

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY (CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT) COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny (Climate Change and Environment) Committee held in the Coltman VC Room, Town Hall on 26th July 2023 at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillors M. Slater (Chairman), Mrs B. Ashcroft, A. Bailey, Mrs V J Gould, M. Holton, M. Huckerby and K. Smith.

Officers Present:

James Abbott (Corporate and Commercial Manager), Sean Loughran (Programmes and Transformation Officer) and Monica Henschcliffe (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Also Present:

Councillor D. Fletcher.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs J Jones.

01/23 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting.

02/23 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Resolved:

That Councillor M. Huckerby be appointed vice-chairman for the ensuing year.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Cllr M Slater		Cllr M Huckerby
Cllr Mrs B. Ashcroft		
Cllr A. Bailey		
Cllr Mrs V J Gould		
Cllr M. Holton		
Cllr K. Smith		

03/23 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

04/23 **PRESENTATION FROM CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Councillor D. F. Fletcher, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, had been invited and attended the meeting to give a brief overview of his portfolio.

He outlined his dream to be the first carbon neutral Borough in Britain. The Government target is for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2040, and a carbon neutral borough by

2050 but his ambition is for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030, and a carbon neutral borough by 2040.

His priorities included Carbon Reduction, Carbon Capture, Biodiversity and Nature Recapture, Climate Change Adaptation and any opportunities presented by climate change, through economic development, green technology and investment in solar panels, air source and ground source heat pumps, and minimising waste pollution.

To become carbon neutral, the Council are to involve outside organisations like, individuals, schools, organisations for profit and non-profit, Parish Councils, Borough Council and the County Council.

A range of current measures and future plans were outlined.

An opportunity for questions followed.

Councillor M. Huckerby requested that the climate change policy be updated on a quarterly basis rather than annually.

NOTED

05/23 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A question was received from a member of the public, regarding rivers in the Trent catchment affected by sewage spills.

A written response was tabled at the meeting from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development. A copy of the question and response is appended to these Minutes.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change attended the meeting to also provide a verbal response to the relevant parts of the question.

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It was advised that surface run-off of water through sustainable drainage systems in new developments is an issue of planning policy.

It was indicated that tree planting in appropriate places is a priority for the Council's Open Spaces Team.

The Council continues to discourage the paving of front/rear gardens, and provide education on the reasons for this.

NOTED

06/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions submitted to the Committee prior to the meeting.

07/23 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT END OF YEAR 22/23

The Report of Mark Rizk, Head of Corporate and Environment Services, regarding the end of year performance report was considered. The Programmes and Transformation Officer provided an overview of the report to the committee.

An opportunity for questions took place.

NOTED

08/23 SCRUTINY REVIEW PROGRAMME

As this was the first meeting of the Scrutiny (Climate Change and Environment) Committee the Chairman requested that Members gave consideration to any topics that they would like to add to the review programme. A number of topics were discussed.

Discussions took place, and the following items were suggested: public owned energy companies; harnessing the power of the Trent; Sewage in the Trent; climate change education in schools; involvement of parish councils regarding climate change; tree planting; insulation of houses; climate change action plan; waste management recycling approach.

It was agreed that it would be arranged for speakers to attend future committee meetings regarding (1) climate change action plan, and (2) tree planting. It was also agreed that the long list of potential reviews would be circulated for Members of the Committee to research further to identify their preferred topic for the next scrutiny review(s) which will be agreed at the next meeting

NOTED

09/23 PUBLIC EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS

Members considered the Public Executive Decision Records.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

10/23 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the Committee take place on Monday 20th September 2023.

11/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting during discussion of the following items as it would likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda:

PUBLIC EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS

Chairman