

CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 2023

Present:-

Councillor George Potter, Lead Councillor for Climate Change
Councillor Angela Gunning
Councillor Diana Jones
Councillor Deborah Seabrook
Councillor Cait Taylor
Councillor Catherine Young

In attendance:

Alistair Atkinson, Guildford Environmental Forum
James Dearling, Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny
Ian Doyle, Joint Strategic Director: Transformation & Governance
Wendy Firlotte, Greener Futures Engagement Lead, SCC
Cat Halter, Climate Change Programme Manager, SCC
Debbie Hickman, Communications Officer
Ben McCallan, SCC and Guildford Zero
Sam Peters, Trustee Zero Guildford
Nat Prodger, Climate Change Officer
Robin Taylor, Executive Head of Service: Organisational Development
Fotini Vickers, Sustainability Manager, Waverley Borough Council
Councillor Steve Williams, Waverley Borough Council

Action By

41. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and indicated that the meeting would be run primarily as a workshop.

42. ACTION TRACKER

With reference to the action tracker document circulated the previous day, the Climate Change Officer outlined the progress of matters identified at the Board's last meeting in

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January. He advised that the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was adopted by the Executive on 23 February and that this had enabled the completion of a number of actions within the Action Tracker. In addition, the Climate Change Officer confirmed that the adoption of the CCAP meant that several actions could now be explored and progressed.

The Chairman requested that a list of outstanding actions be circulated after the meeting. There were no further questions or requests.

The Chairman noted that the agenda had not been emailed to external attendees.

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

44. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman confirmed with those present that the minutes had been circulated to all members, including external attendees.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were agreed as correct.

There were no matters arising.

45. ENGAGEMENT PRESENTATION

Wendy Firlotte, Greener Futures Engagement Lead, SCC, gave a presentation outlining the strategic approach to delivery Greener Futures Engagement. The meeting was advised of the importance of engagement with residents and businesses, including the point that 97 percent of carbon emissions in the county were outside the control of local authorities. The Board was advised that engagement was a relationship-building process. The Greener Futures Engagement Lead, SCC, indicated that engagement tactics resulted in resistance, compliance, or commitment. She emphasised the importance of achieving engagement to deliver effective strategies and

solutions, before outlining the process to translate strategy into aligned action.

The meeting was reminded of value-based climate personas and advised of efforts to determine the distribution of such personas within the respective districts and boroughs of Surrey. The Greener Futures Engagement Lead, SCC, described four key approaches to engagement: strategic flexibility; relationship building; community networks; and building influence at scale (including the Law of Diffusion of Innovation). The Board was advised of a TED talk by Derek Sivers on how to start a movement [https://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_how_to_start_a_movement?language=en].

In addition, the meeting was informed of ongoing work on strategic climate narratives and the value in ensuring climate change communications aligned with such messaging. [Following the meeting, the slides to the presentation were circulated to all attendees and members of the Board.]

In response to questioning, the meeting was informed that the approach outlined in the presentation should be rolled out within weeks.

46. COMMUNICATION PRESENTATION

Debbie Hickman, Communications Officer, gave a presentation on the basic practicalities of communication and engagement at the Council, with illustrative examples. The meeting was informed of the role and activities of a communications officer at the Council and how this differed from a typical engagement role. The presentation provided examples and scenarios of how communications and engagement might change behaviours and spur community action. [Following the meeting, the slides to the presentation were circulated to all attendees and members of the Board.]

In reply to a question, the meeting was advised of the difficulty and value of measuring the impact of events, particularly word of mouth. The merit of using a citizens' assembly or a citizens' jury as a representative sample of an area was suggested.

In response to a question about the availability of materials to help implement nudge theory, the Communications Officer indicated the need to prioritise objectives prior to designing behavioural change campaigns. The likely need to consider climate change adaptation, rather than climate change mitigation, was suggested. Ben McCallan, SCC and Guildford Zero, proposed the benefits of reframing the discussion around climate change and pursue a shared values perspective (for example, with reference to health, waste, and energy independence). In addition, he said that Guildford Zero had offered to run its climate communications training at the Council and help initial communications while more detailed messages were developed.

An attendee recommended using groups outside the Council to promote key messages and that the Council should not see itself as responsible for all such communications.

47. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Climate Change Officer informed the meeting that since the adoption of the CCAP by the Executive on 23 February he had converted the 302 actions into a programme framework on Verto. He outlined how Verto would help monitor future implementation and advised on work to identify the engagement requirements of every action.

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48. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman thanked officers for their presentations and updates and suggested the group discuss next steps on climate change engagement, particularly external engagement. He reminded the Board that its main role was to recommend approaches for the Council.

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Ben
McCallan

With reference to the success of a recent liaison session with parish clerks, the meeting identified the need to engage similarly with residents' groups and people in non-parished areas. In addition, the benefit of the Council facilitating co-ordination between parish councils on climate change action and projects was advocated.

In response to being advised of initiatives with parish councils and a discussion of NALC (National Association of Local Councils), the Chairman proposed the value in all parish councils within the Borough being approached to ensure maximum engagement and involvement. Ben McCallan, SCC and Guildford Zero, referred to the advantages of co-ordinating and sharing resources within distinct catchment areas and confirmed that an open invite event was intended to be held in June 2023.

The meeting discussed the benefits of messaging about solar panel installations and repair shops and heard the value in framing climate change engagement around local issues. The Communications Officer suggested the Council might use the Horsleys as a case study to promote climate change engagement.

Members discussed possible measures to improve co-ordination between parish councils, Guildford Borough Council, and Surrey County Council. Scheduling a meeting between Councillor Young, Councillor Jones, Debbie Hickman, and Ben McCallan to explore how best to cascade information and initiatives was suggested.

In reply to a question, the Climate Change Officer noted the lack of Council resources to co-ordinate a Borough-wide response to climate change.

The Executive Head of Service, Organisational Development, praised the presentations given earlier in the meeting and suggested the optimum role for the Council was as a key player in leading the community conversation about climate change rather than attempting to co-ordinate a Borough-wide response to climate change. He recommended that the Council's role was one of community leadership and taking a lead on communications.

Cat Halter, the Climate Change Programme Manager, SCC, suggested publicising the county-wide measures to reduce emissions, e.g. the Solar Together scheme. She advised the

meeting of the planned development of an online information hub to signpost people to further news and material. In addition, the Climate Change Programme Manager, SCC, highlighted the potential role and representativeness of the county-wide partnership board.

A member of the Board advocated the creation and facilitation of a flexible framework within which collaboration, connection, and relationship building could occur.

The Chairman noted that engagement was a huge part of the CCAP but was outside the role of the Climate Change Officer and the day-to-day responsibilities of the Council's communications team.

Guildford was identified as the area of Surrey with most capacity to progress climate change engagement (due in part to the presence of Guildford Zero, the Council, and the University of Surrey).

Summarising the discussion, the Chairman noted that there were a number of models and approaches for community engagement, other than the Council hiring additional resources, and that the Climate Change Officer and Ben McCallan should meet further to progress this.

49. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The content and date of the next meeting [provisionally arranged for 24 April at 4pm in Millmead], and indicative agenda items, were requested to be circulated to members by email.

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Carrie
Anderson