

**MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY
MEETING
HELD AT 7PM, ON
WEDNESDAY, 7 JULY 2021
ENGINE SHED, SAND MARTIN HOUSE**

Committee Members Present: Councillors C. Harper (Chair), C. Burbage (Vice Chair), G. Casey, N. Day, Judy Fox, C. Fenner, A. Joseph, E. Murphy, O. Sainsbury, L. Sharp, C. Wiggin.
Co-opted Member: Parish Councillor Michael Samways

Officers Present in Steve Cox – Executive Director, Place and Economy (Virtually)
Charlotte Palmer – Group Manager, Transport and Environment
Hannah Swinburne – Principal Climate Change Officer
David Beauchamp – Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Councillor Nigel Simons – Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment
Adrian Cannard – Strategic Planning Manager, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Lynne Sullivan – Commissioner (Virtually)
Greg Archer – Commissioner (Virtually)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Cllr R. Brown (Cllr C. Fenner in attendance as substitute)
- Cllr N. Moyo (Cllr. O. Sainsbury in attendance as substitute)
- Cllr H. Skibsted (Cllr. A. Joseph in attendance as substitute).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

No declarations of interest or whipping declarations were received.

3. MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON:

3.1. 22 FEBRUARY 2021 – JOINT MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Scrutiny Committees held on 22 February 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3.2. 10 MARCH 2021 – GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 10 March 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3.2. 23 MARCH 2021 – EXTRAORDINARY MEETING - GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 23 March 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record

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

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the appointment of a Co-opted Member 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 Parish Councillor Michael Samways as a non-voting Co-opted Member to represent the rural communities for the municipal year 2021/2022.

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and explained that the Parish Council Co-opted Member had been put forward by the Parish Council Liaison Committee via the Liaison Chair and Think Communities Team and that the appointment would be reviewed annually.

The Committee agreed unanimously to the appointment of Parish Councillor Michael Samways as a non-voting Co-opted Member for the municipal year 2021/22. The Chairman invited Parish Councillor Michael Samways to join the meeting.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to appoint Parish Councillor Michael Samways as a non-voting co-opted member to represent the rural communities for the municipal year 2021/2022. The appointment would be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

6. TO INFORM STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN RESPONSE TO THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON CLIMATE'S INITIAL REPORT

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment accompanied by:

- Charlotte Palmer – Group Manager, Transport and Environment
- Hannah Swinburne – Principal Climate Change Officer
- Adrian Cannard – Strategic Planning Manager, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)
- Lynne Sullivan – Commissioner (Virtually via Teams)
- Greg Archer – Commissioner (Virtually via Teams)

The report asked the Committee to consider the recommendations from the initial report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate and recommend priorities for the city-wide carbon management action plan to the Climate Change Working Group.

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

- Members referred to page 53 of the reports pack and asked how much of the £700m/yr funding requirement was attributed to Peterborough and how much the City Council would be expected to contribute. Officers responded that the University of Leeds had provided the costings on the interventions required. These costs were not just for the public sector; they included elements such as the cost of people upgrading their homes. The cost had yet to be broken down on a local authority basis. Officers were keen to attract central government funding via grants, e.g., the zero-emission bus competition and Green Homes grant. The Commission had found that there was appetite in the private sector for investment in green measures if their credentials and return on investment could be demonstrated
- Members requested that the Strategic Planning Manager, CPCA provides the Committee with information from the University of Leeds on the costs of climate interventions to individual local authorities.
- Members praised the sense of urgency in the report.
- Members asked how the decarbonisation of buildings would be achieved given the scrapping of the green homes schemes. Officers responded that they were awaiting policy announcements on heating and building strategies from the Government, with the potential for associated pilot schemes for large scale decarbonisation.
- There was an emphasis on helping private and public landlords know what they had to do to decarbonise.
- Members asked if the Commission considered Peterborough City Council's Local Plan to be fit for purpose given that it was adopted before the Council's declaration of a climate emergency. The Strategic Planning Manager (CPCA) responded that it was not his place to assess the Council's Local Plan. The Commission had found that it was difficult to include changes to Building Regulations within local plans, as these standards were set by the Government. The Commission would favour the Government bringing forward updates to regulations.
- The Local Plan was relatively new and the evidence base would be kept under review as a number of issues had changed within two years.
- Charging points would not be needed on every residential road as 50% of electric cars would only be charged once a week. It would be more logical to install them in retail car parks and city centres that were frequently visited. Charging would become built in to a person's daily activities, as with mobile phone charging.
- Members asked if the Council should have stricter development control measures and commented that they did not believe this would discourage developers from pursuing housing schemes. Officers responded that this was a key part of the Commission's recommendations. Emissions from construction materials would also need to be taken into account alongside emissions from the building while it was in use. It was advised that targets be set to achieve this. The Commission planned to produce reports containing plans and targets for existing homes, e.g. removing gas boilers and introducing heat pumps although energy efficiency measures would be required for this to be effective.
- Members raised concerns that planned building schemes in Peterborough might take place before new emission targets were set and asked what would be done in the meantime to encourage developers to set high standards. The Commissioner responded that being the Chair of Cambridgeshire's Quality panel had highlighted that plans often needed significantly improvements, despite good aspirations. The Government had stated that Local Authorities could set their own standards. Given the urgency of tackling the climate emergency and the fact that

new standards would become normalised quickly, it was felt that the CPCA should set strict standards.

- Members referred to page 59 of the reports pack and asked if the City Council should be approving developments on green space given the aspiration that all new builds have access to nature. The Strategic Planning Manager, CPCA responded that he could not comment on these specific plans but the Commission was investigating forthcoming changes to the planning system that would increase the quality and biodiversity of green space. This could provide an urban cooling effect.
- Officers added that there was a masterplan for the Embankment which would recognise the importance of green space.
- The City Council should lead by example to influence organisations to become more environmentally friendly.
- While there was a need to grow the network, Peterborough had more charging points than most local authorities in the East of England.
- Members commented that cycling facilities needed to be improved in rural areas to ensure safety. Officers responded that the Combined Authority was the Strategic Transport Authority with responsible for the Local Transport Plan and this issue was under review.
- A high proportion of transport emissions were from journeys between 5 and 15 miles in length; a distance well suited to e-bikes and improvements to cycling facilities would encourage more journeys to be made this way; reducing emissions.
- Members asked how new council houses could be made carbon neutral, citing Goldsmith Street in Norwich as a successful project. The Commissioners praised this scheme and cited the work of the Good Homes Alliances which included 20 local authorities. Council officers added that plans for a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) could incorporate zero-carbon principles.
- Young people would be engaged with the Commission's recommendations via the presence of a younger Commissioner and via engagement events. The Commission's report also included a charter on actions people could take and how to encourage behavioural change. Further recommendations would be made in the second phase.
- Members requested that the Group Manager, Transport and Environment provides information to the Committee on plans to engage secondary schools with the work of the Climate Change Commission.
- Members referred to point 9 on page 83 of the reports pack and asked for examples of investment in decarbonisation projects. Officers responded that the Combined Authority would seek to add value and bring forth demonstration projects. Funding for transport schemes was provided through the devolution deal but housing funding was coming to an end. Examples included biodiversity schemes and e-bikes. Opportunities would be taken as they arose.
- Members stated that they hoped sufficient Combined Authority funding would be in place to work with the Council to reconfigure Peterborough's road network to prioritise active travel. Officers responded that the Combined Authority was working alongside the Council to review the Local Transport Strategy. Work had been commissioned on promoting alternatively fuelled vehicles and bus reform, including bus franchising and other models in light of declining use. The Commissioners added that new national strategy was due to be released imminently alongside a National Decarbonisation Plan and it was likely these documents would provide a new focus. Local Authorities would be given the responsibility to secure funding for local projects to discourage car use in towns and cities. Policy was changing rapidly and new funding sources would become

available. In response, Members commented that local authorities should be setting their own targets rather than relying on new central government policy.

- Members commented that the Council might need to recruit additional climate change officers. Officers responded that resourcing for climate change had been increased and the Council would work with the Combined Authority see how the resources could be obtained to take this work further forward.
- Councillor Day, seconded by Councillor Joseph, proposed that the Committee recommends that the Climate Change Working Group considers the capacity of Peterborough City Council to play its full part in developing and implementing an area wide action plan with a view to making recommendations regarding officers' skills and availability. This was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.
- Councillor Day, seconded by Councillor Murphy, proposed that the Committee recommends that the Climate Change Working Group considers the following: Alongside a Carbon Management action plan, the City will need an emergency resilience and adaptation plan which considers in detail and addresses the impact of climate change our community and considers the impact on our most vulnerable communities. This was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.
- Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Joseph, proposed that the Committee recommends that the Climate Change Working Group considers the following: Engagement with tenant farmers and partner landowners at an early stage, e.g., to encourage non-traditional use of land. This was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.
- Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Joseph, proposed that the Committee recommends to the Climate Change Working Group that Peterborough City Council works with the Combined Authority to transform the road network to favour pedestrians and cyclists. This was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.
- Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Day, proposed that the Committee recommends that Cabinet reviews any decisions that might discourage the use of Brown Bins in Peterborough and considers the use of electric waste collection vehicles, as has been achieved in Oxford. This was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.
- Councillor Murphy proposed that the Committee recommends that the Council sets targets to reduce the Council's baseline emissions, e.g., from libraries and community centres. There was no seconder and the recommendation was therefore DEFEATED.
- Councillor Murphy proposed that the Committee recommends that the Council considers using Stafford Hall as a hub to bring about engagement with the Climate Emergency and considers refurbishing the building with energy efficient measures. There was no seconder and the recommendation was therefore DEFEATED.
- The Committee requested the presence of the Corporate Director Resources at a future meeting of the Committee to provide assurances on the cost of implementing the Commission's recommendations.
- Members asked what the relationship was between the Commission's report and the COP26 Summit. Officers responded that the commission could look at new topics, including COP26. The Combined Authority had requested that the Commission makes recommendations on ongoing structures.
- Members commented that Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) could be beneficial in finding solutions to climate change. Officers added that a subgroup of the Commission had explored technological measures such as the precision use of fertilisers and 3D printing.
- Members commented that some of the Commission's recommendations had previously been deemed unaffordable.
- Members commented that charging points should be introduced in rural areas to allow the use of electric waste collection vehicles.

- Alternative fuels such as HVO could be used in situations where electric vehicles were not suitable.
- Members requested an update on plan to reduce the number of idling vehicles around schools. Officers responded that School Streets projects had been successful, and the Council had offered the scheme to all schools following receipt of funding although not all sites would be suitable. Members were encouraged to inform officers of any schools interested in taking part. Members requested that the Group Manager, Transport and Environment provides the Committee with a list of School Streets projects.
- Members raised concerns that there could be negative impacts of discouraging vehicles from driving in the City, noting the rise in courier vehicles and online shopping during the pandemic, and asked how people could be encouraged to visit the City Centre in a more environmentally friendly way. Officers responded that both 'carrot' and 'stick' measures would need to be employed. Research was needed to see how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced people's behaviour, e.g. the popularity of working from home. This could lead to businesses viewing city centres differently and this would need to be taken into account.
- Members asked what measures could be employed by the Council immediately to help tackle the climate emergency. Officers responded that insulating existing buildings was highly cost effective and represented good use of environmental grant funding. Encouraging behaviour change and increasing biodiversity via habitat banks were also effective. There was interest in the private sector in improving biodiversity. Members request that the Strategic Planning Manager, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority provides the Committee with information from the University of Leeds on the cost of biodiversity projects to local authorities

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to make the following recommendations to the Climate Change Working Group:

1. To consider the capacity of Peterborough City Council to play its full part in developing and implementing an area wide action plan with a view to making recommendations regarding officers' skills and availability.
2. Alongside a Carbon Management action plan, the City will need an emergency resilience and adaptation plan which considers in detail and addresses the impact of climate change our community and considers the impact on our most vulnerable communities.
3. Recommend engagement with tenant farmers and partner landowners at an early stage, e.g., to encourage non-traditional use of land.
4. Recommend that Peterborough City Council works with the Combined Authority to transform the road network to favour pedestrians and cyclists.

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that Cabinet:

1. Reviews any decisions that might discourage the use of Brown Bins in Peterborough.
2. Considers the use of electric waste collection vehicles, as has been achieved in Oxford.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider the recommendations set out in the initial report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate
2. Recommend priorities for the city-wide carbon management action plan to the Climate Change Working Group
3. Agree to receive a briefing note on a draft version of the final report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate.
4. Request that the Strategic Planning Manager, CPCA provides the Committee with information from the University of Leeds on the costs of climate interventions to individual local authorities.
5. Request that the Group Manager, Transport and Environment provides information to the Committee on plans to engage secondary schools with the work of the Climate Change Commission.
6. Request that the Group Manager, Transport and Environment provides the Committee with a list of School Streets projects.
7. Request that the Strategic Planning Manager, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority provides the Committee with information from the University of Leeds on the cost of biodiversity projects to local authorities
8. Request the presence of the Corporate Director Resources at a future meeting of the Committee to provide assurances on the cost of implementing the Commission's recommendations.

7. REVIEW OF 2020/2021 AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2021/22

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which considered the 2020/21 year in review and looked at the work programme for the new municipal year 2021/22 to determine the Committees priorities. The report also asked the Committee to consider if further monitoring of recommendations made during 20120/21 was required.

There were no further comments by Members

ACTIONS AGREED

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to

1. Consider items presented to the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee during 2020/21 and make recommendations on the future monitoring of these items where necessary.
2. Determine its priorities and approves the draft work programme for 2021/2022 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Note the Recommendations Monitoring Report attached at Appendix 2 and consider if further monitoring of the recommendations made during the 2020/2021 municipal year was required.
4. Note the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in Part 3, Section 4, Overview and Scrutiny Functions and in particular paragraph 2.1 item 4, Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee and paragraph 3.8 Flood Risk Management as attached at Appendix 3.

8. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which invited members to consider the most recent version of the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and identify any relevant items for inclusion within the Committee's work programme or to request further information. It was noted that a new version of the Forward Plan (Key Decisions from 2 August 2021) had been published since the agenda for this meeting had been distributed. This new plan had been circulated to committee members via email

There were no further comments by Members.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 8 September 2021 – Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee

7pm – 8.32pm

CHAIRMAN