

23 December 2022

Our Ref Cabinet Panel on the Environment/11
January 2023
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To: Members of the Committee: Amy Allen (Co-Chair), Steve Jarvis (Co-Chair), Carol Stanier, Chris Hinchliff, George Davies, Gerald Morris, Juan Cowell, Michael Muir and Val Bryant

Substitutes: Councillors Kay Tart, Richard Thake, James Denselow, Claire Strong and Tom Tyson

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

to be held as a

REMOTE MEETING

On

WEDNESDAY, 11TH JANUARY, 2023 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda **Part I**

Item		Page
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Members are required to notify any substitutions by midday on the day of the meeting. Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
2. MINUTES - 19 OCTOBER 2022	To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 19 October 2022.	(Pages 5 - 10)
3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS	Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
5. CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT - INFORMATION NOTE	To highlight proposed items scheduled in the work programme for the Cabinet Panel on the Environment for 2022/23, agreed at the initial meeting. The Work Programme/Action Tracker at Appendix A allow the scene to be set for evaluation of such actions, and the agreement of topics for 2022/23 civic year.	(Pages 11 - 18)
6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

MEETING HELD IN THE REMOTE MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH OCTOBER, 2022 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Steve Jarvis (Vice-Chair), Chris Hinchliff, George Davies, Gerald Morris, Juan Cowell, Michael Muir and Val Bryant*

In Attendance:

Abigail Hamilton (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Reuben Ayavoo (Policy and Community Engagement Manager), Georgina Chapman (Policy Officer) and Helen Pollock (Hertfordshire LEP Clean Growth Manager)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting approximately 3 members of the public, including registered speakers.

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1:49

Apologies for absence were received by Councillor Carol Stanier and Councillor Amy Allen

49 MINUTES - 20 JULY 2022

Audio recording – 2:20

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20 July 2022 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

50 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2:39

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

51 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2:34

There was no other business notified.

52 Cabinet Panel on the Environment - Information Note October 2022

Audio recording – 3:08

Reuben Ayavoo presented the report and gave a verbal presentation, which included:

- Contributions to the Hertfordshire climate change and sustainability partnership which Members will be aware is the partnership with 10 districts, County Council and the local enterprise partnership
- We are working to progress the action plans against water biodiversity and carbon reduction and transport
- We are looking at the revised version as we are going on. We are reconvening the subjects in the refresh
- One of the biggest things that came out of the partnership was the solar together scheme which launched in August and remained open until the 27th and was around the bulk purchase of solar panels and battery storage at below market rate through an auction
- Hertfordshire had 10% more expressive interest than was expected so that totalled around 13,000.
- As a district we had around 2000 registrations which was one of the highest
- Offers have gone out since mid-October for residents to decide if they want to accept their offer or not
- We have done work around carbon emissions assessment which will go to the panel shortly
- We have also supported the local green festival at Letchworth and Royston and went down quite well
- We've been talking about the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan. There are consultations going on and the information note notes the dates they have happened so far
- Around the anti-idle policy Herts County Council has a micro-site called let's clean the air which builds on their clean air day. It informs and assists and keeps residents update on latest developments
- The business service improvement plan is in the works but will inform Members when we have more details

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Gerald Morris

In response Councillor Steve Jarvis advised:

- Street lighting is done by the County Council so anything regarding this should be brought up with a County Councillor

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the information report

53 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 9:35

Helen Pollock gave a verbal presentation on the Clean Growth Strategy which included:

- Climate change has significant economic consequences at a global and local level
- It threatens mankind and influences all aspects of life
- Businesses account for about 25% of the UK greenhouse gas emissions
- Businesses have an important role to play in protecting our environment and finding solutions and opportunities to meet the climate change challenges.
- The UK is a global leader for low carbon innovation and technology. It is legally required to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050 with key legislation and policy in place
- The UK clean green economy is predicted to grow at 4 times the rate of GDP and create thousands of new jobs
- Hertfordshire has other drivers such as populations levels rising by 175,000 in the next decade, we are looking to build 100,000 new homes and creating 100,000 new jobs.
- The government has directed focus and money to grow a green economy
- There will be employment and upskilling opportunities for Hertfordshire residents
- Many businesses are moving towards Net Zero to increase productivity, efficiency and competitive edge
- The main business case for action is cost savings through increased productivity and efficiency. It also relates to selling positions, a motivator for engaging and attracting staff, and gaining Government support and funding
- The role of the LEP is to ensure the opportunities for sustainability and low carbon economic development in Hertfordshire are identified and maximised to drive clean economic growth forward and to create those important employment opportunities to upskill our workforce, to make change happen. It also helps manage some of the flow of government funding to secure maximum economic impact
- Clean growth underpins Hertfordshire's Economic Recovery Plans and Sectoral Growth Plans
- The principle aim of the Clean Growth Strategy is to build a greener, more sustainable Hertfordshire economy and lead the way for clean economic growth
- There are two pillars: Growing and attracting low carbon businesses and supporting existing businesses and communities and places as they transition to Net Zero
- The priority themes are green economic footprint, development of green skills, business engagement and knowledge support, infrastructure, green financing, sector and place clustering and value procurement
- A clean growth activity supporting pillar 1 is the Herts IQ which is a 3M sq. ft. commercial space targeted at clean growth sectors. It is a sustainable place of knowledge exchange, collaboration and innovation
- A clean growth activity supporting pillar two is the Hertfordshire Growth Hub with Net Zero advice and sign posting
- There is a lot of Hertfordshire based support. This includes the Low Carbon Workspace, Eastern New Energy Programme, Low Carbon Business Support, Low Carbon Innovation Fund, Herts Growth Hub website and others such as Wenta, Herts Chamber and biz4Biz
- Net Zero and clean growth can't be delivered by one organisation or business alone, it is a collective effort.

The following Members and members of the public asked questions:

- Councillor Michael Muir
- Councillor Gerald Morris
- Councillor Val Bryant

- Councillor Chris Hinchliff
- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Sue Lines
- Deolinda Eltringham

In response to questions, Helen Pollock advised:

- The programmes are big, and they have a number of marketing tools that they're using. They have their own marketing team that identifies businesses that it might help. Businesses that are contacting the growth hub are being signposted to this help. Even if a business comes to them that wants help on another matter, the business advisors will now engage more with them on climate change and sustainability. We are using our business partners and groups such as the Chambers of Commerce and other groups that have newsletters and meeting to get the information out there. There is a lot more to be done to get the information out there. We are using social media and various forms of communication
- The LEP is part of the Hertfordshire sustainability partnership which has the sustainability officers of all the local authorities. They are aware of the grants. They do focus more on the resident side but we also push the business side.
- I cannot comment on the industrial development as I don't have the information
- The opportunity of the low carbon business support programme is very specific for North Herts. It is Cambridge that are running it and North Herts has been able to join this one. There are businesses in North Herts that have benefitted from the low carbon grants but we can look at some case studies to look at this.
- It is up to the landlord to drive some of these issues and some people might want to put a solar panel in for example but it is up to the landlord if they will allow that. It might benefit the small business but the landlord won't think it benefits them. The Heritage Trust has plans to retrofit some of their buildings and they have an issue that some are heritage buildings. Big landlords and Housing Associations are working with LEP to address some of these issues
- When it comes to closing doors that makes sense. When it comes to triple glazing it depends on the building. On retrofitting homes, moving from double glazing to triple glazing isn't always as effective as other methods that could be done. I wouldn't advise businesses to get triple glazing until they look at other options that could save them money
- I haven't got the information on the uptake of grants but it is something we can get and look at it on a district level
- A lot of the funding is short term unfortunately and the LEP needs to think about how we can do this in a small sustainable way. There might be some other financial solutions, but it is on our radar
- The Eastern New Energy Programme can EV Fleet audits which can help a business make that business case decision about what route to go down. There is more to be done, such as signposting
- We know some of the bigger businesses have legislation in place that enforces them to make action and changes and a lot of them are leading the way in some of these activities.

Georgina Chapman gave a verbal presentation on the Carbon Reduction Sub-group which included:

- There are some updates to the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) around carbon reduction

- They have produced a climate change training video for non-suitability or non-climate officers within the Council and also elected Members. It is about half an hour and will be shared more widely
- The solar together scheme was open for about a month for expressions of interest and then closed on the 27th September.
- We have had more than 13,000 expressions of interest across Hertfordshire and 2,309 in North Herts. We had the second highest amount of expressions.
- They split Hertfordshire up into 4 regions due to so many expressions of interest and there were 4 winners and all of the installers are local
- Personal recommendations were sent out to residents and the average saving from typical market price was around 14%. Everyone has until the 25th November to accept the recommendation.
- The first installation is planned for late December or early January and we will be getting weekly updates to how many people have signed up and how many installations have taken place
- At North Herts we are creating a summary of our carbon emissions assessments and we had an independent consultant come to assess our operations and give us a carbon footprint that is in line with the green house gas protocol. We compare this to our baseline year from 2019/20 to see how we are improving
- The Eco Stars Fleet Recognition Scheme looks at how your fleet is run and look at individual vehicles but also as a whole. It helps you look at your emissions and how you can run your fleet in a more efficient way to improve air quality.
- The electric vehicle charging points have increased at the District Council offices to support the transition to hybrid and electric vehicles.
- The Greenspace Management Contract Changes have carbon changes in reducing the frequency of verge cutting and has taken some vehicles off the road. There has been an increase in the use of strimmer's rather than the big ride-on grass cutting machines so we have saved some carbon there
- There are some policies in the upcoming Local Plan which support low carbon development. There are proposals to support low carbon energy and a requirement for development proposals to reduce energy consumption with things like design materials and technology.
- We are having conversations around the new waste contract and the various effects of this. Carbon reduction is a key consideration within these discussions, such as moving to a three-weekly collection.
- The solar thermal at the Royston leisure centre supports an aim in our carbon reduction strategy which is around exploring how we can more sustainably heat our swimming pools. Procurement has begun on this and we are looking to find a contractor to carry out the work.
- There are also plans to carry out solar PV at North Herts leisure centre, Royston leisure centre and Hitchin swimming centre. Capital bids have been put in for the next financial year. We are looking to see how Absolute Energy can support us in designing, procuring and installing those projects for us.

Georgina Chapman also updated Members on the last HCCSP which was on biodiversity. We are engaging with Natural England to have five new ponds for the next five years to support greater crested newt populations.

The following Members and members of the public asked questions:

- Deolinda Eltringham
- Councillor Chris Hinchliff

In response to questions, Georgina Chapman advised:

- The solar thermal at Royston is more of a first step test case to see how it goes. We haven't ruled out the other leisure centres in the future.
- The electric charging points that have been put in the Council car park are to support our transition to electric for our own fleet. This probably isn't for buses at this point and this might be a County Council thing to provide EV charging points for public transport.

Reuben Ayavoo also advised members:

- In the Hertfordshire bus improvement plan are looking wider. This is about need and capacity and it is being looked at. When funding become available electric buses may become more available and charging points.

54 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Audio recording – 1:09:25

Councillor Steve Jarvis informed Members that there was a plan for meeting topics. The next meeting on the 11th January 2023 will address air quality.

Sue Lines commented on the idling outside schools and takeaways that affects air quality and the speed of cars in different parts of the town centre.

Councillor Steve Jarvis agreed that idling should be added to the next meetings agenda relating to air quality. He also advised that management of speed limits is a matter for County Council.

The Chair requested that, should any Members have any further suggestions for agenda items for future meetings, they advise himself, officers or the Committee Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Chair

CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT
11th January 2023

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER FOR 2022/23

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS – Environment and Leisure Executive member and Recycling and Waste Management

PRIORITY: SUSTAINABILITY / A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This note highlights proposed items scheduled in the work programme for the Cabinet Panel on the Environment for 2022/23, agreed at the initial meeting. The Work Programme/Action Tracker at Appendix A allow the scene to be set for evaluation of such actions, and the agreement of topics for 2022/23 civic year.

The Cabinet Panel aims to set a work programme which will enable open discussion that may lead to recommendations to Cabinet /the relevant Executive Members or Service Director, regarding actions that they believe that the Council should be taking to address climate and environmental issues.

2. STEPS TO DATE

2.1 Cabinet approved the establishment of the Cabinet Panel for the Environment at the 27th June 2019 meeting. The amended terms of reference were tabled for the Full Council meeting on the 4th June:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/documents/s10892/Appendix%20C%20-%20Revised%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20for%20Cabinet%20Panel%20on%20Community%20Engagement%20Enterprise%20and%20C.pdf>

2.2 By way of update to the Panel, the Corporate Policy Team have been involved in the following work:

Contributions to the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)

HCCSP members have asked officers to work through each of the current action plans (Water; Biodiversity; Carbon Reduction; and Transport) to present revised versions which take into account action to date, clarified targets, and changed context/funding/priorities. As such, the subgroups for each area will be reconvened to work on this, and the policy team are working to refresh the biodiversity subgroup. We have now held an initial meeting of the reconvened Biodiversity Subgroup and agreed a timeline and plan for revising the Action Plan

With the period for acceptance of Solar Together offers drawn to a close, 410 (of 2262) people from North Herts have accepted their offer for Solar Panels, and 18 (of 107) have accepted their offer for battery storage only. We have contacted iChoosr to see if they are able to provide us any data around how many Letchworth households have signed up, to try to understand whether the Heritage Foundation's design regulations and application process may impact on households' propensity to accept.

The Policy Team continue to be a part of the Behaviour Change Subgroup.

We also continue to be a part of the Adaptation Subgroup who are working towards the creation of climate risk assessments which identify risks posed by climate change to council services and mitigative actions.

Carbon Emissions Assessment

We are now working to produce a summary of the carbon emissions reports that we have received. This summary will be reported to the panel once complete.

Review of the Council's 2021 Carbon Emissions and Climate Actions

The Policy Team has been collating data to estimate the Council's carbon emissions in 2021 and produce a document detailing what the Council achieved in 2021 against the Climate Change Strategy's Proposed Actions. This work is ongoing.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3.1 An Environment inbox has been set up to allow members of the public or organisations to provide suggestions/presentations for the panel's consideration. The address is - EnvironmentPanel@north-herts.gov.uk. The Policy and Community Engagement Manager will also provide a verbal update to the Panel.

3.2 The Panel could choose to accept suggestions from outside the meeting including:

- Suggestions by Members of the public or organisations either at the meeting or by email;
- Recommendations from Council, Cabinet or any other Committee;
- Suggestions by any Member of the Council;
- Suggestions by any Officer of the Council.

3.3 The Panel will seek to ensure that consideration of agenda items minimises additional burdens on staff resources. Wherever possible, requests are made for the presentation of documents already in existence rather than the production of new documents specifically for the Panel. Suggestions from outside sources, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 will only be placed on the work programme if agreed by one of the alternating Chairs or at a meeting of the Panel.

3.4 Attendance from external bodies and members of the public is actively encouraged.

3.5 This is a non decision-making advisory body and therefore this or any notes/reports to the Panel do not include a recommendation on a key Executive decision and have not been referred to in the Forward Plan. However, recommendations for action from the Panel for consideration by Cabinet may do so. This will therefore need to be borne in mind for any recommendations of the Panel.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1 Other topics for consideration and inclusion in the Panel's work programme will be considered at each meeting. When considering additional topics, their risk assessment and prioritisation will ensure that the most appropriate items are taken forward to the work programme.

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix A Environment Panel Work Programme and Action Tracker

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

Reuben Ayavoo, Policy and Communities Manager, 01462 474212
Reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk

Georgina Chapman, Corporate Policy Team Leader, 01462 474121
Georgina.chapman@north-gov.uk

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix A - Environment Panel Work Programme and Action Tracker

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APPENDIX A – WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER 2022/23

PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT MEETINGS 2022-23

<p>Meeting 1. 20th July 2022</p>	<p>Biodiversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCCSP biodiversity action plan • Council actions on biodiversity (How can the community support the actions in the plan) • Green and Growing Network Group (what does community action look like for climate change and how can the Council support this. • Finalising topics for upcoming meetings.
<p>Meeting 2. 19th October 2022</p>	<p>Carbon Reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Enterprise Partnership - Clean Growth Strategy in Hertfordshire - Helen Pollock (Clean Growth Manager) • HCCSP/NHC Carbon Reduction updates – Georgina Chapman
<p>Meeting 3. 11th January 2023</p>	<p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Air Programme – Matthew Clark, Programme Manager – Air Quality • Defra return for air quality monitoring – Roger Pitman NHC Air Quality Consultant
<p>Meeting 4. 22nd February 2023</p>	<p>Achievements</p>

CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT – ACTION TRACKER: January 2023

Date and Min No	Action/Resolutions	Action/Response/Outcome	Status (Complete/in progress)	Deadline for Implementation	Additional commentary
11092019 EP8	Proposal of surveying clients at Best Before Café/Hitchin Food Rescue to assess needs/client base	Policy and Communities Manager/Community Engagement Team	On-going		Initial survey results received. Further action to refine information once the demand on services has diminished after the pandemic.
06012020 EP27	NHDC publicised activity of schools in recycling	Executive member for Recycling and Waste	On hold		Actions to be placed on hold until the outcomes of the consultation on the National Waste Strategy and subsequent actions for Local Authorities are finalised
06012020 EP34	Establish a 'Eco- credentials' of food outlets(Similar to food hygiene scoring)	Executive member for Recycling and Waste	On hold		As EP27
06012020 EP37	Investigate the service change of 4 weekly collections/smaller bins/incentivise better recycling habits	Executive member for Recycling and Waste	Complete	2025	At another recent Extraordinary Cabinet Meeting, it was agreed by Waste Management that the Council will move to purple bin collections every 3 weeks, as part of the Service Change in 2025 . This change will avoid an increase in costs and honour the Council's commitment to the Climate Change Emergency.
06012020 EP38	Encourage the use of recyclable cups at district events	Executive member for Recycling and Waste	On hold		As EP 27
05032020 EP46	Anti-idling policy development.	NHDC Legal team/ Environmental Health	On-going		To be further developed as part of the Sustainable North

Date and Min No	Action/Resolutions	Action/Response/Outcome	Status (Complete/in progress)	Deadline for Implementation	Additional commentary
					<p>Herts programme/Taxi Licencing Policy. HCCSP and Public Health have developed a microsite to inform, assist and keep residents updated on the latest developments, including local pollution alerts.</p> <p>Let's clear the air (hertfordshire.gov.uk)</p>
05032020 EP47 Page 15	Smart Card option bus use in district	Transport officer	On-going		<p>The Bus Service Improvement Plan from HCC outlines the development of Smart Tickets as part to the plan. The plan has been recently been approved by the DfT. (introduction date unknown). Funds have yet to be allocated to the County Council.</p>
05032020 EP49	Consider the instituting of car free days in Hitchin	HCC highways/Transport officer	On-going		As EP46

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