

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK AND FINISH GROUP
HELD ON 20TH AUGUST 2019 AT THE TOWN HALL, LEAMINGTON SPA**

Present: Councillors Janet Alty, Sarah Boad, David Brunson, Will Bryce, Mubarik Chowdry, Louisa Radice and Susan Rasmussen

Robert Nash (Town Clerk)

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Alty is appointed Chair of the Climate Change Task and Finish Group.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Jennifer McAllister,

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations at this time.

4. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Consideration was given to draft Terms of Reference for the Climate Change Task and Finish Group (Report 4).

It was noted that similar Groups had been established by both Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council and this needed to be reflected in the Terms of reference for this Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference are revised to include cross referencing to the work being undertaken by Climate Change Groups at Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council.

5. **CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Group was reminded of the decision of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 17th June, 2019 that:-

(1) Leamington Town Council accepts the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's conclusion that global warming above 1.5°C greatly increases climate change risks such as extreme weather, spreading of diseases, species extinction and extreme poverty in Africa and Asia; and that "ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities can support the implementation of ambitious actions implied by limiting global warming to 1.5°C".

This Council declares a 'Climate Emergency' because of the significant and urgent action needed; consequently, Royal Leamington Spa Town Council will instigate all of the actions that it is able to take with the aim of producing a relevant plan of action within 6 months; and

(2) that a task and finish group is established to develop proposals for consideration and approval by the Council by December 2019.

The Group had been circulated with the following documents prior to the meeting:-

- Briefing document for Parish and Town Councils – action once a climate change emergency is declared (Stroud District/Town)
- Huntingdon Town Council – Environmental Policy

Both documents are filed with these Minutes.

The Town Clerk had prepared a schedule of potential initiatives that would help the Council to draw up an action plan to address the climate change emergency. This formed the basis of discussion at the meeting and included the following agreed actions:-

Local Planting schemes/Biodiversity

The introduction of sustainable planting solutions was now established in the Town and wild flower planting was being favoured in some locations. As these schemes were delivered through contracts managed by Warwick District Council, the Town Council would need to establish the extent of the provision for biodiversity in such arrangements. Reference was made to the experience at Rotherham Borough – Cllr Bryce to investigate and report.

Allotments

Provision had been made in the draft Neighbourhood Plan to protect land designated for use as Allotments. However there was some evidence that some over production occurred at peak growing periods and this might be addressed by making such surpluses available to the local Community. There was also a suggestion that fruit trees might be encouraged to help build more resilience into the local food economy. Dialogue on these matters could be extended to privately managed Allotment sites. These matters would be raised with the respective Allotment Societies at the next opportunity. - Action Town Clerk

Housing

The Group recognised that measures to lower the carbon footprint of the housing stock was a key area in addressing climate change, though this presumed policies largely outside the remit and influence of the Town Council. The policies outlined in the schedule listed several initiatives that were to be taken forward in the Neighbourhood Plan including encouraging applicants to go beyond sustainable housing development standards, particularly with regard to environmental performance of buildings, resource consumption & recycling. It was suggested that as climate change issues were becoming more prevalent, monitoring other recent Neighbourhood Plans could be helpful in identifying new policy initiatives. Town Clerk to monitor Facebook account @NP_things

Transport

There had been significant support through the consultation process on the Neighbourhood Plan and from across the community generally for improved cycle ways that both introduced safer cycle routes and a more cohesive network linking the various unconnected routes that presently exist. It was recognised that reducing car use was fundamental to lowering CO² emissions. Reference was made to the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory which enabled comparison of the various factors influencing air quality, though this data was only available on a District/Borough area basis. (naei.beis.gov.uk).

Cllr Brunson referred to initial discussions with the Manager of Warwick District Mobility Ltd concerning the potential hire of electric cycles from the Mobility Unit at Royal Priors. This was an item that could be investigated further with the Mobility Board of Trustees. Action: David Brunson

Energy Efficiency

The Group noted that the Council's Office accommodation was subject to lease agreements with Warwick District Council and this embraced all aspects of energy use. The degree to which energy conservation measures had been implemented in the Town hall was unclear and this was an area to be explored with the landlord.

Action: Town Clerk

A number of funding sources were available to the public sector including Government funding through Salix Finance and advice and assistance through Act on Energy, an advice based organisation for householders. Councillor Boad to establish extent of possible assistance

Council Administrative Operations

The Town Clerk advised on the economies and reductions in energy consumption inherent in modern office equipment. The Town Council's carbon footprint had been progressively reduced over recent years through greater use of electronic communication which had seen declining use of photocopying and postage for Council meetings. It was suggested that further economies could be made if a secure Wifi connection could be established to the Council chamber as it was presently only possible to access the internet on the ground floor of the Town Hall.

Action: Town Clerk

RESOLVED that the schedule of initiatives prepared by the Town Clerk is applied as the basis for an action Plan incorporating the actions agreed at this meeting.

Action: Town Clerk

6. FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed that the Group would meet on a monthly basis, unless an earlier meeting is necessary. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 25th September 2019 commencing at 6.30 pm.

As a discussion point for the next meeting, it was suggested that all Group Members identify 3 actions that they will personally undertake over the next 12 months to help alleviate the climate change emergency.

Action: All Members

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and ended at 8.00 pm.