

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee held on  
Thursday, 20 September 2018 at 2.00 p.m.

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

### **Committee Members in attendance:**

Sue Ellington  
Peter Fane  
Peter McDonald  
Nick Wright

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Neil Gough (Cabinet Lead Member for Environmental Services)

### **Officers:**

Gemma Barron	Head of Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing
Soraya Hashemi	Scientific Officer
Mike Hill	Director of Housing and Environmental Services
Kevin Ledger	Revenues and Benefits Support Officer
Siobhan Mellon	Development Officer
Trevor Nicoll	Head of Waste Resources
Paul Quigley	Head of Environment Commissioning
Katherine Southwood	Project Officer
Rebecca Weymouth-Wood	Interim SSWS Waste Policy Manager

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were reported from Councillor Jose Hales.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Peter Fane declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was currently a director of a renewable energy company.

### **3. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DRAFT WORK PLAN**

The Director of Housing and Environmental Services presented this report on the Terms of Reference. It was agreed that the title "Functions" on page 3 of the agenda should be amended to "Terms of Reference".

The Committee **NOTED** the Terms of Reference.

The Committee identified several areas to include in a draft workplan as well as the agenda items on air quality, green energy and single use plastic:

- Review SPD of new strategic sites, such as Waterbeach; The Committee agreed that it should make recommendations on the Waterbeach SPD before the consultation closed on Friday 26 October. It was therefore agreed to have a report on this issue at its next meeting. It was noted that the Committee should not duplicate the work of the Planning Committee, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or its task and finish groups.
- Review of existing strategies including Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership
- Creation of a Climate Commission or Forum to pool expertise from outside of the

Council and bring together key stakeholders to consult and advise on key issues, best practice, latest evidence; also as a way to help achieve the ToR in terms of engagement. Should include Drainage Boards.

It was agreed that the priority areas of action to be included in a future work plan would be revisited at the end of the meeting, following discussion of the agenda items on air quality, green energy and single-use plastics.

#### **4. 2018 DRAFT AIR QUALITY STRATEGY BRIEFING NOTE**

The Head of Environment Commissioning presented this report on a draft version of the Air Quality Strategy, which proposed a new approach to maintaining or improving air quality across the District.

##### **Monitoring of additional sites**

Members of the Committee suggested that air should be monitored near schools, new developments, airfields, railway crossings as well as hot spots like the A14.

##### **Monitoring air quality near schools**

The Head of Environment Commissioning explained that there was no requirement for the Council to monitor all schools, although Orchard Park had been monitored due to other concerns. The Highways Authority could identify vulnerable groups that the Council should monitor. It was agreed that action should be taken to prevent cars from “idling” with their engine running.

##### **Air monitoring units**

The Head of Environment Commissioning explained that mobile air monitoring units cost approximately £7,000, but did not last as long as permanent units, which cost £25-30,000. He stated that a capital bid of £100,000 had been made.

The Committee

**AGREED** To endorse the new approach to local air quality proposed by the Strategy and outlined in paragraph 10 of the report, with the following amendments:

- i. Seeking to maintain and, wherever possible, improve local air quality throughout the District, rather than focussing only on exceedances of national objectives.
- ii. Adopting a Whole District approach to local air quality, particularly in relation to particulates.
- iii. Updating the AQMA Action Plan on the A14.
- iv. Constructively using the planning system, in particular the Local Plan process, Supplementary Planning Documents and objective planning conditions using newly developed and innovative Air Quality Requirements.
- v. That the Strategy should be further developed, with the Committee’s comments (particularly on the A14), and a final draft presented to the Committee, together with a SMART Workplan to deliver the Strategy.
- vi. That the Strategy should be further developed, with the Committee’s comments (particularly on the A14), and a final draft presented to the next meeting of the Committee, together with a SMART Workplan to deliver the Strategy.

To submit a funding proposal to the Corporate Planning Budget process for dedicated officer time and a capital bid for £100,000 for the purchase of air quality monitors.

#### **5. AVOIDABLE SINGLE USE PLASTICS**

The Cabinet Lead Member for Environmental Services presented the overview of the Waste and Recycling Service. The Head of Shared Waste Service presented the report on the use of avoidable single-use plastics and how the Council could reduce their usage.

### **Contaminated recycling**

Concern was expressed at the amount of contaminated recycling that had to be rejected, although it was noted that this authority actually rejected less on average compared to other councils. It was noted that contamination included textiles in the recycling and tins or plastic containers not being washed properly. The reduction of single use plastics was one element in a bigger picture.

### **Single use plastic use at the Council**

The Committee noted the work of Mariana Vicente, a work experience student, on the reduction of single use plastics at the Council. This had led to the piloting of the removal of rubbish bins at desks, to be replaced by two communal bins, one for waste and one for recycling.

The Committee welcomed the decision to no longer procure plastic soda and water bottles and plastic cutlery in the canteen, to replace the plastic cups in the meeting rooms with glasses and the forthcoming distribution of reusable drinking bottles to staff. The Committee heard of the budget to purchase recycling bins for each of the floors, and recommended that the decision be taken to purchase.

The Director of Housing and Environmental Services agreed to report back on whether the Refill app could be rolled out across South Cambs, and whether there could be elimination of single use plastics at events run by and with the Council across the district. Also whether single use plastics were being used in the satellite offices of the Council, including the Sheltered Housing communal rooms.

It was noted that a presentation on recycling would be given to staff and councillors on Thursday 27 September from 12 noon to 2pm.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

## **6. INVESTMENT IN GREEN ENERGY**

The Policy and Performance Officer presented this report on the potential for the Council to invest in Green Energy.

Members of the Committee made the following points:

- The Council should consider the promotion of solar farms on public buildings and public land.
- The Council should replace its 1,800 footway lights with more energy efficient LED lighting.
- The Council should encourage parish councils to invest in renewable energy.
- The Council should promote the use of electric vehicles.

### **Budget**

It was noted that at this stage, any recommendations for significant levels of expenditure would have to be considered for next year's budget. Concern was expressed that the Council would not have the officer resources to enact ambitious recommendations.

It was noted that the Policy and Performance Officer would prepare project briefs to inform High Level Assessments to be delivered by Bouygues, outlining green energy investment

options for the South Cambridgeshire Hall site and the Council's stock of footway lighting. The briefs will outline objectives, risk appetite and return on investment requirements. All Members indicated their willingness to input into the content of these briefs and as such it was agreed that these would be brought forward to a future meeting.

The Committee

- A) Reviewed the opportunities provided by the Council's Renewables Reserves and the recently accessed Re:fit procurement framework, plus options for the investigation and implementation of Green Energy projects.
- B) Recommended to Cabinet a continuation of the current strategy, which sees retained renewable energy business rates earmarked through the Renewable Reserve for investment in green energy projects.
- C) Identified High Level Assessments to be commissioned under the Re:fit procurement framework. South Cambs Hall and Footway lighting stock were agreed as first two projects for commissioning of High Level Assessments, to be produced by Bouygues.
- D) Recommended to Cabinet the contracting of a dedicated energy investment officer to be funded through the Renewables Reserves in order to progress the Green Energy investment agenda, including work under Re:fit and further options for direct investment in renewables.
- E) Supported investigation into further options for direct investment in renewables.

## **7. COMMUNITY ENERGY GRANTS REVIEW**

The Development Officer presented this report, which invited the Committee to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Community Energy Grant scheme.

It was understood that approximately £18,000 out of the available £55,000 for Community Energy grants had already been committed for 2018/19. It was noted that no more than £3,000 could be allocated to a project, although more than one application could be received from a single parish.

The Committee

- A) Agreed with the proposal to re-open the Community Energy Grant scheme.
- B) Agreed with the proposed amendments to the scheme guidance and application process.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members of the Committee suggested including the following items on its Forward Plan:

- Air Quality at new developments.
- Waterbeach SPD.
- Promotion of renewable energy projects on sites of new development.
- Investigation of noise complaints generated by wind farms.
- Investigation of noise complaints caused by work on the A14.
- Environmental impact of pet crematorium at Thriplow.

It was agreed that the following areas should be included in the Forward Plan:

- New Air Quality Strategy and air quality review in new developments
- Green Energy investment opportunities
- Single Use Plastics
- Climate and Environment review of SPD of strategic sites, including Waterbeach

- Review existing strategies including Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership
- Planning provisions (supplemental documents and design guides) for environment, biodiversity, flooding and energy
- South Cambs Climate Forum/Commission

It was noted that the Committee needed to be mindful that resources were limited.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee agreed that its next meeting would be on Thursday 18 October at 4pm.

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**The Meeting ended at 4.10 p.m.**

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