

CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT
19th July 2023

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2023/24

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR: Environment and Leisure & 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 2023/24. The Work Programme below sets out the proposed topics for the 2023/24 civic year.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 This meeting will focus on the topic of Water, including disposal of wastewater, and work occurring to enhance our chalk streams.
- 1.4 The Policy Team are currently reviewing the Action Tracker. This is with a view to improving its effectiveness and clarifying the areas and ways in which the Council can have a meaningful influence. An updated Action Tracker will therefore be brought to the September Panel meeting to highlight changes brought about by this review.
- 1.5 The Provisional Work Programme for the Cabinet Panel on the Environment Meetings 2023-24 is as follows:

Meeting 1. 19th July 2023	Setting the Work Programme; Water
Meeting 2. 27th September 2023	Sustainable Development
Meeting 3. 6th December 2023	Waste
Meeting 4. 20th March 2024	Achievements

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 June¹. The Constitutional Amendment Report of the 18th April 2023² recommended that this Panel is the only remaining panel for 2023.

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

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

2.4 Reviewing and revising the HCCSP Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan. As lead on the Biodiversity subgroup, the team have been working with the subgroup to revise the plan to take into account action to date and changed context. This version of the plan will be presented to the July HCCSP meeting. The subgroup has planned a larger revamp of the plan in 2024, to coincide with development of Hertfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). This will allow us to ensure that the documents are aligned.

2.5 The Council are preparing for a second round of the Solar Together scheme which will be open for registrations of interest in August.

2.6 The Council are compiling a climate risk log. This identifies risks to council services and to the district from climate impacts (extreme heat; flooding; drought; storms). This is part of the Adaptation subgroup work to ensure there is a log of climate risks across the county.

2.7 Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2)

2.8 The Home Upgrade Grant phase 2 is due to launch and we have been preparing for this. The scheme is only available for off-gas properties. Those who live in a property EPC rated D,E,F, or G and who have a household income of below £31,000 per year are eligible to sign up for home energy efficiency improvements. We have conducted an analysis of eligible homes to enable us to target direct mailouts and have submitted our marketing plan to the Greater South East Energy Hub for approval. The wards with the largest numbers of eligible households are Hitchwood, Offa, and Hoo; Ermine; and Weston and Sandon. Our marketing will therefore focus on these wards in the first instance. Eligible residents from any ward are able to sign-up however, and we will also do general promotion of our scheme on our website and social media.

2.8 Luton Airport Expansion

2.9 Work has re-commenced on reviewing the Luton Airport Expansion Documents. Documents on several areas including climate resilience, green controlled growth, biodiversity, infrastructure, and air quality are being reviewed by officers to ascertain whether previous concerns raised have been addressed.

2.10 Engagement and Eco-festivals

2.11 The Council continue to provide relevant updates on the Climate Hive engagement page and attended the recent Baldock and Hitchin eco-festivals.

¹ [Appendix B - Revised Terms of Reference for Cabinet Panel on the Environment.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Constitutional amendment report 18.4.23.docx \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

2.12 Aligning our Climate and Environment Goals with Planning Projects

2.13 The Council continue to work on ensuring alignment between our climate/environment goals and planning projects. The Policy & Strategy team continue, alongside other relevant teams, to be part of the Strategic Project Board for the Baldock expansion; attending monthly working group meetings to work through various aspects of the development including sustainability elements.

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. CONTACT OFFICERS

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