CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT
20 July 2022

***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, to be 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)

Over the past six months, the policy team have been involved in the work around developing the county-wide biodiversity baseline. The finalised dataset and report are now complete and due to be shared with the relevant officers in each authority. Two workshops have been held (one for HCCSP Members, one for Officers) on the development of the baseline, key findings, and the uses and limitations of it.

The policy team have now RAG-rated (Red, Amber, Green) all actions from all HCCSP actions plans (Water, Biodiversity, Carbon Reduction, Transport, and Behaviour Change) to indicate to the HCCSP Project Leads Officer how far along we are with progress and implementation of the actions within North Herts. This rating will also help us to understand which actions we still need to feed through to service delivery plans and commence work on.

The Behaviour Change Subgroup have now produced a draft of their Strategic Action Plan, ensuring that all actions are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). This has been taken to the HCCSP and approved in draft form. Following recommendations from HCCSP, the subgroup has now prioritised three key themes on which to begin work. These are:

- Raising awareness of the value and need for protection of biodiversity and promoting behaviour change to residents and businesses
- To increase deployment of renewable energy in Hertfordshire
- Raising awareness of the value of water and promoting behaviour change to residents and businesses

North Herts Council have signed up to participate in a Solar Bulk Purchase Scheme run by iChoosr. This will allow residents that sign up to install solar panels at a discounted cost. The Solar Bulk Purchase scheme will be launched around the end of August.

Carbon Emissions Assessment

The carbon baseline report has been updated and is now inclusive of the Council's other sites and buildings. This baseline now includes everything that the consultant recommends we include other than F gases. We have been given the opportunity for F gases to be included in the baseline if data can be provided.

Road Map to Net Zero

The contract for the Roadmap to Net Zero has been signed. Work is ongoing to provide the necessary information for this.

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 has achieved in 2021 against the Climate Change Strategy's Proposed Actions. This work is ongoing.

Hitchin Eco-Fair, Saturday 14th May

North Herts Council was represented by a stall at the Hitchin Eco-Fair on Saturday 14th May. Materials were displayed to promote some of the climate-related work that the Council has and is doing. This included the North Herts climate change infographic; posters to promote the HEAT energy app, Herts Sustainable Periods, and the WWF carbon calculator a Hitchin fair trade map. Preparations are now underway for the Council to have a presence at the upcoming Letchworth Green Festival on 10th September and Royston's Sustainability Day on 2nd October.

Climate Change Officers Group

A Climate Change and Sustainability Officers Group has been established with the purpose to capture and guide service-level activity in relation to climate change, environment, and sustainability; To identify mechanisms and opportunities to mitigate the carbon impacts that arise from the delivery of Council services and duties, and synchronise implementation across services collaboratively; To support the implementation of the Council's strategies and those of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership; To help the Council define and deliver 'value' and 'success' in its climate and sustainability activities on a consistent basis, including mechanisms for measuring success; To provide quarterly updates to the Climate Change Implementation Group (CCIG) in order to assist corporate and political leadership in delivering upon their ambitions in relation to climate change, environment, and sustainability; And to facilitate and champion a corporate culture of sustainability, helping shape the thinking

of staff in the more sustainable delivery of services. This group most recently met on Wednesday 15th June.

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 Programme of meetings and Action Tracker

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix A - Action Tracker