

7 SEPTEMBER 2020

PLACE MAKING AND INNOVATION EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

7 September 2020

- * Councillor Angela Gunning (Chairman)
- * Councillor Gordon Jackson (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor Jon Askew | * Councillor Steven Lee |
| * Councillor Christopher Barrass | * Councillor Masuk Miah |
| * Councillor Ruth Brothwell | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Graham Eyre | * Councillor Will Salmon |
| * Councillor Diana Jones | * Councillor Catherine Young |

* Present

Councillors Chris Blow, Jan Harwood, Ramsey Nagaty, George Potter, John Rigg and Deborah Seabrook were also in attendance.

PMI9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no apologies for absence or notification of substitute members.

PMI10 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests.

PMI11 MINUTES

Following a lengthy discussion regarding the nature and purpose of minutes, the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 1 June 2020 were confirmed and would be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity, subject to the following changes:

- the words 'essence of' be deleted from the penultimate line of the second paragraph of minute number PMI3; and
- the last bullet point of minute number PMI5 concerning Plastic Free Guildford be expanded to read: 'The aims of the plastic free Borough initiative should be pursued and the Borough Council as an institution should seek 'Plastic Free Community' status and certification from Surfers Against Sewage, the issuing organisation, and to collaborate with the community and the Plastic Free Guildford campaign to support obtaining this certification for the Borough community as a whole.'

PMI12 CLIMATE CHANGE AND INNOVATION BOARD UPDATE

The EAB considered a report providing an update in respect of the accomplishments and findings of the former Climate Change and Innovation Board (CCIB) since its creation in August 2019 and the next steps following the Executive's agreement at its meeting on 25 August 2020 to disband the CCIB and in its place form two new working groups, namely, the Climate Change Board and the Innovation Board, to balance the focus on these two equally important areas.

The report advised that on 19 March 2019, the Executive had approved a new Innovation Strategy for 2019-20 which reflected the dynamic and at times rapidly changing nature of innovation. The Strategy, which addressed the Council's Innovation theme in its Corporate Plan 2018-2023, was developed, co-ordinated and managed by an existing Innovation

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Strategy Board, assisted by its Climate Change Sub-Group, to provide economic leadership and to deliver sustainable and proportionate growth.

On 23 July 2019, the Council adopted a motion to declare a Climate Emergency. In line with the commitments set out in this motion, the Council merged the Innovation Strategy Board and its Climate Change Sub-Group to create the CCIB in August 2019 which would report to the Executive and have overall responsibility for:

- developing the Council's Climate Change Strategy; and
- overseeing the delivery and carrying out of an ongoing review of the Council's Innovation Strategy 2019-20.

It was reported that the CCIB had met on six occasions between August 2019 and August 2020 and the minutes of these meetings, which had been circulated separately to the EAB, were summarised in Appendix 1 of the report. Although the CCIB initially identified five themes on which to focus, namely, aspects of planning, transportation, trees and green spaces, procurement, and waste, it did not have an opportunity to consider the two latter themes before being disbanded. The CCIB also received updates from key officers which covered areas including the rural economy, business innovation, energy consumption, waste, electric vehicles and transport. In addition, community engagement was discussed by the CCIB on a number of occasions and it considered methods to pursue this. The CCIB had also commenced identification of key areas of focus for inclusion in the Climate Change Strategy which were summarised in Appendix 2 of the report. The Executive had decided to disband the CCIB and replace it with two new boards as it was felt that the CCIB had served its purpose by covering a number of areas and that the new configuration of two boards would better equip the Council to meet the two rapidly developing areas of climate change and innovation.

The report recommended that the EAB considered the actions taken to date by the CCIB and made recommendations as appropriate to the Executive.

The following points arose from related questions, comments and discussion:

- Although the Lead Councillor was aware of the 'Scatter' tool which was built to assist local authorities to measure the cost and effectiveness of steps being taken to reduce carbon emissions, it was not currently being utilised by the Council which was working to a similar framework with the assistance of the Association for Public Service Excellence. However, the Council could explore alternative approaches including the 'Scatter' tool which indicated the total amount of carbon emissions produced by area, the majority of which stemmed from energy consumption and transport. The University of Surrey had undertaken a detailed exercise in relation to emissions at both county and borough / district levels and this could inform the Council's work in this area. A link to Scatter's website would be circulated to EAB members for their information.
- Whilst possible sites for solar farms were being sought, potential sites would not be announced in advance of proposed purchases as this could have cost implications. The intention was to progress this matter without delay.
- In terms of the impact of the Government's 'Planning for the future' White Paper on the Guildford Borough Local Plan, the proposed overhaul of planning policies would affect all local planning authorities and the Council would evaluate the potential implications of the White Paper and formulate a response to the related public consultation exercise as a key priority.
- Details regarding the location of existing and proposed electric vehicle (EV) charging points would be circulated to the EAB.

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- Sufficient staff resources should be secured to enable the commitments set out in the Climate Emergency motion to be actioned and achieved and a culture of reducing carbon emissions should be embedded throughout the Council and reflected in its policies and strategies. Although the Council would work towards reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption across its own estate and lead by example, effective partnership working with stakeholders and community engagement was crucial to promote climate change initiatives and encourage residents, businesses, organisations and the education sector to reduce their respective carbon footprints. It was proposed that the new Innovation Board would continue past liaison with the local business and education communities to promote climate change initiatives.
- Although much of the early work of the CCIB had focused on briefings and presentations to gain knowledge and understanding of the issues being faced, this had been necessary to develop a robust strategy. The future direction, particularly for the new Climate Change Board, was likely to focus more on achieving actions and outcomes.
- The separating of the former CCIB into two separate boards was welcomed to progress both climate change and innovation equally and it was hoped that the new boards would be proactive and meet regularly to make progress in these areas. As there were overlaps in the work of the new boards, interactions in areas such as transport innovations and technology to reduce carbon emissions would be required and achieved by some duplication of membership and the chairmen of the boards working closely together and co-ordinating joint actions.
- The Council was seeking to upgrade the energy efficiency of its housing stock by installing air source heat pumps (ASHP) when tenancy break opportunities arose and conditions were suitable as part of property renovations. Further information concerning the decisions and locations associated with the installation of ASHP in the housing stock would be provided. Information concerning related Government grants for householders was available on the Council's website.
- The Plastic Free Guildford (PFG) Group had been in contact with local schools which were enthusiastic to become involved in climate change initiatives and be guided in that regard. Many schools had appointed a climate change captain and one had a climate change group. Contact details were available from the PFG Group if required.
- Although the Guildford Environmental Forum's (GEF's) climate change presentations to parish council meetings had been suspended owing to the Coronavirus, it was hoped that the Forum would resume this work as an adult focused means of engagement when possible. As GEF was represented on the Climate Change Board, this would provide an opportunity for the Board to encourage GEF to continue this community engagement work.

Having considered the actions taken to date by the CCIB, the EAB made the following recommendations to the Executive:

- Sufficient staff resources should be secured to enable the commitments and aspirations set out in the Climate Emergency motion to be put into practice.
- The aim of reducing carbon emissions in all areas of Council activity should be embedded across the authority and reflected in its culture, policies and strategies.
- The new Climate Change and Innovation Boards should meet regularly and proactively pursue and seek to achieve their aims, objectives and targets without delay. This might include establishing officer / councillor working groups to focus on and progress particular aspects.
- As a key priority, the new Climate Change Board should devise and pursue methods to engage with local communities to promote climate change initiatives such as reducing carbon emissions, with a particular focus on accessing schools and engaging young people in addition to adult residents, businesses and organisations.

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PMI13 EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

It was highlighted that the Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would be considered by the Executive on 22 September 2020 and it was preferred that any related views that non-Executive councillors wished to express were submitted by 8 September 2020, if possible, to allow ample time for comments to be incorporated into the documentation.

PMI14 EAB WORK PROGRAMME

Councillors were invited to submit suggestions for possible future EAB work programme items to the Chairman for discussion at the Executive Advisory Board / Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme meeting on 11 September 2020. It was emphasised that draft SPDs should come before the EAB in a timely manner to enable it to contribute to their development and comment in respect of the related consultation responses. As SPDs were currently unscheduled in the work programme, it was requested that timescales around their preparation and consultation be mapped to enable them to be scheduled for consideration at future meetings of the EAB. Councillors were advised that a longer term prioritisation list in respect of SPDs was being developed and would be shared with the EAB when finalised.

The meeting finished at 8.20 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman