

## CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2024

#### Present:-

Councillor Joanne Shaw (Chair)  
Councillor Amanda Creese (Remote)  
Councillor Catherine Houston  
Councillor James Jones (Remote)  
Councillor Richard Mills OBE  
Councillor George Potter  
Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith (Remote)  
Councillor Catherine Young

#### In attendance:

Nat Prodger, Climate Change Officer  
Melanie Battams, Communications and Digital Content Manager (Remote)  
Carrie Anderson, Senior Democratic Services Officer

**Action By**

#### 18. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Councillor Jo Shaw chaired the meeting and all were welcomed.

#### 19. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Martin Wiles (UNIS) and Ben McCallen (SCC).

#### 20. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held 15 November 2023 were agreed.

#### 21. **CLIMATE CHANGE TEAM UPDATE**

The Climate Change Team's update had been circulated with the agenda and the Board members were invited to comment.

- It was noted that the events listed were only those where the council had an involvement. There was much discussion of forthcoming events including activities in

support of the nationwide campaign Big Green Week (BGW) running 8-16 June 2024. The council had taken experience gained from running the Car Free Days (in September) and to apply this to running an event for BGW on Sunday 9 June. Other groups and parish councils would be encouraged to run local events in support of BGW and the council's Comms Team would promote these alongside its own event. This was described as running in a similar way to Heritage Open Day week. Comms would take the discussion forward with the Climate Change Team outside of the meeting.

- The Board expressed concern and regret at the low turnout for the recently held climate change basic training offered to all councillors. It was unclear if numbers had been restricted by the trainers themselves or if the take up had been low. Cllr Young was a member of the Councillor Development Steering Group and would look into the matter. It was suggested that the basic training course might become a requirement for all councillors or at least those councillors sitting on Planning.
- The report mapping tool was in development. The purpose of this tool was to integrate the actions of the adopted Climate Change Action Plan and map them across all service areas of the council and to cross-link with Waverley Borough Council (WBC) service areas. Priority actions were highlighted and there was a red, amber, green RAG rating to identify the progress of the actions. The CCO gave the Board a demonstration of its functionality. The CCO would be presenting the final version to the Joint Management Team (JMT) on 21 February 2024.

## **22. ACTION TRACKER UPDATE**

The Board had previously tasked the CCO with clearing the Action Tracker of completed or outdated actions. Some actions had been incorporated into the adopted CCAP and were no longer required in the Tracker. Those cleared actions now sat separately and all actions were colour-coded dependent upon levels of progress.

Two new actions had been added to the Tracker which were

the refresh of the Tracker itself and the Rolling Works Programme development.

The actions owned by the Economic Development Team would remain static as the council had staff vacancies in that area.

An update on energy procurement should be obtained from the Executive Head for Assets and Property and Procurement would be invited to come and present to the Board on the topic.

Nat  
Prodger

The proposal to run a climate assembly jointly with WBC had lost momentum due to the financial pressures both councils were experiencing. It was suggested that the expenditure might be better used elsewhere but that the matter should come to the Board at a later date for a full discussion to decide either to recommend the Executive proceed or to abandon the action.

A workshop would be convened at the end of February or early March to review the new webpages.

Nat  
Prodger

The Board was content with amendments to the Tracker. For the next meeting only, the current actions would be presented.

## 23. PARTNER'S UPDATES

A new agenda standing item asked for external partner updates.

Unfortunately, UNIS and SCC had sent apologies for the meeting.

Zero Carbon Guildford Zero gave the following update (provided in writing due to the online sound quality at the meeting):

- We were hoping to get the keys to the new premises (formerly India Jane, at the top of the High Street behind the George Abbot statue) this week but this has now been postponed to 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Not allowed to open to the public until the lift has been fixed, which should hopefully be 'about a month'. Until then, ZCG team/volunteers will be able to access to do building/painting/etc work.

- Planning a launch event 16<sup>th</sup> March to coincide with opening a new e.coli testing lab at ZERO for the Water Rangers.
- Community Fridge, Water Rangers and some talks have continued throughout closure, plus some Library of Things lending, when possible, to access White Lion Walk storage. Community Fridge will resume at the new building as soon as possible. Library of Things will be fully moving to Guildford Library, with just publicity and guidance on setting up accounts/how it works to be hosted at ZERO. Will be up and running as soon as we can arrange training for Library staff/ZCG volunteers.
- HEAT scheme (free energy surveys with thermal cameras, carried out by trained volunteers) has now begun. Several hundred households signed up to receive a survey so far across Surrey, with 55 volunteers trained or to be trained.
- Still discussing with Repair Cafe whether we can also host events at new ZERO building. For now, ZCG volunteers with repair skills have been helping at the Hive instead. Not looking to stop Hive events, but hopefully add to them instead with town centre dates.

It was proposed that councillor comms be used to promote activities such as the Repair Cafe.

UNIS, GEF and SCC would be asked to provide an update that could be appended to these minutes.

Carrie  
Anderson

#### **24. ENGAGEMENT WITH PARISHES AND COMMUNITIES**

The picture across the borough at parish level in regard to tackling climate change was mixed. Some parishes, such as West Horsley/'The Horsleys' and Shalford had been quite active, albeit activity was subject to the availability and commitment of volunteers and volunteers' particular interests. In the case of 'The Horsleys,' a community group had been formed separate to the parish council. Locally, there was also a U3A group.

Anecdotally, SCC was thought to be constructing a toolkit for communities and parishes but this could not be confirmed or

any detail provided as SCC had sent apologies for the meeting.

The GBC parish clerk liaison meeting which was held bi-annually was considered a useful way to engage with parishes. The meetings were held in March and September.

The council would wish to engage with climate change community groups as well as parish councils. The parish councils had a degree of resource available to them, in terms of finance and also parish council support networks such as the NALC and SALC, whereas community groups did not have such resources to access and would need to raise funds themselves to undertake local activities, so the council might endeavour to offer support to them in regard to comms.

The meeting heard from the Communications and Digital Manager that the council had a Comms Team but there was currently no specific resource for engagement work. However, individual service areas had local links and connections, and could assist, to an extent, with communications and engagement. The Economic Development Team had a useful role in engaging directly with local business which could once again be picked up, once staff had been recruited to it.

It was observed that engagement work was also required within the council itself to encourage officers and councillors to collaborate with their own communities to reduce carbon and to be more aware of the issue.

It was suggested the new website would be a useful engagement tool in terms of providing inspiration, information and signposting to connect individuals and groups. Local groups might be asked to make contributions to the council's website in regard to what activities had taken place or were planned, frequently asked questions or guidance in setting up and running projects or events. Oversight of such website content, running as a hub, could see the council 'matchmaking' and putting people together. It was noted that the University and SCC were undertaking development work on their websites with which the council's website would connect.

The digital newsletter was another vehicle the council could

use to get messages out and to share information. To connect, residents needed to subscribe to receive information from the council. There were plans to expand this offer and to include more video content to include interviews and discussions with councillors and partner agencies. There were currently 3,000 subscribers and numbers were growing. Comms would work with the CCO closely to ensure that best use of all the council's media options was being used.

The Board found it challenging to put together an engagement plan at the current time without some dedicated resource available within the council. There was agreement that it was not the role of the CCO to solely undertake engagement with communities. Consequently, it was felt there could be a period of time, whilst certain vacancies remained, when the council must focus internally on its own ambition to reach net-zero by 2030.

It was noted that partner agencies such as SCC and Surrey Wildlife Trust were delivering engagement work locally and the council did play a significant role in sharing communications in regard to those activities. Some members of the Board had personal experience that the council's Comms Team were successfully delivering news locally and that messages were being picked up, certainly at parish level. Those areas without parish councils were more poorly connected and this was a concern. Once again, the role of local councillors was considered important in this regard. Cllr Creese, who had joined the meeting remotely but unfortunately experienced some technical difficulties, shared concerns about unparished areas and especially in her ward of Bellfields and Slyfield.

In summary, the Board felt unable to arrive at any definite recommendations for the lead councillor given so many external partners were absent. Consequently, it was proposed that a breakout session be convened at a later date to troubleshoot community engagement as a topic with the anticipated outcome to provide a good understanding for the lead councillor and the Executive of what could be achieved in this regard both in partnership and in future with adequate

Carrie  
Anderson

resource in place.

## 25. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board received the first draft of its work programme that had been requested at the November meeting.

The work programme set out a schedule of substantive items that the Board would discuss at its meetings going forward subject to progress made and the availability of the appropriate officers to attend.

Those items listed as 'unscheduled' could become scheduled at any time subject to updates and the lead councillor requiring the view of the Board on any particular matter.

Members of the Board might suggest items be listed for the work programme at any time. The lead councillor stressed that this applied equally to any of the external Board members.

Renewable energy installation and solar PV in car parks was listed for March but it was suggested this may require the attendance of a number of officers and could take longer to organise. Alternatively, it was agreed that the Finance update listed for July be brought forward to the March meeting. The S.151 officer and Lead Councillor for Finance and Property should be invited to present. It was felt Finance was a topic that should be rescheduled again later in the year as the council drew nearer to drawing up its budget for 2025-26.

Carrie  
Anderson

The website item listed for March would be moved to an informal workshop with a date to be canvassed by the CCO.

Nat  
Prodger

An unscheduled item for the review of the Local Plan would be added to the work programme. The commentary would list to understand how the Board might support the review. A member of the Planning Policy team and the PH would be invited to support the discussion.

## 26. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The dates of future meetings were agreed. The DSO had

liaised with Waverley Borough Council to ensure there would be no further date conflicts with the Waverley Climate Change Board meetings.

20 March 2024

22 May 2024

17 July 2024

18 September 2024

20 November 2024

22 January 2025

19 March 2025

All from 2:30pm

**27. AOB**

The Board noted that Clean Air Night was held on 24 January and that the Big Plastic Count was a national campaign that would run from 11-17 March 2024.