

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel (to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs T L Ellis (Chairman)

Councillor N R Gregory (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: M R Daniells, Ms C Bainbridge, J M Englefield and
Mrs J Needham (deputising for S Dugan)

Also Present: S D Martin (Items 5 and 6)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor S Dugan and Councillor Mrs L Clubley.

2. MINUTES

It was AGREED that the Minutes of the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel held on the 12 July 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcement: -

Thank you and welcome to all those present.

It should be remembered that the Climate Change Action Plan is a live document and subject to relevant up-dates. At the Audit and Governance Committee it was noted in the Auditors report, they stated they are ... 'mindful that climate related risks may have a long timeframe and therefore while risk exists, the impact on the current period financial statement may not be immediately material'

As can be seen in our later presentation, implementation is long term and we must heed the need for prudence with our residents' money whilst doing all we can to hasten our journey to net zero. It is also clear from reports that we should always consider the lifetime impact and cumulative carbon costs involved in any, and all initiatives.

For the wider Borough we would encourage residents to access available assistance to help their own position using alternative fuels, Warmer Homes and the Greening Campaign. Also worthy of note is the recent push for using hedging as a measure for carbon capture offset by the farming community. Something I know officers will watch with interest, alongside the Environment Bill when it finally makes it through to give clear direction and always with an eye to developing technologies. Do keep an eye on our website for up-dates.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

A deputation was received in person from Anne Stephenson on behalf of the Fareham and Gosport Friends of the Earth.

The Chairman invited Councillor S Martin, Executive Member for Planning and Development to address the Panel to comment on some of the points made by the depute as Climate Change sits within the remit of the Planning and Development Portfolio.

The Chairman thanked the depute for their deputation and expressed the importance of continued public engagement. The comments made by the depute are an invaluable contribution to the meeting.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Panel received a report from the Policy, Resources and Engagement Manager updating Members on the progress of the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). The report also included a detailed Project Programme, mapping out the implementation of the Council's key carbon reduction projects.

Members enquired about the viability of the carbon neutral target, following comments from the depute who raised concerns over the Council reaching its carbon neutral target by 2030. Officers explained that a lot of work is underway to improve on the 9.1% carbon reduction achieved over the last two years. As more projects are implemented and an increase in environmental technologies are brought onto the market, it is hoped that this will have a positive impact in reducing the Council's carbon footprint and reaching carbon neutrality by 2030.

Members of the Panel also asked for reassurance that the Council's Climate Action Plan is imbedded within all Council decisions as the Panel itself only considers specific elements of the CCAP. The Director of Planning and Regeneration addressed the Panel to highlight that Climate Change is fully considered alongside legal and financial considerations in all the Council's key policy and project decisions. The Policy, Resources and Engagement Manager went on to say that a key focus over the coming months is to train both Councillors and Council Staff in how they all play a part in the Council's journey to carbon neutrality.

The Chairman explained that the scope for the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel is vast and reminded Members that although all aspects of Council business must have consideration for the CCAP, the Panel's focus must continue to be the monitoring and performance of the CCAP as it is not possible for this Panel to scrutinise every Council decision.

The Panel asked if consideration is given to the environmental policies of tenants of the Council's various commercial assets. The Director of Planning and Regeneration explained that, although the Council is not typically able to significantly influence those the wider environmental policies of tenants occupying its commercial premises. However, the Council does consider opportunities for investment in relevant environmental technologies as part of the ongoing property management of the Council's commercial premises stock.

RESOLVED that the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel: -

- a) note the contents of the report; and
- b) note and commented on the contents of the Project Programme at Appendix A.

7. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

There were no items of Executive Business pertaining to the Climate Change Action Plan for the Panel to consider.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

The Panel were asked to consider the Scrutiny Priorities for the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel.

The Director of Planning and Regeneration addressed the Committee to advise that the following items will be brought to the next meeting for consideration by the Panel: -

- Building Control Partnership, to present information on the changes to the building regulations in relation to Climate Change, and
- A scoping report to invite officers from Hampshire County Council to a future meeting of the Panel to explain the plans for carbon neutrality by 2050.

The Chairman addressed the room to ask everyone present who wishes to suggest additional priorities for the Panel to please contact the Democratic Services department.

RESOLVED that the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel considered the Scrutiny Priorities for the Panel.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.20 pm).