climate Strategy. The improved Climate Action Plan is much more user friendly than its predecessor allowing for filtering of information such as biggest carbon reduction for the least cost, and date it is due to be delivered. This will enable officers to really scrutinise actions. This also allows officers to ensure these targets are being met by various teams so that the Council meets its 2030 Net Zero promise.

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The following point was noted:

- Members asked about the ISO 50001, are the council going with compliance with the standard or getting certified to it? Officers stated they are aiming to be certified on the ISO 50001.

RESOLVED:
(unanimous)

That the update be noted.

25. HERTFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP (HCCSP)

Members received a verbal report from the Executive Member (Environment and Climate Change) as the Council's representative to the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP).

It was noted that at the last meeting there was a presentation from the National Pharmacy Union which was interesting.

The Executive Member encouraged the group to give feedback or comments to officers on the new Climate Action Plan.

RESOLVED:
(unanimous)

Members noted the update.

Meeting ended at 8.00pm
VM