

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee held on
Thursday, 18 October 2018 at 4.00 p.m.

Chairman: Pippa Heylings
Vice-Chairman: Dr. Martin Cahn

Committee Members in attendance:

Sue Ellington
Peter Fane
Jose Hales
Peter McDonald
Nick Wright

Councillors in attendance:

Neil Gough

Officers:

Patrick Adams
Gemma Barron
Mike Hill
Andrew Winter

Senior Democratic Services Officer
Head of Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing
Director of Housing and Environmental Services
Senior Planning Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

In minute 6, point E) was removed and the final sentence before the recommendations was amended to read: "All Members indicated their willingness to participate in a Working Group, which would investigate further options for direct investment in renewables."

4. WATERBEACH NEW TOWN

The Principal Planning Officer gave a presentation on the climate and environmental issues regarding the proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which was currently out to consultation.

Electric cars

The Principal Planning Officer assured the Committee that each dwelling would be able to have a charging point for electric cars. Concerns were expressed at the suggestion that residents' cars would be parked in locations some distance from their properties.

Cycling

It was noted that to encourage residents to cycle, there needed to be secure points for them to secure their bicycles. It was understood that the plan included cycleways and a perimeter path. Members were assured that the proposals from the Waterbeach Cycling

Campaign would be taken into consideration.

Sustainable homes

It was noted that sustainable show homes were currently not part of the SPD, but there were plans to have renewable energy projects on site.

Employment

It was suggested that 15,000 square metres was insufficient for local businesses if the new town was to be sustainable.

Air quality and schools

Significant concern was expressed at the re-location of the Primary School in close proximity to the A10 in the Phase One development plans. It was reported that the Waterbeach SPD section on Air Quality explicitly stated that there should be no construction of schools close to the A10; recent national studies have revealed the deadly health impacts of air pollution from traffic on children, especially in roadside developments; and air pollution affects both brain and lung development, as well as the obvious respiratory problems. The Principal Planning Officer explained that the location had been chosen to satisfy concerns of the County Council about road safety and noise. The proposed location was about 60 metres from the A10. Given that there are plans for dualling of the A10, Members expressed concern that this could mean that the Primary School will finally be only 40-60 metres from a busy, main A-road. It was noted that a bund with young trees had already been constructed between the A10 and the site of the proposed settlement. The Principal Planning Officer explained that the green separation in the proposed SPD could not be decreased and formed part of the Section 106 Agreement.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that, in terms of air quality, the location satisfied current Government guidance. In response, the Chair of the CCEAC highlighted the fact that national thresholds will very soon change due to the new knowledge that was emerging about the particulate pollution especially from pm2.5 caused by road traffic. The Chair insisted that it was highly questionable that in a new development of such a size, a long-term decision was being taken that will knowingly put children's lives and development at risk.

The Committee agreed that it wanted further expert assurances that the level of PM 2.5, requested that the location of the school be reconsidered. Calls were made for the buffer zone between the A10 and the school to be extended.

Wildlife

It was noted that 5% of the area would be set aside for wildlife, surpassing Natural England's recommended figure of 3.5%.

Design and Multi-story buildings

It was suggested that the new town should have more multi-story buildings in the centre to make a bold design and landscaping statement for a new town and to make best use of the available space.

5. INTERNATIONAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC) SPECIAL REPORT BRIEFING

Dr Anne Miller gave a presentation to the Committee on the implications of the recent International Panel on Climate Change Special Report. It was agreed that the presentation should be distributed to Committee members.

It was suggested that the implications for the District included:

- Changes in land use that result in release of emissions.
- Mass planting of trees to absorb carbon and especially on major new roads to make them carbon-neutral (A14, A10, A428)
- Raising ambition on energy efficiency and renewable energy in new builds.
- Preparing for increased frequency and severity of flooding.
- Building houses that are flood proof.

John Ranken from Girton, on the invitation of the Chairman, made the following points:

- We needed to be free from dependency on fossil fuels by 2020.
- Traffic needed to be reduced and the A14 upgrades should be stopped.
- New homes needed to be sustainable and old homes should be retro-fitted.
- Homes should be built with solar panels on their south facing roofs.

6. FORWARD PLAN TO NOVEMBER

This was noted.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday 28 November at 4pm.

The Meeting ended at 5.55 p.m.
