

**MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING
HELD AT 7.00PM, ON
WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2023
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors N Sandford (Vice Chair in the Chair), Ahmed, J A Fox, A Jones, Perkins, Rush, Sharp, Simons, Warren and Independent Co-opted Members Stuart Dawks and Dr Esther Norton

Others Present: Miriam Sellick, Youth Council Representative

Officers Present: Charlotte Palmer, Head of Environment and Climate Change
James Collingridge, Head of Highways and Transport
Helga Kendall, Senior Category Manager
Jill Evans, Service Director: Corporate Finance
Charlotte Cameron, Senior Democratic Services Officer

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Day and Strangward.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

Councillors Sharp and A Jones declared their roles on Peterborough Limited.

Councillor Sandford declared his role as a company member on Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT).

25. MINUTES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

The minutes of the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 September 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to the inclusion of the Cabinet Members name in apologies section.

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

No call ins were received.

27. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Senior Democratic Services Officer 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.

- There were no comments.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee considered the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

28. CABINET PORTFOLIO UPDATE – INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the Cabinet Member portfolio relating to infrastructure, environment and climate change.

The Head of Environment and Climate Change accompanied by the Head of Highways and Transport introduced the report and highlighted key points including:

Officers clarified that the Cabinet Member had changed and that Councillor Simons, as the previous role holder, would support with questions.

The report covered the remit of the Cabinet Member portfolio and the functions included within that.

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

- Members referred to the increase in flytipping cases and were advised that work had been undertaken to investigate the increase.
- There were 34 cases prepared for court and Officers advised they could provide more information in a briefing note.
- The cover cameras that had been installed had been a success and were being redeployed to known hotspot areas.
- Members noted that 4000 trees had been planted and requested further information on how many had been removed.
- Officers advised that the number of biodiversity grass areas were increasing with successful trials of additional areas. Further detail could be found in the Biodiversity Strategy.
- Councillors had been asked to identify areas in their wards that would be suitable for wildflower areas and Members asked if that initiative had been successful. Officers advised that where the areas were identified on road verges, they had not been successful however the increase in local engagement had been helpful.
- Members suggested the use of a member session where Councillors could use plans of their wards to identify where the best biodiversity areas would be. Officers would take this away and review how it could be most effective.
- The grass cutting schedule had been prolonged due to changes in weather patterns and Officers advised that they were considering the requests from specific groups for additional rounds.
- There had been a trial to place a bag of batteries on the bin to avoid fires in the refuse collection vehicles. There would be a continued review to roll the trial out further.
- The electric refuse vehicles were difficult to use with food pods as the battery took up the space required.
- Members were advised that when the vehicles were not used for the collection of garden waste, they would be used to support crews elsewhere.

- The issue with the supply of food waste bags had been resolved and Officers were reviewing what would be the best way to supply the bags.
- The team had recruited three recycling education officers who were active in the community and would be promoting the food waste scheme.
- The education team would focus on getting into local organisations to help promote recycling and make them aware of the services that were on offer.
- Members referred to the fires in the refuse collection vehicles and were advised that crews could pinpoint where the batteries had come from.
- Officers would bring a report to a future meeting on the National Waste Strategy to understand the detail and how it would impact the Council.
- Members referred to scope 3 emissions and how their reduction would be achieved in the supply chain. Officers advised that further information would be provided at a later agenda item.
- There had been work undertaken to review the council's largest emitting sites to support in their heat decarbonisation.
- Members praised the work of Westcombe Engineering and passed on their congratulations to the team.
- Members were advised that the active travel schemes were in the design stage and Officers confirmed that the Thorpe Wood scheme would be implemented in this financial year.
- Members congratulated Officers on the national award for the School Streets scheme.
- The Youth Councillors referred to the cycling infrastructure in the city and queried how they supported the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Officers advised that should the LCWIP be adopted, it would support those schemes moving forward.
- The redevelopment of the Station Quarter would allow for innovation on how to change traffic flow and reduce congestion on Crescent Bridge.
- Members noted that urban trees could reduce surface water flooding and were advised that the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy had been working on the inclusion of climate adaptation plans.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee resolved to consider and scrutinise the report and endorse the approach being taken under the portfolio of Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change.

The Committee also requested:

1. Further detail on the 34 fly tipping court cases.
2. Information on the number of trees that had been removed in the city.

29. PENSION SCHEME RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT POLICY UPDATE

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the pension scheme's Responsible Investment policy which arose from a motion to Full Council in October 2022.

The Service Director for Corporate Finance introduced the report and highlighted key points including:

The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) would be reviewed in early 2024 and conversations with advisors were ongoing as this was an evolving area.

The primary concerns were security of public funds, liquidity and yield (SLY).

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

- Members referred to the target of reaching carbon neutral by 2050 and were advised that it would be considered as part of the target.
- Officers had interacted with other organisations to determine how they were setting their targets.
- Members requested further information on whether the Pension Scheme are on track to meet their net zero target by 2050 or 2045.
- Members requested further information on how the Council can influence the pension fund.
- The Environmental, Social and Governance policy would be brought back to Committee after the TSM had been reviewed.

AGREED ACTIONS

It is recommended that Climate Change and Environment Committee:

1. Note the report of the progress made with the Pension's scheme's Responsible Investment policy, and
2. Agree that the relevant scrutiny committee review the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy of the Council once the Treasury Management Strategy is refreshed, in 6 months.

The Committee also requested:

- Further information on whether the Pension Scheme are on track to meet their net zero target by 2050 or 2045.
- Further information on how the Council can influence the pension fund.

30. PROCUREMENT SERVICE AND CLIMATE CHANGE CRITERIA

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the proposed approach to including climate change criteria in the procured process.

The Senior Category Manager introduced the report and highlighted key points including:

The Climate Change Commercial ask had been presented to CLT. The approach would embed climate change criteria into the procurement system by Autumn 2024.

The evaluation criteria included compliance, reliance, and proportionality.

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

- The co-opted member involved with PECT noticed that they would be more than happy to engage in the process.
- There would be a staggered approach to implementation, the commercial asked would be finalised and then stakeholder engagement would commence.
- The Procurement Act 2023 would allow for flexibility within authorities on how they conduct their procurement activities.

- Members were referred to scope 3 emissions and were advised that the generation of a footprint would not be accurate due to the availability of tools to determine the data.
- Members were advised that monitoring of the Council's own scope 3 emissions would be facilitated through the implementation of the commercial ask.
- Members queried how the project would be funding and the officers advised that it had been done with the resources they had. It would be crucial that the team received additional funding which could be received through commercial involvement.
- Members were concerned about small local traders who may find it difficult to adapt to the criteria. Officers acknowledged that this was significant challenge.
- Officers would focus on engagement with local suppliers to determine what the best route would be and were taking advice from Suffolk who had experienced similar issues.
- Members were pleased to hear that Officers had been learning from best practice examples.
- The commitment to the net zero pathway would be expected, however, Officers were aware that this would not be an easy ask.
- The Youth Councillor referred to the distinction between local fairtrade food which Officers confirmed would be tied into the strategy.

The following recommendation was made by Councillor Sandford that the Committee recommended to Cabinet that in their consideration of the budget 2024/2025 they take into account the importance of extending our climate criteria to the Council's supply chain. A vote was taken on the recommendation from Councillor Sandford and was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee resolved to review and comment on the proposed approach to embedding climate change criteria into procurement documentation as outlined in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation was made by Councillor Sandford that the Committee recommended that Officers include specific timetables in future reports when detailing the progress of schemes and pieces of work. A vote was taken on the recommendation from Councillor Sandford and was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee also **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to:

1. Cabinet that in their consideration of the budget 2024/2025 they take into account the importance of extending our climate criteria to the Council's supply chain.
2. Officers include specific timetables in future reports when detailing the progress of schemes and pieces of work.

31. MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Members noted that the Cycling and Walking Task and Finish Group's final report would be presented to Cabinet at their next meeting.

Members also noted that the Carbon Literacy Training had been useful and provoked challenge and conversation about important topics.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the responses from Cabinet Members and Officers to recommendations made at previous meetings as attached in Appendix 1 to the report.

32. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which looked at the work programme for the municipal year 2023-2024 to determine the Committees priorities. Members were invited to make comments and suggestions.

Members raised the topic of air quality, with reference to the historical brick pits in Whittlesey.

Members also raised the topic of the pathway towards net zero as a crucial piece of work and noted the request for a briefing note on the feedback from the climate debates.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee considered the Work Programme for 2023/2024 and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted as being the 17 January 2024.

VICE CHAIR

Meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 8.25pm