

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

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix A - Environment Panel Work Programme and Action Tracker