

CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2022

Present:

Councillor George Potter (Chairman)
Councillor Diana Jones
Councillor Paul Spooner
Councillor Deborah Seabrook
Councillor Catherine Young

In attendance:

Alistair Atkinson, Guildford Environmental Forum
Francesca Castelo, Economic Policy Officer
Ian Doyle, Joint Strategic Director: Transformation & Governance
Debbie Hickman, GBC Comms
Nat Prodger, Climate Change Officer
Marieke van der Reijden, Executive Head of Service: Assets and Property
Robin Taylor, Executive Head of Service: Organisational Development
Carrie Anderson, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Action By

24. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman, Councillor George Potter, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Those present were regular members and no introductions were necessary.

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ben McCallan (SCC), Prof. Bob Nichol (UNIS), and Chris Wheeler (Executive Head of Technical Services)

It was noted Prof. Nichol had been unable to attend a meeting so far. The Chairman would contact him to understand if there were obstacles preventing him from joining.

Cllr Potter

26. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2022 were approved.

The Action Tracker was now uploaded to the CCB Teams site and was shared with the meeting. The actions marked in green had been completed.

Anyone unable to view it should contact Nat or Carrie.

The Action Tracker would be reviewed at the next meeting.

27. UPDATE ON NEXT STEPS WITH CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

The draft Action Plan had been submitted to the Corporate Management Board (CMB) in October. Following that, it had been submitted to each service area for review and comment as to what they thought was achievable, especially in terms of finance and timescales. The matter of budget was critical to the Council and there had to be a full evaluation of what was deliverable within the time-period leading up to 2030. An example being the Spectrum Leisure Centre which was the largest contributor to the Council's overall emissions. A decision on the future of the Spectrum was significant with many ramifications. Central Government funding, the option of using reserves and funding from community schemes were, it was suggested, be a way forward to meet these challenges.

Nathaniel
Prodger

It was anticipated service leads would respond before Christmas. (Note – responses are now expected during January 2023).

Thereafter the Climate Change Officer will review feedback from service leads and finalise the Action Plan for submission to CMB and the relevant Committee (TBC) during January 2023. It was noted the emissions data for the Council and for the borough as a whole had been received from APSE and would feed into the document.

The Action Plan would follow the Executive committee pathway and be considered by an Executive Advisory Board (EAB). A date for this had not yet been set. It was the Board's view that all councillors should have an opportunity to comment on the Action Plan prior to it being considered by the Executive. It was explained that without an understanding of how service managers would respond to the consultation, a firm date for committee was not possible. Officers would come back to the Board with a timeline once feedback had been received and understood. It was proposed the Action Plan should be endorsed by full Council.

The Action Plan presented goals for each service area and overall, with those goals achieved, for the Council to reach net zero by 2030 and the borough by 2050 with circa 733 kilotons of carbon left to offset, potentially achieved through the Council generating its own power. A solar farm proposal for Guildford was in the Action Plan, albeit this might not be the only solution open to the Council as technologies developed through to 2030. If the Council produced its own energy this would reduce emissions and increase resilience and adaptation for the future.

It was noted that because of the collaboration with Waverley

Borough Council a new Joint Management Team (JMT) was in place heading up service areas for Guildford and Waverley. The Chairman had met with the new JMT and was appreciative a certain amount of delay was to be expected whilst the new management team familiarised themselves with their new teams and areas of responsibilities.

The headline of the Action Plan would be a revised wording of the climate declaration.

The Climate Change Officer was asked to provide a written update on the CCAP for the next meeting.

28. CLIMATE EMERGENCY DEFINITION

The Climate Change declaration was made by the Council in July 2019, since then there had been a development in understanding of the issues and terminology involved. As the Council moved forward it was important that its ambitions were clear. It was proposed the original declaration be updated and clarified. It was proposed this revised statement form an introduction to the draft Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP).

Firstly, the Council should be clear about the definition of Scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions and how these would be addressed. Scope 1 was understood to be the emissions created by the running of the Council itself, such as gas and electricity usage. Scope 2 was understood to be the emissions created by the activities the Council, electricity used within our buildings etc. and Scope 3 was indirect emissions arising from the Council's third-party relationships, through the procurement or supply of goods and services. There was not, as yet, a defined methodology for calculating or influencing Scope 3 emissions.

It was proposed Scope 3 be included in the Council's definition due to the credibility of the intent, but that Scope 3 emissions might be outside of the ambition for 2030 as it would possibly take an additional year or two years to work with partners and providers to achieve that outcome which would be in accordance with the science-based targets to keep within the 1.5 degree increase.

Secondly, the original declaration made no mention of the biodiversity emergency, air quality or resilience and adaptation to climate change when it had become clear these were important related challenges.

Attention was drawn to the video circulated recently to the Board setting out the relationship between climate change and biodiversity.

It was suggested certain parts of the Council's portfolio might be reassessed and placed outside of the 2030 target if it appeared

that could not be met by precisely the cut off year of 2030 but could be achieved more flexibly.

It was noted some parts of the declaration had been met such as the member training, albeit this training may have to be repeated following the local elections.

The wording of the objectives of the development management policies could be incorporated in the declaration.

Parish councils might be looking for leadership from the Council and this role might be made more explicit in the revised interpretation of the declaration.

The Action Plan was to be reviewed regularly, probably every two years.

It was suggested the Council's procurement policy might stipulate that any business acting as provider to the Council should have its emissions benchmarked with a plan for decarbonising to facilitate measuring and reducing Scope 3. The Chairman felt there was much to understand in procurement practice, such as how and if the Council were bound to certain legal or procedural constraints.

Colleagues from the Comms Team and those working with local businesses stakeholders were welcomed for their contribution in this regard. The meeting heard that Guildford continued to be in the lead for LoCASE¹ registrations of interest, with a total of 104 registrations since the launch of the grant programme. In addition, Guildford took joint lead with Mole Valley for applications submitted (19) and a total of 90.43 tCO₂ was expected to be saved by businesses in Guildford. To see LoCASE figures, the LoCASE newsletters are uploaded in the Climate Change Board Teams Site:

Documents->General->Support->Businesses->LoCASE

The graph showed where registrants had heard about the grant funding programme and it was evident that partners (e.g. ZCG/Guildford SBN, University of Surrey/Research Park) had been key in promoting LoCASE to Guildford businesses, alongside GBC, Councillors, Comms and EDO. The Council had allocated funding in its Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) proposals for business financial support to carry out decarbonisation projects as follows:

- UKSPF: Decarbonisation loan scheme with SCC and Surrey DBs – awaiting further details from SCC
- REPF: Grants for small scale investments for SMEs, including capital funding for net zero infrastructure for rural

¹ [LoCASE | Low Carbon Across the South and East](#)

businesses. The Council was waiting a response from Government on its application.

LoCASE funding was due to end in April 2023, but the Council's Crowdfunding option might provide opportunities.

In conclusion, the Chairman summed up that the revised declaration should include the Council's approach to biodiversity, air quality, resilience and adaptation to climate change. The primary focus was to reduce the emissions the Council could control within the resources available, but also to act in a leadership role with stakeholders, partners and the community by setting an example. The Chairman proposed that Scopes 1 and 2 emissions be set within the 2030 target but that Scope 3 emissions be subject to a separate ambition once measurements to make a calculation were standardised. Legal arrangements around procurement needed to be understood, some of which would likely be subject to legislation. Adoption of an accurate measurement application would inform the declaration of net zero for Scope 3 and any offsetting implications.

29. FUTURE ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Chairman explained the definition of the purpose of the Board would remain, but that once the Climate Change Action Plan had been adopted, the role of the Board would be a scrutinising one, tracking and monitoring progress. Secondly, and especially drawing on the expertise of advisory members, the Board would continue to seek to update and review the Action Plan.

The Board agreed with the Chairman and added that where there were difficulties with progress, elected members would seek to offer support to officers and Governance processes.

The Board should be seen as route for updates to the Executive and to the Council not only on what had taken place but also strategic direction. It was noted that although public opinion could be supportive of policy, once policy was to be implemented the transition could be uncomfortable for Council as it sought to bring residents along. The Board might act as a focus hub for how to address those issues before they arose.

The Board might invite specialists to address it on certain areas to inform how the Council might address certain specific matters or the Board might arrange for speakers to address councillors for educational purposes. It was anticipated the Board would receive short presentations at future meetings from Executive Heads of Service or their representatives on progress.

The Board and the Council should have greater public visibility as it strives to achieve its ambitions. It was set out in the Action Plan that the Board would report to full Council to update on progress

periodically, the frequency was to be confirmed.

In summary, the Board would adopt a scrutiny role to monitor the implementation and progress of the Action Plan, as well as to advise regarding updates to it. Where there were major decisions to be made by the Council in terms of emission, such as the Spectrum, the Board might act as an early consultative body given its external expertise. The Chairman suggested the Board might have a supportive role to the Lead Councillor regarding communications to the borough on climate change matters. Finally, there might be a forward plan of matters for the Board to discuss.

30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for the Board to discuss.

31. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 25 January 2023 at 10:30am.