

2022-2023 REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S WORK, ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS – APPENDIX 1

1.0 Throughout the year a number of reports were scrutinised by this Committee and recommendations made, this appendix details these recommendations and progress made since in order to support the committee to determine its priorities and approve a draft work programme for the year ahead:

1.1 **Local Flood Risk Management Strategy** – this strategy was initially presented to the committee in July 2022 ahead of public consultation. The Committee suggested at this time that the strategy should be updated to include timescales for each of the proposed actions including completion dates.

In February 2023 officers presented the results of the public consultation to the Committee which resolved to endorse to Cabinet the Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021-2027. It was subsequently accepted by Cabinet in March and finally adopted by Council later that month.

Since adoption of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy the following activities have taken place:

- Officers have commenced discussions with Officers at the Environment Agency who are embarking on the development of a new Nene Water Strategy.
- Completion of Section 19 reports following the July 9th flooding incidents in 2021. A section 19 flood investigation report is a public statement of the circumstances of a flood event and what parties have a role in managing the risks.
- Ongoing cyclical cleansing and review of the Council's road drainage assets alongside commencement of the digitisation of asset data into a new mapping database.
- Engagement with partner organisations with a view to collaborate on flood mitigation schemes.
- Appointment of a new Graduate Engineer into the Sustainable Drainage Engineer post.
- Officers have engaged with our Welsh counterparts over the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood & Water management act 2010 ahead of the upcoming formation of SAB's (Sustainable Drainage Approving Body) in 2024.

1.2 **Local Area Energy Plan** – this was presented to the committee initially in July 2022 and the committee resolved to:

- Note the findings of the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP);
- Support the approach to incorporate findings and recommendations of the LAEP into the development of the City-Wide Climate Change Action Plan;
- Support the approach to establish a Peterborough wide decarbonisation stakeholder group, hosted by Peterborough City Council, to continue to lead the delivery of the LAEP and progress towards the development of viable business cases to unlock investment.

In November 2022, the Committee resolved to endorse the adoption of the LAEP and recommend that Cabinet endorsed it. The LAEP was subsequently accepted by Cabinet in November and finally adopted by Council in December.

Following the adoption of the LAEP the following activities have taken place:

- Successful delivery of the projects identified in the LAEP will not only require the correct technical solution to be found, but also to overcome any non-technical barriers for the technology to be adopted by the end user. Peterborough City Council formed a collaboration and was successfully awarded funding from Innovate UK through the Net Zero Living Pathfinder Places competition. This funding has enabled the exploration of some of the non-technical barriers to adopting net zero technologies, such as

engagement, finance, regulation, and skills. Further funding is available to apply for in phase 2 in September.

- The LAEP identified that a large number of retrofits will be required across domestic properties in the city. A collaboration led by Portsmouth City Council, in which Peterborough City Council is a constituent member, has been successful in its application for Home Upgrade Grant 2. £41.4m was awarded to the consortia to deliver energy efficiency improvements and low carbon heating to properties not heated by gas, across its 24 council areas. This funding scheme will deliver installations from April 2023 to March 2025.
- The LAEP identified that Peterborough will likely have around 80,000 electric cars and vans by 2040. The city will require a robust charging network to facilitate this. The council is currently recruiting an officer to develop its electric vehicle public infrastructure strategy and work closely with procurement to ensure that the best providers are selected to roll out installations.
- Officers have also provided support to Cambridgeshire County Council in advising on the process of the developing a Local Area Energy Plan. Insight of the future pathway to net zero for both Peterborough and Cambridgeshire will enable stronger regional planning.
- Officers will use the findings of the LAEP in the development of the city-wide climate change action plan.

- 1.3 **Tree Management: Review of Existing Policy for Managing Tree Related Subsidence Claims Against the Council** – this report was presented in September 2022 and the Committee were recommended to note the current pressures imposed on the council by tree related subsidence and note the lessons learned from the recent Bretton Oak tree felling, offer any further views on the draft tree related subsidence policy and endorse the revised policy prior to submission to Cabinet.

The Committee noted disappointment that the decision to fell a Council owned TPO (Tree Preservation Order) tree was not referred to the Planning Committee, but clarification was provided that the constitution does not require applications to fell Council owned trees, subject to a TPO, be referred to the Planning Committee, where required to mitigate subsidence damage. The Committee made a recommendation to refer any applications for Council owned TPO trees, proposed for felling to mitigate subsidence damage, to Planning Committee. This was not taken forward by Cabinet.

Subsequently the following activities have taken place:

- The policy was taken to Cabinet 17 October followed by presentation to Full Council 7 December 2022. Having now formally adopted the policy it has been added as an addendum to the existing Trees and Woodland Strategy and has been implemented by the Council since Dec 2022.

- 1.4 **Climate Change Public Engagement Approach** – the Committee reviewed the proposed approach to public engagement and the proposed approach to utilising consultation feedback in the development of the city-wide climate change action plan.

Following the endorsement received by the Committee the following activities took place:

- The Peterborough Climate Debate programme ran from November 2022 – March 2023. c100 people attended a Peterborough Climate Debate events organised by the Council. The presentation given at the debate was recorded and shared online, giving more people the opportunity to watch the debate. Feedback was collected through notes taken at events and the 86 responses to the survey.
- A version of the Peterborough Climate Debate suitable for young people was developed and materials and lesson plans shared with schools. There were four mini-10–15-minute lessons developed, and teachers could opt to deliver as many of them as desired. 3,532 school pupils participated in these lessons, with at least 989 individual pupils taking part in the debate.

- The Youth Council hosted an event and invited secondary school aged pupils to share their views on climate change. The presentation was prepared and delivered by the Youth Council, with support from the council.
- The insight from these will feed into the development of the city-wide climate change action plan.

1.5 **Peterborough School Climate Change Programme** – the Committee scrutinised the work undertaken as part of the Peterborough School Climate Change Programme and provided feedback.

Following the endorsement received by the Committee the following activities took place:

- A significant increase in programme participation - it is anticipated that 16 schools will be participating in the programme during the next academic year (September 2023- July 2024). This is an increase of 11 schools since January 2023 and we are still actively encouraging participation. School action plans can be built over several academic years and therefore the programme can be adapted to suit the schools preferred pace.
- Officers have started delivering the net zero workshops - Manor Drive Secondary Academy and St John Fisher Catholic High School are the first two schools signed up to the programme to complete their net zero workshops. The workshops focus on climate change as an issue, its causes and encourages students to design carbon reduction solutions for their school. Mr Tom Boiling, Teacher of Humanities at Manor Drive Secondary Academy, said: “The workshops were so engaging and informative and the kids especially loved the experiments and bespoke activities that were created just for them. The students were inquisitive throughout the day and asked lots of questions; a good indication that they were incredibly interested in climate change and what Peterborough City Council had to say.” Both schools are now in the position to be supported in completing phase 2 of their action plans.

1.6 **Trees and Woodland: Ash Dieback Action Plan** - the Committee were asked to: note the current threat posed to the Council’s tree stock by Ash dieback and the potential pressures imposed; consider the Ash Dieback Action Plan; and offer any further views which will subsequently be reported to Cabinet in due course. The committee endorsed the draft Ash dieback Action Plan and recommended it to Cabinet. It was subsequently accepted by Cabinet in February.

The Committee asked for: Information to be supplied to show where the affected Ash Dieback trees are in the city. Officers subsequently advised that all trees that have been felled due to ash dieback or are proposed to be felled (excluding woodlands) would be communicated on the Council's website using the existing notification protocol. Officers requested that any ward Councillor wishing to know the exact location of all non-woodland Ash trees within their ward contact the Natural and Historic Environment Manager directly who can provide extracts from the Council’s GIS data base; and bring the Bretton Wood Management Plan back to Committee after the 2024 survey has been conducted. This has been noted.

Subsequently the following activities have taken place:

- Since approval by Cabinet the Ash Dieback Action Plan has been implemented by Aragon Direct Services within their operational duties, in respect to trees and woodland management across the City.

1.7 **The City Council’s Biodiversity Strategy: Progress Report 2021-22** – the Committee noted progress made against the Council’s 2018 Biodiversity Strategy and made recommendations with regards the ongoing delivery of the Strategy.

The Committee asked for: Information on the success of our wildlife sites in positive management (SDL 160) in comparison to the Council's statistical neighbours; and the map that details where the owl boxes are for the Peterborough Barn Owl Recovery Programme. Data on PCC’s performance against SDL 160, along with Barn Owl Box locations were provided to the relevant

Cllrs. Monitoring of the 2018 Biodiversity Strategy remains ongoing with the aim to produce a further progress report in early 2024.

- 1.8 **Peterborough Draft Council Climate Change Action Plan** – the Committee noted the update on the Draft Council Climate Change Action Plan and provided comments on proposals for future commitments.

The Committee asked for information on how much power was generated by solar panels across the Council's estate in comparison with our statistical neighbours. An update on this is due to be shared with Committee members shortly.

The Committee resolved to endorse the plan and recommend that Cabinet endorsed it. The plan was subsequently accepted by Cabinet in June and adopted by Council later that month.

A further update has not been included here due to the recent timeline in which this plan was adopted.

- 1.9 **Final Report of the Cycling and Walking Task and Finish Group** – the Committee considered the final report of the Task and Finish group and endorsed the recommendations contained within it. There was an amendment to recommendation 5 to include consultation with Peterborough City Councillors before action is taken.

The Committee report is available here:

<https://democracy.peterborough.gov.uk/documents/s49146/7.%20Completed%202022%20Walking%20and%20cycling%20TF%20Group%20Scrutiny%20Report.pdf>

The Cycling and Walking Task and Finish Group report is available here:

<https://democracy.peterborough.gov.uk/documents/s49147/7.%20Appendix%201%20-%20Completed%20Cycling%20and%20Walking%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20Final%20Report.pdf>

The next step will be to present both reports to a future Cabinet meeting.

Update on Active Travel England (ATE)

ATE is a government executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling, and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England. Their objective is for 50% of trips in England's towns and cities to be walked, wheeled, or cycled by 2030.

As of 1 June 2023, ATE are also now a statutory consultee on all planning applications for developments equal to or exceeding 150 housing units, 7,500 m² of floorspace or an area of 5 hectares. ATE will help planning authorities to implement good active travel design, including connectivity to schools and local amenities.

Staff from ATE visited Peterborough on 21 June 2023 along with Officers and Portfolio Holders from CPCA (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) and Cambridgeshire County Council. The visit was very productive in building relationships and discussing all of the plans and opportunities that Peterborough (and the Combined Authority) has to improve walking and cycling provisions.

Funding updates

- The Council has secured £900k for the designs of three projects across Peterborough (Oundle Road, Thorpe Road and Bourges Boulevard/Lincoln Road) and £2m for construction of Thorpe Wood Cycleway in the recent Active Travel Fund tranche 4 funding round. Public consultation for the Thorpe Wood cycleway is currently being planned.
- Officers are developing a number of walking and cycling schemes to improve access to the University and are currently planning to undertake public consultation.

- Public consultation has been undertaken for the new Fletton Quays footbridge and the results are currently being analysed to inform next steps.
- Work is continuing on the Peterborough Station Quarter Levelling Up Fund project. We have now moved into the Outline Business Case phase with a number of options being considered including better walking and cycling provisions. In addition to the Levelling Up Fund the council has also secured £1.5m of Towns Fund to make a number of walking and cycling improvements between the station and the city centre. A number of options are currently being considered for this.
- The Council has approximately £500k of funding this year from the CPCA to upgrade sections of the Green Wheel and officers are currently reviewing options.
- The Council has secured £284k of revenue funding from the Government's Capability and Ambition Fund to develop the LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans) and associated feasibility work.
- The CPCA have awarded the Council £12k to deliver an active travel programme – Living Streets WOW – to 8 primary schools in Peterborough. The scheme will involve children recording how they have travelled to school each day, with badges awarded to those who do so sustainably. The schools have not been selected yet, but decisions will be made shortly.
- 14 school streets projects are active across the city at nurseries, primary schools, and secondary schools, with more schools wanting to join. A school street involves temporarily closing the road at school opening and closing time to encourage pupils to walk and cycle.

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