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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

MEETING HELD IN THE REMOTE MEETING ON TUESDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 2021 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Steve Jarvis and Councillor Amy Allen (Co-Chair), Councillor Val Bryant, Councillor George Davies, Councillor Sarah Dingley and Councillor Adem Ruggiero-Cakir*

In Attendance: *Reuben Ayavoo (Policy and Community Engagement Manager), Alice Sims (Trainee Policy Officer), Penny Copestake (PA to the Service Director - Legal and Community), Louise Overington (Service Development and Support Manager) and Chloe Hipwood (Shared Service Manager – Waste & Recycling)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting Councillor Carol Stanier and approximately 5 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 15 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Hoskins and Gerald Morris.

28 MINUTES - 7 SEPTEMBER 2021

Audio Recording – 2 minutes 25 seconds

Councillor Steve Jarvis, as Chair, proposed and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 7 September 2021 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

29 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 21 seconds

There was no other business notified.

30 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 40 seconds

- (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 as well as being filmed. The audio recordings will be available to view on Mod.gov and the film recording via the NHDC YouTube channel.
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the detailed reminder about this and speaking rights is set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

31 INFORMATION NOTE - WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER FOR 2021/22

Audio Recording – 3 minutes 24 seconds

The Policy & Communities Manager presented the information note entitled Work Programme and Action Tracker for 2021/22 and drew attention to the following:

- Have been working with the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership and took part in a COP event on 3 November.
- A paper was circulated recently looking at solar bulk purchasing for County and Districts, this would be explored at the January meeting and further details would be shared at a later meeting.
- NHDC were leading on Biodiversity and Biodiversity Baseline.
- The Carbon Footprint Calculators have been reviewed and have shortlisted three, each with a different level of detail and ease of use.
- Community composting schemes were underway, with the support of the Council in promoting this.
- All bins in town centres had been converted to collect cigarette ends and chewing gum.
- There had been over 1000 expressions of interest in the 'Tree Give-Away' scheme and the Greenspace team would be liaising with BIDs to encourage further expressions of interest.

The following Members, Officers and members of the public took part in a discussion and asked questions regarding the Policy and Community Manager's update.

- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Amy Allen
- Reuben Ayavoo
- Diane Ketcher
- Chloe Hipwood
- Christine Watson

In response to questions, the Shared Service Manager – Waste Management advised there had been around 60 areas adopted as part of the 'Adopt an Area' scheme. They also confirmed that any leaves collected from open spaces and streets by NHDC contractors was sent for composting, but would need to confirm whether this could be shared with allotments.

Councillor Steve Jarvis commented that it was positive to hear about a County wide scheme for solar panels and that the 1000 expressions of interest in trees accounted for more than the 10,000 trees available and would need to look at making sure these were spread as widely as possible.

RESOLVED: That the Information note entitled Work Programme and Action Tracker for 2021/22 was updated.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure the Cabinet Panel on the Environment is able to plan its workload and monitor actions.

32 PRESENTATION ON WASTE AND RECYCLING

Audio recording – 12 minutes 45 seconds

Chloe Hipwood and Louise Overington from North Herts Council gave a presentation on Waste and Recycling. Chloe introduced herself and Louise and briefly explained their roles.

The presentation was about working towards being Net Zero and some of the initiatives that are currently being done or being looked at. Some of the main points included in the presentation outlined:

- Work was ongoing on a carbon management plan, as the refuse service was one of the biggest emitting departments at the Council. This included installation of analytic devices on refuse collection vehicles and exploration of fleet decarbonisation options.
- Food waste still accounts for a third of waste in residual bins and Council social media messaging has focussed on this as food waste is one of the main contributors to greenhouse gasses.
- A Waste Awareness Officer was recruited earlier in the year, allowing the Council to promote seasonal social media messages and events.
- Some of the schemes promoted included; Food Waste Pledge, Plastic Free July and reusable nappies.
- The Adopt an Area scheme started in 2021. 174 contacts had been made expressing interest in adopting an area and kits had been provided to Parishes in the district.
- Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Day encouraged people to bring unwanted electrical items for recycling and received over 10.5 tonnes of WEEE. Some of these items would be able to be reused thanks to Herts County Council PAT testing funds.
- Waste Warriors Facebook Group established to encourage a more community led and less formal approach to tackling waste. There was a need to improve the reach of the posts in these groups.
- Future campaigns will include promoting advice on wrapping paper disposal and paper based alternatives, seasonal messaging on food waste and recycling and campaigns to promote the use of the kerbside paper recycling bins.

The Chair thanked Chloe Hipwood and Louise Overington for their presentation and lead a discussion on the presentation.

The following Members and members of the public took part in the discussion and asked questions:

- Councillor Amy Allen
- Councillor Val Bryant
- John Webb
- Christine Watson
- Diane Ketcher

Councillor Amy Allen commented that it was positive to see so much wrapping paper without glitter.

In response to questions, the Shared Service Manager – Waste Collection advised:

- Items brought to a WEEE event would be handled in the same way as if they were taken to a Household Recycling Centre. Items that can be reused will be collected and sent to a Reuse Centre for PAT testing.
- Promotion of local businesses was discouraged on Waste Warriors page in order to prevent any issues around green-washing. Public were encouraged to share positive stories of local businesses who were doing positive environmental things.
- There would need to be a discussion held with Comms department to see if Plastic Free North Herts could be included on the Council website.
- Messaging around Christmas wrapping paper would be online only this year, as a trial to see how this affects amounts of recycling and cross-contamination. If this is successful, it would be rolled out further next year.

33 PRESENTATION FROM ROYSTON REPAIR CAFÉ

Audio recording - 63 minutes 50 seconds

Chris Lee from Royston Repair Café gave a presentation on The Royston Repair Café and outlined:

- It was important to find good ideas around recycling and the environment and borrow and reusing these, but learn from previous mistakes.
- Established a hashtag, #RoystonReducingWaste, which was an umbrella structure which other organisations could shelter under, in an attempt to share existing waste reduction schemes in place at companies and organisations in Royston.
- Set up Repair Shed in Hemel Hempstead, as part of the Men's Sheds scheme, and the Repair Café in Royston in 2014 and these are both still functioning. The Men's Shed scheme was focussed on making, mending and learning.
- iFixit business in Royston repairs technology based items and the Right to Repair has made it legal to repair tablets, iPhones, etc.
- There were several other businesses and schemes running across Royston which were attempted to reduce waste through repairing items.
- Briefly outlined tentshare and the work being done by that business.
- The future aims of the Repair Café were to run Skill Sharing Sessions, clothing exchanges, tool libraries and a community fridge, amongst other ideas.
- Highlighted the possibility of looking at repurposing the disused public toilets in Royston.
- In Glasgow, there was Remade Network, which promotes a city wide repair economy, with both private and public partners, providing affordable repairs and training for new green jobs.

The Chair thanked Chris Lee for his presentation and said the meeting would now hear from tentshare and then questions would be taken from both presentations.

34 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & DISCUSSION

Audio recording – 76 minutes 48 seconds

The Chair invited Rebecca Heaps from tentshare to speak.

Rebecca thanked the Chair for the chance to address the Panel and gave a presentation to explain the aims and work of tentshare, which included:

- The scheme was a community led, tent mapping service in an attempt to reduce the amount of tent waste.
- The two main arms of the scheme are Family Camping, where tents can be rented out and hired by someone in the local area. The other arm was a festival scheme, which looked to rent salvaged tents to festival goers.
- Part of the scheme was to encourage people, and teach people how, to repair their tents.
- tentshare was a peer-to-peer sharing scheme, based on a triple line business model (planet, people, profit).

The Chair thanked all Rebecca Heaps for her contribution to the meeting.

The Chair lead a discussion regarding the contributions to the meeting and the following Members, Officers and members of the public took part:

- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Chloe Hipwood
- Diane Ketcher

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In response to the presentations, the Shared Service Manager – Waste Management encouraged both Rebecca and Chris to get in touch if there was any specific help the Council Waste services could offer and requested that a wanted section be set up as a function of tentshare.

Rebecca Heaps advised that she would pass the idea back onto the committee.

In response to the presentations, Councillor Steve Jarvis advised he was keen to explore how NHDC disused buildings (such as the public toilets) could be brought back into use. He also noted that the Council could better promote the work and schemes being run by volunteers and charities.

In response to questions, the Shared Service Manager – Waste Management advised that VegWare type items should not be included in household recycling bins, as these items can generally only be composted in specific places and advised that they would look at including this on the website.

The meeting closed at 9.01 pm

Chair

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