

**MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING
HELD AT 6.00PM, ON
WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2024
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors: Day (Chair), Wiggin (Vice Chair), Z Ali, Boyce, Antunes, Ahmed, Ann Shaheed, Strangward, Walsh and Barkham

Others Present: Miriam Sellick and Shanzay Zehra, Youth Council Representatives

Officers Present:

Daniel Snowdon, Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager
Charlotte Palmer, Service Director for Environment and Climate Change
Amy Nebel, Waste and Recycling Manager
Darren Sharpe, Natural and Historic Environment Manager
Hannah Swinburne, Climate Change Manager
Zoe Peyton Jones, National Management Trainee

Also Present:

Councillor Ellis, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Judy Fox and Elsey.

Councillors Boyce and Antunes were in attendance as substitute.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations of interest or whipping declarations.

11. MINUTES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2024

The minutes of the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10 July 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

12. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISIONS

No call ins were received.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS 2024-2025

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the appointment of Co-opted Members in accordance with the Council's Constitution Part 3, Section 4 – Overview and Scrutiny Functions. The purpose of the report was to seek approval from the Committee to appoint Matthew Bradbury as a nonvoting Co-opted Member for the municipal year 2024/25.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and explained that the nominations Co-opted Members had been put forward by the Committee and that the appointments would be reviewed annually. The Committee unanimously agreed to the appointment of Matthew Bradbury as a non-voting Co-opted Member for the municipal year 2024/25.

The Chair welcomed Matthew to the meeting and invited him to join the committee for the rest of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee appointed Matthew Bradbury to the Committee as an Independent Co-opted Member with no voting rights for the municipal year 2024/2025. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

14. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Chair introduced the report which included the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions containing decisions that the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the forthcoming month. Members were invited to comment on the plan and where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme.

- It was noted that the Contract Award to Milestone for construction of Lincoln Road Improvement KEY/29JUL24/01 decision should be allocated to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee rather than this one.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee considered the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and identified any relevant items for inclusion within their work programme or requested further information.

15. BRETTON WOODS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to a draft revised Bretton Woods Management Plan and the measures outlined within it.

The Natural and Historic Environment Manager introduced the report and key points raised included:

- This report referred to a revision of existing trees and the management plan for Bretton Woods.
- Where Ash Dieback is found there would have to be intervention and all ash trees were monitored to assess the level of damage in the woodland.
- The officer noted that the report referred to work to be undertaken in late summer 2024 which should have read late summer 2025.

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members queried the impact of removing ash trees and were advised that

continued monitoring of the ecology was undertaken. Where trees had been removed, there had been a benefit to biodiversity as the levels natural light had increased.

- Members referred to the class 4 trees scheduled to be removed and asked for the number. Officers advised that they did not have the exact number to hand but confirmed that all trees had been GPS plotted and categorised.
- Members were advised that the woods were hard to survey as it had been managed as a coppice woodland.
- Members were assured that putting back the work would not increase the costs.
- Officers acknowledged the need to meet with residents in Bretton so that they were informed of the works.
- All removed trees would be replaced with a combination of smaller whips.
- Members were concerned that the removal of trees would reduce carbon absorption and were advised that a felling license would not have been issued without a plan to restock.
- The management objectives were to increase native species to build resilience.
- Members were advised that the push back would mean a decline of ash but not to the levels that had been expected.
- Officers advised that deer had been a problem in the woodland and their grazing had eliminated 50% of the regeneration. There had been some culling of deer in the Milton Estate which had helped, along with the guarding of young saplings.
- Officers would actively encourage the community to get involved in replanting schemes.
- The works would be contracted and bidders asked to identify if there was any commercial value from the felled wood though there would be a proportion of deadwood left as it is essential to good woodland management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee:

1. Reviewed the current decline of the Council's owned and managed Ancient Woodland (Bretton Woods) and the potential pressures imposed,
2. Considered the draft Bretton Woods Management Plan and provided further views prior to wider consultation.

16. HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE OPERATIONAL UPDATES

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to how the council intends to implement the change to operations at the HRC alongside the proposed updates to the HRC Waste Acceptance and Disposal Policy and the residual waste bag splitting proposal.

The Waste and Recycling Manager introduced the report and key points raised included:

- There had been operational difficulties regarding staffing and machinery at the recycling centre and the detail within the report would help alleviate some of those challenges.
- Residual waste had increased by 20% with the number of visitors increasing by 15%.
- The Government had put in clear guidelines and the HRC would follow them.
- The bag splitting proposal would educate residents on pre-sorting and highlight where items should be going.

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Access to the HRC would be limited to Peterborough residents and other areas that had a similar approach had not recorded an increase in flytipping.
- Members noted that flytipping was a complex issue.
- The site had been designed to offer a range of recycling options to residents but there was little that could be done to address capacity.
- Members were assured that the limit had been on construction waste only.
- Members were concerned that the bag splitting policy would pose health risks to operatives and were advised that it would be done with the resident, with their consent. Operatives would not be expected to do this on their own.
- The disposal of residual waste was the most expensive as the price per tonne was £128.
- The Council could not charge for household waste disposal.
- Commercial waste had been a concern, but the city was served well with places that accept commercial waste disposal.
- Members expressed concerns on the limit on items especially when residents may renovate their kitchens or bathrooms and the impact this would have on flytipping.
- The 20% increase in waste going to the site may have correlated with the number of houses that had been built. Officers advised that the modelling accounted for population growth.
- Members were advised that the HRC had longer opening hours than the counterparts in Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.
- The changes to the site were simple and site staff would be on hand to support residents.
- Members expressed their support for increased local collections areas as it was felt residents would be more inclined to use those than go to the HRC.
- Members requested that this be brought to the Parish Liaison Committee. Officer acknowledged the importance of this engagement and made it clear that the changes were to ensure that the council was in line with Government guidance.
- The decision to restrict access to PCC residents was passed as part of the budget setting process and this report detailed how that decision would be implemented.
- Members were assured that bag splitting would not be offered if it was not appropriate to.
- Members noted that the permit could be updated via the website.
- There had been a recent closure of the site that had led to a number of complaints. These were monitored carefully and actions taken where necessary.
- Members expressed their concern that any barrier in place to the HRC would increase flytipping.
- Members requested a further report in 12 months following implementation of the scheme.
- Officers expressed that they wanted the best outcome for all residents.

In summing up the discussion, the Chair proposed the following recommendation with **UNANIMOUS** agreement of the Committee that the new policies be clearly communicated to the media, the public and residents to explain the changes and reasons for the changes prior to their implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee:

1. Endorsed the mechanism by which the council will introduce a resident only permit scheme for all using vehicles at Peterborough Household Recycling Centre (HRC).
2. Endorsed the updated HRC Waste Acceptance and Disposal Policy.
3. Endorsed the residual waste bag splitting proposal.

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee also recommended that the new policies be clearly communicated to the media, the public and residents to explain the changes and reasons for the changes prior to their implementation.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee requested that:

- a briefing note on the policy be provided in 6 months and a follow up report in 12 months from implementation.
- engagement be held with the Parish Councils via the Parish Council Liaison Committee.
- Officers monitor the levels of fly tipping following the implementation of the new policy.

17. ROADMAP TO NET ZERO

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the Draft Roadmap to Net Zero for Councillors to provide comments on the plan for inclusion in the final version.

The Climate Change Manager introduced the report and moved straight to questions.

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members referred to the lack of dates and timelines within the roadmap and were advised that that the report explained the pathway that was subject to the award of grants. Therefore, Officers could not commit to definitive timelines.
- Members were advised that the green electricity tariff had not been purchased due to an additional £110k cost implication. The Section 151 Officer determined that this would not go forward and had been scheduled for 2030.
- Officers would present projects to the committee as and when funding had been committed.
- Officers had been successful in achieving funding for heat decarbonisation plans and there was a good portfolio of projects.
- Members noted that the Council did not procure a significant amount of food.
- Members acknowledged that Peterborough Limited accounted for half of the emissions and sought clarification on the oversight of their emissions. Officers advised that the leadership team had undertook the carbon literacy training and the team has reviewed what they could do across their sites.
- There was a programme that looked at the feasibility of moving to a battery-operated fleet.
- The target for net zero in 2030 was a challenge and carbon budgets had not been explored as yet.
- Members queried whether the Committee could have a report on its own budget that detailed all the projects. Officers agreed to take this way as an action.

- Officers agreed to investigate the risks and blocks to achieving net zero grant funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) Endorsed the Roadmap to Net Zero; and
- 2) Recommended that Cabinet endorses the roadmap to net zero for Council adoption.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee requested that:

- Officers look into the possibility of having a service area level budget report.
- Officers provide information on the risks and blocks to achieving net zero grant funding.

18. MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

The SDSO introduced the report which enabled the committee to monitor and track the progress of recommendations made to the Executive or Officers at previous meetings.

- The Committee acknowledged to report and noted that the recommendation had been addressed.

19. WORK PROGRAMME 2024/2025

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which looked at the work programme for the municipal year 2024-2025 to determine the Committees priorities. Members were invited to make comments and suggestions.

- There were no comments.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted as being 6 November 2024.

CHAIR

Meeting began at 6.00pm and ended at 8.16pm