

CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE PANEL

Action notes

Monday 27th July 2020

Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Cllr Ian Barnes, Cllr Mahym Bedekova, Cllr Katherine Chibah, Amanda Grosse, Andrew Marsden, Andy Higham, Bevan Jones, Dominic Millen, Ed Jones, Glenn Stewart, Ian Davis, Kayhan Ali, May Hope, Peter Alekkou, Matt Bowmer, Michelle Marche, Mitch Cooke, Nevaeh West-Lawson, Sarah Cary, Tilly Ford.

Introductions

Cllr Barnes welcomed everyone to the meeting and paid tribute to Cllr Chris Bond, who had been a member of the Task Force and had sadly passed away recently.

Updates on recent progress

Adoption of the Climate Action Plan – Cllr Barnes noted that the Climate Action Plan (CAP) had been agreed by the Council's Cabinet in July. However, it had subsequently been called in, which was delaying final adoption and the public launch event.

Preparing the 2019/20 carbon emissions baseline – Bevan Jones gave a brief update on progress and noted that it appears emissions have fallen, which is a move in the right direction, although more needs to be done to accelerate this including commencing delivery of the CAP actions.

Action There was a query about emissions from teams where work is outsourced and large emitters (for example hospitals). It was agreed that these would be looked into.

Emerging national and regional policy – A summary of recent announcements had been prepared and brief highlights were provided.

Action It was agreed the summary of recent announcements would be attached to the meeting notes.

Thematic Focus on Buildings

A brief overview was provided on various areas of interest:

- Role of planning system
- Building regulations
- Upgrading Council buildings
- Retrofitting existing housing stock
- Embodied carbon in construction.

There was then a discussion with various points arising:

- Building regulations only apply to new residential space while there is a requirement for commercial buildings so show consequential improvements.
- The current building regulation requirements are below the highest standards, for example London Plan requirements and Passivhaus.
- There is conformity in the approach to climate change and emissions through the various tiers of planning policy.
- Areas covered by planning policy include carbon standards, carbon offset funds and decentralised energy.
- Assessments of new buildings do not currently include embodied carbon, although the new London Plan includes a requirement for a whole life cycle calculation.
- A Housing Asset Management and Sustainability Strategy is being developed which includes a baseline assessment of existing Council housing stock.
- When looking at corporate buildings, will need to consider whether working from home transfers emissions.

Action Consider staff training to allow review and challenge of carbon emission assessments.

Communications and Engagement

The CAP launch event will be promoted via Council media outlets including social media platforms. This will be supported by a short video providing an overview of the CAP. It will also be linked to existing related campaigns for example around waste and recycling as well as the reforestation project.

Action The Young Mayors were asked to help with engaging with schools.

It was noted that messaging needed to reflect broader benefits, for example in terms of improvements for the public and residents.

Meeting forward plan

Action It was agreed that the emerging Parks and Open Spaces Strategy would be the next main topic.

AOB

None.

Background Information

Emerging national and regional policy

Green Recovery Challenge Fund	Help for conservation organisations and their suppliers to create 3,000 jobs and safeguard 2,000 others.	£40m from DEFRA as part of wider Govt. package.
Reforestation	Govt. commitment to plant 30,000 hectares of trees every year by 2025.	Consulting on new English tree strategy.
New schools	Ten-year school rebuilding programme, starting from 2020-21.	Over £1bn to fund the first 50 projects which will be confirmed in autumn for Sept 2021 start.
Repairs and upgrades to schools and FE colleges	Repairs and upgrades to schools and FE colleges.	£560m for schools and £200m for FE colleges in this financial year.
Local growth projects	Possible areas of interest include development and regeneration of key local sites, investment to improve transport and digital connectivity, and innovation and technology centres to build on local comparative advantage.	£900m for shovel ready projects.
Electric vehicles	Investment in UK production and R&D capabilities as well as super-fast charging network.	Circa £2bn with £1bn for charging.
Direct Air Capture	Funding for R&D. Govt. also looking at carbon pricing and incentives.	£100m for R&D, potential payment per tonne CO2 captured.
Green Homes Grant	Homeowners will be able to apply for vouchers to cover two-thirds of energy efficiency improvements (entire cost for low income households).	£2bn with vouchers available from September.
Green Public Sector Buildings Fund	Grants to public sector bodies, including schools and hospitals, to fund both energy efficiency and low carbon heat upgrades.	£1bn fund over next year.