

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee held on  
Tuesday, 28 January 2020 at 2.00 p.m.

**Chair:** Pippa Heylings

**Vice-Chair:** Dr. Martin Cahn

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

Geoff Harvey  
Grenville Chamberlain  
Graham Cone  
Peter Fane

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Bill Handley, Dr. Tumi Hawkins and Bridget Smith

### **Officers:**

Patrick Adams	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Philip Bird	Corporate Programme Manager
Christian Brady	Historic Environment Team Leader
James Chesher	Building Control Surveyor
Emma Dyer	Project Officer
Jane Green	Built and Natural Environment Manager
Soraya Hashemi	Scientific Officer
Heather Jones	Strategic Lead 3C Building Standards
Siobhan Mellon	Development Officer - Climate and Environment
Alex Snelling-Day	Green Energy Investment Officer
Celia Wignall	Conservation Officer

### **1. APOLOGIES**

None.

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

None.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 were agreed as a correct record subject to the amendment of the first sentence in the fourth paragraph of the fifth minute to read "... ground source heat pump".

### **4. CLIMATE EMERGENCY - PLANS FOR MEMBER WORKSHOP**

The Corporate Programme Manager explained that a Climate Emergency Member Workshop would be held on Wednesday 19 February in order to ensure that the Council met its target to be zero carbon by 2050. Regret was expressed at the fact

that the Workshop was being held on the same day as the Joint Development Control Committee and the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, but it was noted that the meeting date was unlikely to be changed.

Members made the following suggestions:

- The Workshop should hear evidence from expert witnesses.
- The Council needed to work with its partners on this issue.
- The Council should consider how the Local Plan will affect its carbon footprint.
- The Council needed to agree a timescale with specific targets.
- The Council needed to work with the Greater South East Energy Hub on this matter.

## **5. PROGRESS REPORT ON GREEN TO OUR CORE PROJECTS**

### **Taxi EV Charging Points**

The Corporate Programme Manager explained that installation of these Points needed to be completed by the end of March for the Council to secure funding. It was hoped that a suitable location for these points could be found. Councillors suggested that the car parks in the District should be considered, including those run by the Parish Council or a local supermarket.

The Corporate Programme Manager agreed to find out the power of the proposed chargers in kilowatts. It was suggested that all the chargers needed to be “rapid” instead of “fast” to be useful for taxis.

### **Housing Energy Audit**

The Corporate Programme Manager explained that the Interim Assistant Director HRA was working with Savills to establish a timescale for this project. It was noted that whilst it was easier to carry out work on voids, this would increase the time in which a property remained empty. It was suggested the benefits of energy efficient housing should be promoted in South Cambs magazine.

## **6. RESPONSE TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION**

The Development Officer, Climate and Environment gave a presentation on the Council’s proposed response to the Cambridgeshire County Council’s Climate and Environment Strategy for Consultation.

Members made the following points:

- It would be useful to see a timescale on how the targets would be achieved by 2025.
- Changing to electric transport was ambitious.
- It was unclear if the County Council had factored in their move to Alconbury.
- The County Council needed to consider tree planting as well as grassland and peatland restoration.
- The management of water sources needed to be considered as chalk based rivers were vulnerable.

The Chairman agreed to liaise with the Development Officer, Climate and Environment to ensure that the Committee's suggestions were included in the finalised response.

## 7. AIR QUALITY STRATEGY

The Assistant Director of Environmental Health presented this report, which stated that the air quality in the District was good and she provided details on how this could be maintained.

### **Equipment**

The Assistant Director of Environmental Health explained that the more expensive equipment was larger, more durable but harder to move than the smaller cheaper units. A trial of smaller units would take place in Harston. She also explained that the location of smaller units was a challenge, as the ideal location was head height, which made them more vulnerable to theft.

### **Non traffic pollution**

The Scientific Officer – Air Quality explained that there were existing national standards regarding industrial pollution and smoke free zones could be considered if pollution from chimneys became an issue.

### **Histon and Impington**

The Committee noted that Histon and Impington Parish Council had installed its own air monitor at a cost of approximately £7,000 over four months. The Assistant Director of Environmental Health explained that last year's data had shown that it was unnecessary to keep monitoring the A14 and the Council would work with Histon and Impington Parish Council regarding their findings.

### **Working with the City Council**

The Scientific Officer – Air Quality explained that whilst this authority would not have a joint strategy with the City Council, the two authorities had a good working relationship regarding air quality and would liaise with each other regarding the measures in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Councillors made the following points:

- Drivers needed to be encouraged to switch off their engines when stationary.
- Air quality near schools was of particular concern.
- The main cause of air pollution was the burning of fossil fuels and not traffic emissions.
- Pollution was also caused by the degradation of roads caused by traffic.
- Limiting pollution caused by waste collection vehicles should be considered.
- Air quality in the District was affected by industrial activity that took place in neighbouring Districts.
- The location of an incinerator in Cambridgeshire could be an issue.
- Air quality along the A14 and the A428 needed to continue to be monitored to address public concerns.
- That Highways England had secured funding for tree planting should be

welcomed.

## **8. ZERO CARBON COMMUNITIES GRANT SCHEME**

This item was discussed after agenda item 4.

The Climate and Environment Project Officer presented this report on the funding decisions made on the recent Zero Carbon Communities (ZCC) grant applications.

### **Promoting the Grant Scheme**

The Committee welcomed the funding of these projects. In response to questions regarding the promotion of these works, the Climate and Environment Project Officer explained that a new web page had been established.

Councillors made the following points:

- The success of these projects should be promoted more.
- This was a cross-party issue and should be promoted as such.
- The opportunity for bidding for grants in the next financial year should also be promoted.

## **9. RESPONSE TO FUTURE HOMES STANDARD CONSULTATION**

The Building Control Surveyor presented this item on the Government's Future Homes Standard, which will be introduced in 2025 and was expected to ensure that new buildings would be 75%-80% more efficient than those built in 2013.

The Strategic Lead 3C Building Standards explained that the Council had to answer the yes/no questions in the format provided by the Government's consultation, which provided little opportunity for qualitative comments.

The Strategic Lead 3C Building Standards agreed to send the Leader details of the consultation response relevant to safer and stronger communities, as she was the Vice Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

The Committee made the following points:

- The Standards proposed were lower in terms of achieving zero carbon than those of 2011 and our disappointment in this should be reflected in the response to the consultation.
- Future proofing of buildings to allow retrofitting was important.
- Government guidance needed to be in plain English.

## **10. INFORMATION ITEM: ADVICE FOR RESIDENTS ABOUT ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

The Historic Environment Team Leader presented this report on the advice being given by the Historic Environment Team on how owners of historic buildings could adapt their homes. The Committee welcomed the presentation given by the Conservation Consultancy Officer and asked for a copy of it to be circulated to Committee members.

**Heritage Declares**

The Committee recommended that the Council should sign up to “Heritage Declares” a non-affiliated group of heritage practitioners who have come together to urge the sector to react more quickly and effectively to the climate and ecological emergency. This could influence the Local Plan.

**Challenging pre-existing views**

The Committee noted that many owners of historic buildings believed that the Council would reject any applications to renovate their homes and this reputation needed to be challenged. It was suggested that the Council consult with home owners before it signed up to Heritage Declares.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

- The Council should sign up to “Heritage Declares” with the timetable to be decided by officers.
- A webpage should be developed to support owners of historic buildings and signpost how to receive advice on renovations.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 24 March at 2pm in the Monkfield Room. Community forest and tree planting within the District would be discussed.

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**The Meeting ended at 4.45 p.m.**

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