

**CABINET
27 JUNE 2019**

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR: LEGAL AND COMMUNITY & MONITORING OFFICER

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS: LEADER OF COUNCIL, ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE, RECYCLING AND WASTE

COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the establishment, terms of reference and membership of a Cabinet Panel on the Environment (the 'Panel').

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the establishment of the Panel, with Membership, Terms of Reference, Procedure and administration as per Appendix A (or as amended by Cabinet).

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To comply with the direction of Cabinet on 11 June 2019.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 Following the Climate Change Motion at Annual Council on 21 May, and the Cabinet meeting on 11 June, the administration has asked that this item is considered by Cabinet. This is with the view to considering environmental and climate ideas and further assist with the implementation of the Council's Motion of 21 May.
- 5.2 As per the instructions, Membership, Terms of Reference, Procedure and Administration are set out as per Appendix A.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan, although 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.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 A Petition on Climate Change and a Climate Change motion¹ were both presented at the Annual Council meeting on 21 May 2019. Full Council resolved:

Council notes that:

- (a) *the recent 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report states that we have just 12 years to act on climate change if global temperature rises are to be kept within the recommended 1.5 degrees Celsius;*
- (b) *all governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts on climate breakdown, and the governments that recognise this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. UK county, district and city councils need to commit to aggressive reduction targets and carbon neutrality as quickly as possible;*
- (c) *districts are well placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions, as their responsibility for planning policies opens up a range of sustainable transport, buildings and energy opportunities;*

In light of the above, the Council therefore agrees to:

- (1) *Join other councils in declaring a Climate Emergency;*
- (2) *Ask the Leader to write to the Secretary of State requesting that they provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on climate change easier;*
- (3) *Request that, in light of the IPCC report, officers review the council's Climate Change Policy with the aim of bringing a report to Council in autumn of 2019, after consideration by Overview and Scrutiny. The review should include an action plan to achieve a target of zero carbon emissions by 2030 and proposals for regular reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the progress with the plan;*
- (4) *Ask officers to ensure that, as the Council's policies are routinely reviewed, specific consideration is given to how policies and our related decisions and actions, affect our contribution to climate change, and where necessary, update these policies to reduce our impact wherever possible;*
- (5) *Ask officers to investigate the most appropriate training for Members and officers about how to promote carbon neutral policies for consideration by Council;*
- (6) *Continue to work with partners across the district, county and wide region to deliver widespread carbon reductions."*

¹ [Climate Change Motion Annual Council 21.5.19](#)

- 7.2 Whilst this was subsequently then listed on the Cabinet Agenda for 11 June, there was insufficient time to prepare the report and Appendix prior to that meeting, but to the extent necessary the instruction to bring forward a report for a special Cabinet meeting was then confirmed on that date.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Panel's Membership, Terms of Reference, Procedure and Administration are attached at Appendix A.
- 8.2 Appointees (other than the Executive Chairmen) shall be confirmed at the Cabinet meeting on 27 June or in the event that this is not available, to the Democratic Services Manager subsequently to enable the meetings to be arranged.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the power to do anything that individuals generally may do for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident in its area, with the exception of powers which are afforded by implementation of or compliance with alternative legislation. Cabinet's Terms of Reference at 5.6.14 is *"To carry out the Authority's responsibilities for the General Power of Competence pursuant to section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 for the benefit of the Authority, its area or persons resident in its area and increasing the availability and equality of access to employment."*
- 9.2. The establishment of the Panel would therefore fall under the Localism Act provision as described and the Cabinet's terms of reference.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Other than potential staffing costs, there are no other direct revenue or capital implications arising from this report. If the Panel were to make recommendations to Cabinet that had financial implications then there would need to be a consideration as to whether they could be delivered within the existing budgetary control framework.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct risk implications arising from this report. As highlighted in paragraph 14.1 the additional work involved could create pressures in delivering existing work and/ or could create the need to increase staff hours. The establishment of this Panel may enable actions to be taken that help reduce the impact of climate change. This in turn may alleviate the impact on the Council and residents of the District.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 12.2 The proposed Panel seeks to advance the Council's response to the impact of Climate change at a District level. The international and national reports note the negative impacts on the community of which greater impact will be felt by those who share a protected characteristic.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There will be staffing and resource implications for arranging and supporting the Panel, and report writing and its meetings – as these will be in addition to the existing calendar of meetings. These may be quantified when it is clear which Officers will attend these meetings. In terms of Council meetings, each attracts a meeting attendance allowance for officers of £25; and officers up to and including grade 7 will be paid overtime at time and a half for some staffing areas under local agreement (although overtime is not paid in addition to flexi/ toil).
- 14.2 Staffing implications may go beyond the cost of staff attending evening meetings. If new projects emerge they may require additional resource that cannot be quantified at present, on top of this will be relevant training and development of staff working on these projects.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Proposed Panel's Membership, Terms, procedure and administration.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1. Jeanette Thompson; Service Director: Legal & Community; Monitoring Officer
jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4370
- 16.2 Reuben Ayavoo; Policy and Community Engagement Manager
reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4212
- 16.3 Ian Couper; Service Director: Resources and s151 Officer
ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4243
- 16.4.1 Kerry Shorrocks; Corporate Human Resources Manager: Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4224

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1. Council Motion and Full Council minutes 21 May 2019: [Council 21 May 2019](#)
- 17.2. Cabinet 11 June 2019: [Cabinet 11 June 2019 page](#)