

**CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT
22nd February 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 highlights the topics agreed for the 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 the Council should be taking to address climate and environmental issues.

This meeting will focus on the progress made across various areas of the council on our climate, environment, and sustainability goals.

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 have been reconvened to work on this. The policy team held a meeting of the Biodiversity Subgroup on 18th January and began discussing the actions. We have also now received the updated Action Plan Template from which to work. HCCSP is keen for the revised action plans to take into account the work being done by other organisations and community groups as well as for each Plan to have an overarching vision for Hertfordshire (the previous iterations were focused around local authority delivery and spheres of influence only). As such, the subgroups are looking for those with relevant interest and expertise to attend and

contribute to the action plan revisions. An email on this has been sent out to those on our distribution list.

iChoosr have sent through postcode data on Solar Together acceptances, which we have begun to analyse. We requested this data to aid our evaluation of the scheme and to understand how participation has varied across the district. Installations are now progressing and are still on track to be completed by April.

The Policy Team continue to be a part of the Behaviour Change Subgroup who have refined their priority areas. The subgroup are due to take a paper to HSOG and then HCCSP.

We also continue to be a part of the Adaptation Subgroup. The subgroup lead met with the Chief Execs Group to discuss our plans for identifying climate risks, and was well-received. We now have a template on which we can begin recording our risks. Authorities on the subgroup have agreed to record risks under categories of the key climate impacts (i.e extreme heat; rainfall & flooding; drought; and wind/storms) to have a common approach.

Sustainable Warmth

Installations continue for eligible households who have signed up. We are awaiting confirmation from government as to whether there will be an extension to the scheme.

Green Courses Research

Following a question that was asked at a recent Environment Panel meeting, the Policy Team have conducted research (attached) on courses and modules available in Hertfordshire with links to sustainability, climate change and the environment. The courses include those from school leavers to undergraduate degree courses both available at Hertfordshire Colleges and Universities as well as The Open University.

Updated Climate Change Strategy

Following the approval of updated Climate Change Strategy in December 2022, a designed version has now been produced and is due to be published on our Climate Change webpage. Additional actions have been added under each of the three action categories.

Affinity Water 'Water Resources Management Plan' Consultation Response

We have been preparing NHC's response to Affinity Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP24). This plan outlines how the water company will provide a reliable and sustainable water supply to its customers between 2025 and 2050, particularly in light of the growing demand and water scarcity facing this region. The plan includes proposed reservoirs in South Lincolnshire and at Abingdon, as well as a Grand Union Canal Strategic Transfer to bring down water from the Midlands. The policy team has liaised with other Hertfordshire local authorities and local group, Revlvel, to help inform our response.

Aligning our Climate and Environment Goals with Planning

We have been working with Planning to ensure consistency between our Climate Change Strategy and HCCSP Strategic Action Plans, and the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) on Sustainability and Biodiversity.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3.1 Our Environment inbox is a means for members of the public or organisations to provide suggestions/presentations for the panel's consideration. The address is - EnvironmentPanel@north-herts.gov.uk.

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

5.2 Appendix B Hertfordshire Course and Module Research

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix A - Environment Panel Work Programme and Action Tracker

7.2 Appendix B – Hertfordshire Course and Module Research