

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE
28 MARCH 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote meeting on Tuesday, 28 March 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson (Chairman)

Councillors: Gillian Brockley, Mared Eastwood, Chrissy Gee, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Carolyn Preece, Dan Rose, Jason Shallcross and Sam Swash

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Councillor Marion Bateman for Councillor Steve Copple and Councillor Rob Davies for Councillor Ian Hodge

IN ATTENDANCE:

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy, Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy, Programme Manager (Climate Change and Carbon Reduction), Service Manager – Planning Strategy, Democratic Services Manager, and Democratic Services Officer

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mared Eastwood declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 as a member of the Clwyd Pension Fund.

RESOLVED:

That the declaration of interest be noted.

21. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 January 2023 were submitted.

Accuracy

The Chair referred to page 15 of the agenda and said that Councillor Coggins-Cogan had spoken in support of holding an inquiry about potential divestment of the companies the Clwyd Pension Fund held investments in and asked that the minutes be amended to record this.

Subject to the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were approved as moved by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson and seconded by Councillor Sam Swash.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the above amendment the minutes be approved as a correct record.

22. CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME REVIEW

The Programme Manager (Climate Change and Carbon Reduction) presented the report. She provided background information and advised that following a recently published progress report for the Climate Change Programme, the report reviewed progress within the action plan and areas for action over 2023. It also considered the national updates since adoption of the Strategy that needed to be included within the strategy review in 2024. The Programme Manager reported on the main considerations as detailed in the report and referred to the 'Climate Change Action Plan Progress 2022/23 which was appended to the report.

Councillor Carolyn Preece asked what action was being taken to prevent water leakage. Officers responded to the concerns raised and the Service Manager – Planning Strategy advised that the issue of water leakage was a major objective in Welsh Water's Water Resource Management Plan.

Councillor Marion Bateman referred to reference CCM8 in the Action Plan which was appended to the report and commented on a previous scheme whereby bicycles were provided by the Council for employees to use to travel to work and asked for an update on the programme.

Councillor Chris Bithell referred to reference CCM3 in the Action Plan – to ensure vehicle charging points are available at key areas across the county - rural and urban. He raised questions and concerns around the progress and availability of establishing recharging points in local communities. The Chair suggested that he writes on behalf of the Committee to request that where possible council owned land be made available to local communities for use as allotment sites and the provision of charging points. This was moved by Councillor Chris Bithell and seconded by Councillor Dan Rose. Councillor Dan Rose also commented on a national project whereby residents with large gardens offered to share the land for others to use and suggested that this scheme also be looked into.

Officers responded to the further comments and questions raised by Members around the use of allotments, community land, open spaces, and 'unadopted' land.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the areas of focus for 2023 and the items that need to be included in the 2024 strategy review be agreed; and
- (b) That the Chair writes to the County Council to suggest the possibility of transfer of land to establish more allotment sites

23. HYDRO POWER AND MILWR TUNNEL

In response to a motion by Councillor Mared Eastwood, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy and Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection, provided a verbal update on Milwr Tunnel and the provision of Hydro Power in Flintshire.

The Service Manager – Planning Strategy gave a verbal presentation on the Councils duty to make provision for renewable energy and the potential from various sources including hydro power, solar energy, and innovative technology. During discussion the Service Manager responded to the comments raised by Members around the amount of power to be generated, potential for tourism, and other options available. The Committee felt that the costs of the Milwr Tunnel project would be significant and that it could be explored if technology improved but the onus is on the owners of Milwr Tunnel. During discussion the Service Manager – Planning Strategy also provided an update in relation to consideration of the potential at the Greenfield Heritage Centre and Wepre Park sites

24. POLICY ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OFF STREET PARKING

The Chair read out the recommendations that the Cabinet Member for Streetscene be asked to report to the Climate Change Committee and the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the feasibility of offering the installation of cable ducts between houses and the street to enable owners of electric vehicles without off street parking to safely run cables across pavements, with the cost of these to be met by the resident in the same way as dropped kerb installations; and to ask Cabinet to adopt a policy of enabling all council tenants to have installed, or have installed on request, electric vehicle charging points at home.

In moving the recommendations Councillor Carolyn Preece spoke in support of the proposal. This was seconded by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson.

The Cabinet Member for Streetscene expressed concerns on the wider implications of the recommendations and suggested that further consideration be given to the matter.

The Programme Manager (Climate Change and Carbon Reduction) responded to the comments and points raised by Members around accessibility to charging points, suitability of off-street parking, and the difficulty experienced by some residents in being able to park near or outside their own home. She referred to a focus on 'Destination charging' where provision is made at key destinations across the county, and 'En-route charging' where EVs are topped up midway through a journey. The feasibility study for next phase of destination chargers is scheduled for 2023 subject to the successful securing of funding, and will identify the most strategic Council owned and private locations to further develop the EV charging network.

In summing up the Chair referred to the recommendations as follows:

- that the Cabinet Member for Streetscene be asked to report to the Climate Change Committee and the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the feasibility of offering the installation of cable ducts between houses and the street to enable owners of electric vehicles without off street parking to safely run cables across pavements,

- that residents in Flintshire be invited to take up the opportunity of the installation of the above with the cost to be met by the resident in the same way as dropped kerb installations; and
- that Cabinet be asked to adopt a policy of enabling all council tenants to have installed, or have installed on request, electric vehicle charging points at home.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Carolyn Preece and seconded by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson. When put to the vote the recommendations were carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Cabinet Member for Streetscene be asked to report to the Climate Change Committee and the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the feasibility of offering the installation of cable ducts between houses and the street to enable owners of electric vehicles without off street parking to safely run cables across pavements,
- (b) That residents in Flintshire be invited to take up the opportunity of the installation of the above with the cost to be met by the resident in the same way as dropped kerb installations; and
- (c) That Cabinet be asked to adopt a policy of enabling all council tenants to have installed, or have installed on request, electric vehicle charging points at home.

25. CLIMATE CHANGE INQUIRIES

The Chair provided background information and referred to the need to approve the Climate Change Inquiry questions, as detailed in the agenda, and discuss the timelines for inquiries in line with Officer capacity.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy made a number of suggestions to assist with the administration of the questionnaire. The Chair commented that the question set sought qualitative not quantitative evidence and requested people's views on the Clwyd Pension Fund and its investments. The question set also sought the views of people external to the County Council and Clwyd Pension Fund. The questions and statements would be published on the Council's website. The aggravated responses would be provided to the Committee as evidence for the Committee to base its views on and published on the website in due course.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Dan Rose and seconded by Councillor Sam Swash and when put to the vote was carried.

RESOLVED

That the Climate Change Inquiry questions, as detailed in the agenda, be approved.

26. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair referred to the Forward Work Programme which listed the items for the meetings on 23 May and 18 July 2023.

Councillor Dan Rose suggested that an item on car parks be included on the Forward Work Programme with a view to reviewing the facilities available and support consideration of use for generating energy, citing installation of solar panels as an example. Councillor Rose also referred to the item on Renewable energy generation which was to be considered at the meeting of the Committee on 23 May, and the possibility of exploring alternative renewable energy opportunities, including wind and solar power, on Council owned car parks. He suggested that consideration be given to this prior to the next meeting to avoid duplication of any work already being undertaken. It was agreed that the Programme Manager (Climate Change and Carbon Reduction) would liaise with the lead officer on the project.

Councillor Mared Eastwood moved that the Forward Work Programme be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Allan Marshall. When put to the vote this was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the forward work programme be adopted; and
- (b) That the Programme Manager (Climate Change and Carbon Reduction) liaises with the lead officer on the review of Council car parks to explore the possibility of alternative renewable energy opportunities, including wind and solar power.

27. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no Members of the press or public in attendance.

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.45 pm

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Chairman