

## CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2020 AT 10:30AM

Present:-

Councillor Jan Harwood  
Councillor Diana Jones  
Councillor Caroline Reeves  
Councillor Deborah Seabrook  
Councillor Paul Spooner  
Councillor Catherine Young

#### Action By

**1. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Professor Graham Miller, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean (UNIS) and Alex Swainson, Energy Strategy Manager (GBC).

**3. INTRODUCTIONS**

Those present who were not elected members introduced themselves:

Carrie Anderson, Senior Democratic Services Officer and supporting the meeting.

Alistair Atkinson, Guildford Environmental Forum (GEF) an active local community group promoting the climate agenda and also an infrastructure planner.

Chris Burchell, Lead Economy Manager working with local businesses and start-ups.

Ian Doyle, Director for Service Delivery that covered a large number of relevant business areas

Steve Gibbs, Communications Officer

Emma McBriarty, Communications Manager (joined the meeting later)

Marieke van der Reijden, Head of Asset Management and Climate Change Lead Officer and lead a team managing the Council's non-housing property

estate.

Chris Wheeler, Waste, Parking and Fleet Services Manager covering a large area of influence in terms of promoting more sustainable lifestyles and choices.

Paul Taylor-Armstrong, Climate Change Officer, newly appointed to help deliver the Councils' climate change agenda

## **1. AIM OF THE BOARD AND MEETING FORMAT**

The Chairman set out the aims and outputs for the Board which included ensuring it remained well-informed, monitoring the development of key projects and acting as a sounding board for decision-making committees, Executive, Full Council and delegated officers. It was noted that the Board was an Executive working group that did not have decision-making powers in itself but would seek to influence decision-makers.

Councillor Jan  
Harwood

The three key focus areas for the Board would be energy, infrastructure and community & business outreach. One of the first items of business for the Board would be to consider an energy delivery framework as set out in the High Level Action Plan approved by the Executive on 21 July 2020.

The Board would act as a stimulus to projects but would not necessarily be 'hands on' through to the finish. There was an expectation that once projects had gathered sufficient momentum that the Board would step back and simply monitor progress. Smaller project teams would be convened in particular cases where more focus and attention were required. An example offered was that of a project team to ensure that relevant and motivational information was available on the Council's web site.

## **1. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

A copy of the Board's terms of reference (ToR) had been circulated with the agenda pack and had been approved by the Executive on 25 August 2020. As an Executive working group the Board would be run as set out in the Procedure Rules of the Constitution. The ToR had an emphasis on the three target priority areas and set out roles and responsibilities as well as membership. The frequency of meeting would be every two months.

Marieke van der  
Reijden

In discussion it was suggested that everyone on the Board had a role to play in 'championing' tackling climate change in all areas that they were involved in aside from the Board. The ToR stated that the Director of Strategic Services would be a permanent member of the Board when that position was filled in the New Year. It was suggested that whichever director attended the Board from the Corporate Management Team (CMT), should have a responsibility to feed back to CMT and that the CMT representative might rotate. The Chairman advised that any officer could be expected to attend if required to progress business.

A standing agenda for the Board would be a project update to include standing actions and new actions. It was suggested the Board should also include a review of the three key focus areas at each meeting on progress. This would be considered by the Chairman who would feedback. It was noted that a motion to Full Council on 6 October 2020 resolved that the Climate Change Board will present a progress report to full Council within three months. It was further suggested the terms of reference include a report to the Executive to be delivered on a regular basis, perhaps quarterly. It was advised that the report be holistic setting out activity across the Council.

The Board was advised that it should set out clearly what it considered to be “Zero-carbon” as this would be a benchmark measure. The definition used by the Committee for Climate Change was suggested as a sound starting point. This definition would be provided to members of the Board and it was further suggested that the Board produce a glossary of terms to maintain clarity in discussion.

The Board should be clear that the Council could only be responsible for itself whilst trying to influence others. A full study of the Council’s carbon emissions was being undertaken by the Association for Public Service Excellence (ASPE). The carbon footprint for the Council had already been received and the trajectory was expected by the end of October. An update on progress for the borough-wide footprint was to follow.

In addition the Council was using ‘SCATTER’ to calculate emissions. SCATTER was a local authority focussed emissions tool, built to help create low-carbon local authorities. The Scatter spreadsheet was circulated to all members.

#### **4. HIGH LEVEL ACTION PLAN**

The Climate Change Officer explained the three stages of the high level action plan that had been approved by the Executive on 21 July 2020. The keynotes were establishing the emissions trajectory for the Council that would provide a baseline for the Board; developing a delivery framework and there would be a mapping exercise to determine an overall approach to the delivery of the projects and finally project delivery. The action plan provided a common view for the Board of the direction the Council would take. Some projects on the action plan were listed as ongoing having already started before the establishment of the Board following the Council’s commitment to tackle climate change. This had been accounted for in the trajectory. It was described as a ‘working document’ and also set out timescales for delivery.

Alex Swainson

It was explained that there was a Borough and District Climate Change officer group that met on a monthly basis which enabled cross authority working and included Surrey County Council (SCC). It was noted that SCC had its own Climate Change Strategy and that there had recently been a change of lead councillor and lead officer for this area of work. The Chairman set out his ambition to achieve a close working relationship with partners and acknowledged that climate change was a global and not a local problem and was not constrained by local government boundaries.

It was suggested the Council could be local leaders for moving towards a green economy strategy given the close working relationship with the University of Surrey that had faculties working at the forefront of climate change and its role working with local business. It was explained that the work in terms of stakeholder engagement was at an early stage. The Chairman agreed that this would be a key area of work to connect with local business and to appeal to their priorities. It was proposed that there should be a meeting with the appropriate officers on the matter of engaging with local business that could present back to the Board at the next meeting.

## **5. CARBON LITERACY RECAP**

The members of the Board and certain lead councillors had recently received Carbon Literacy training provided by the Association for the Association for Public Service excellence (APSE). The members of the Board discussed how informative and powerful the training had been. It was suggested that such training should be rolled out across the council to inform all members and officers. The APSE session had been lengthy and it was suggested that it would not be practical in terms of time and cost to roll out the same training. It was proposed that members might deliver training themselves based upon what they had learned. The Chairman and Councillor Young put themselves forward as volunteers. It was proposed that an in-house video might be recorded for those across the organisation to watch at an appropriate time.

Alex Swainson

The Board was advised that as the group it was in a position to inspire, motivate and influence behaviour change across the organisation. Finding the 'tipping point' at which behaviour was changed was key.

It was suggested the in-house video may draw some of the content from the APSE training and put it in a Guildford context. It would also set out the ambitions of the Board itself.

The matter of climate change should be in every conversation the council is having and should be on every agenda. A business survey was to be circulated to local businesses and it was suggested questions on climate change could be included. An open question might be used.

The Chairman concluded that the messaging from the Board both internally and externally would be a key aspect of its business and that the Council had a unique opportunity to reach many sectors.

There was a discussion about the need to go further and break down the high level plan into deliverable projects, whilst being realistic about funding and resources. The Chairman noted the Board should be ambitious but cautious in not taking on too many projects and to keep projects manageable.

It was expected that Central Government would begin to release climate change funds in preparation for the Climate Change Conference next year. The Board must be on the front foot and prepared with 'ready to go' projects to submit. Noted the Local Enterprise Board would also be a significant player.

**6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Meeting every two months was gauged as appropriate to be able to allow officer and committee time to make progress.

Energy and community outreach would be the next major topics for the Board at the next meeting.

A project update on the Council's projects so far would be produced for each meeting of the Board.

Board members would advise if Thursday mornings were suitable and a date would be agreed for two months' time.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.