

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Climate & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Held in the Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney at 2.00 pm on
Thursday, 7 April 2022

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Coles (Chair), Joy Aitman, Mike Cahill, Rupert Dent, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Ted Fenton, Andy Goodwin, Liz Leffman, Martin McBride, Alex Postan and Carl Rylett.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Bill Oddy (Group Manager - Commercial Development), Louise Oddy, Vanessa Scott (Climate Change Manager WODC) and Scott Williams (Business Manager - Commissioning Strategy) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Democratic Services Manager).

43 Minutes of Previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2022, under the previous Committee name "Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

44 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harry St John and Councillor Alaa Al-Yousuf.

Councillor Duncan Enright substituted for Councillor Owen Collins.

45 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

46 Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

47 Committee Work Programme 2021/2022

The Chair introduced the Committee work programme and welcomed Scott Williams and Louise Oddy to the meeting. There were in attendance to provide a verbal update on Waste and Recycling.

Mr Williams provided an update on the progress made since the last Cabinet report which agreed the introduction of dual bins for litter and dog waste. He advised that most locations had been supplied with Witney due to receive their bins in the next few weeks. It was noted that numbering the bins would be considered as part of the Street Cleansing Review and Innovation programme.

Mr Williams answered questions from Members on a number of queries including tanneries using waste, the location of the bins aiding wheelchair users and the extensive communications that had taken place with parish councils.

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Following a question from Councillor Goodwin, Mr Williams advised that capacity had been created in the Ubico team and explained the steps being taken to address the ongoing impact from the pandemic. Members were assured that officers monitored public comments using a number of sources including social media channels, parish and town council communications and customer service calls.

Councillor Coles queried the communication with Ward Members and how the various sites of the bins had been agreed. Mr Williams advised that studies had shown that removing bins reduced the levels of litter rather than increasing it and new estates would be serviced where appropriate. However, if parish councils felt strongly enough, they could pay for installation and servicing.

Ms Oddy explained that regular meetings with Ward Members had taken place and their knowledge had been shared with Ubico. Councillor McBride confirmed that his interactions with Mr Williams and Ms Oddy had been extremely positive and residents were happy with the service.

Councillor Dent expressed his thanks to the team and highlighted that satisfied comments being received. Mr Williams directed these thanks to Ms Oddy who had been driving the project and Members noted the update.

Following the conclusion of the update, the work programme was considered further and it was agreed that the Carbon Action Update would be a regular item on each committee agenda. It was also noted that the Trade Waste Review was forthcoming and should be added to the work programme for July 2022.

Resolved that the Committee Work Programme be noted.

48

Climate Action Update

The Climate Change Manager Ness Scott gave a verbal update to Members on the Climate Action current programme of works.

The update included the progress so far on the PSDS 3 Carterton Leisure Centre project, which Members noted had moved on the Cabinet work programme. It was noted that this may be scrutinised by the Finance & Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee prior to consideration.

With regard to Decarbonisation work, a modelling exercise had been taking place in relation to the Agile Working project, council offices, signage and energy reduction. Communications to staff would be increased in the office and for those working from home to share the message.

Mrs Scott gave an overview of the District wide work taking place, Biodiversity and Land Management plans which had been adopted and published formally, wildflower areas across

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Council owned sites and the Hedgehog Highway campaign. In addition, she provided an update on the Electric Vehicle Charging Points projects, promoting energy surveys to landlords, retrofitting and the focus on those residents in fuel poverty.

Members made comment on a number of the projects and were pleased with the level of involvement from local schools. It was noted that the Council had been nominated at the LGA awards, which was recognised as a national achievement, with no other District Councils being nominated.

Future work noted by the Committee was the electric street sweeper that had been trialled in Bampton, the relationship being encouraged with Blenheim Palace with regards to their development plans and the options being considered for solar energy.

Councillor Goodwin queried the Carbon Action Plan and asked for a projection of where the Council was looking to fund and invest in as a multi-year projection. Mrs Scott confirmed that this was published as part of the Annual Monitoring Review and Bi-annual reports.

Councillors commented that they were impressed with the achievements made during the past year, and asked Ness Scott to feedback and thank the team for their continual hard work.

The update was noted.

49 Cabinet Work Programme

Resolved that the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

50 Members' Questions

Councillor Postan asked for an update on the revised wording relating to Thames Water as a consultee in Development Control matters. He was advised that the revised wording was currently being considered by Phil Shaw and Councillor Haine. It was suggested that the wording be looked at by the Committee prior to adoption.

Councillor Goodwin asked that his disappointment be recorded in relation to the approval of the Eynsham Master Plan, as he had made it clear he was not satisfied with the decision that Cabinet made.

Councillor Coles, who had chaired the meeting in Councillor Al-Yousuf's absence, thanked everyone for their hard work and their contributions throughout the last year. He wished all those who were standing for election in May, good luck. Finally, he thanked all staff in Democratic Services and in the Environmental teams for their support.

The Meeting closed at 3.34 pm