
COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 7th September, 2023

Present: Councillor Peter Edwards (in the Chair),
Councillors Carole Haythornthwaite, Heather Anderson and
Caroline Montague (Vice Chair) and Mike Booth

In Attendance: Councillors Zak Khan

Apologies: Scott Brerton and Colin McKenzie

119 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

There were apologies from Councillors Scott Brerton and Colin McKenzie. Councillor Mike Booth substituted for Councillor Brerton.

120 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations.

121 Minutes of Last Meeting

To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26th July 2023 for approval as a correct record.

There were no questions or comments relating to the minutes.

Resolved - That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.

122 Hyndburn's Carbon Emissions and Transition to Net Zero

The Chair welcomed Councillor Zak Khan, Portfolio Holder, Stuart Sambrook, Policy Manager, Sarah Whittaker, Regeneration Manager, Anne Hourican, Senior Environmental Initiatives Officer and Tim Brodest, Home Energy Reduction Officer to the meeting.

Stuart informed the Committee that a full report was included in the agenda, and that he would go through this via a presentation. He would invite other officers to contribute and respond to questions at the appropriate time.

The Chair suggested that this agenda item be merged with the following item, Climate and Biodiversity Natural solutions as there was clear overlap between the two topics. The Committee agreed to this.

Stuart presented and covered the following:

- Climate emergency declaration
- Council's 2030 Net Zero targets

- Scrutiny Green Review
- Hyndburn wide carbon emissions and the biggest emitters
- Transport
- Housing stock
- EPC ratings of Hyndburn properties
- Newly appointed Home Energy Reduction Officer
- Industry
- Lancashire County Council's Carbon Reduction Pathway
- Carbon capture and offsetting
- Council work with eco partners including Prospects Foundation, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and the River Ribble Trust
- Social awareness and events
- Renewable energy projects in Hyndburn
- Public sector decarbonisation scheme
- Hyndburn Borough Council decarbonisation of buildings including works already completed at Hyndburn Leisure Centre, Scaitcliffe House and Accrington Crematorium
- Low emission vehicle fleet and the use of hydro-treated vegetable oil
- Woodland planting
- £1 million climate reserve funding
- Net Zero Working Group
- Other ideas to help the Council achieve Net Zero

Tim Brodest, Home Energy Reduction Officer provided a brief update on the energy efficiency grant schemes available and plans to engage with local organisations.

Sarah Whittaker, Regeneration Manager provided an update on the work carried out on the Council's buildings including plans for Haworth Art Gallery and Willows Lane. She also covered future rounds of available public funding and the requirements to provide match funding, and difficulties recruiting a Carbon Reduction Officer to lead the decarbonisation of Council buildings. A phased approach will be applied with focus on the Council's biggest emitters.

Anne Hourican, Senior Environmental Initiatives Officer presented on Climate and Biodiversity – Natural Solutions.

The presentation covered the following:

- Acquisition of Brookside / Bury Meadows nature reserve and plans to enhance the area
- Partner involvement in the above
- Flood management
- Work on engaging with schools
- Peat stores
- Coal authority and mine heat exchanges

Cllr Khan, Portfolio Holder said that he welcomed the enthusiasm from officers across Council departments who are involved in the Council's green agenda. He said that whilst the Council can be a leader and an enabler in this, we can't do it on our own. He sees the Net Zero Working Group as not just a Council group but one which should involve other stakeholders, schools and business leaders. He said several businesses have already approached the Council to discuss our transition to HVO fuel in our fleet.

The presenters responded to questions on the following:

- Emissions per km2 and emissions across neighbouring areas
- Domestic grants schemes including LA Flex, and promoting domestic energy efficiency to those who may not be eligible for grants but may have the means to carry out work themselves
- How local contractors can apply to be approved to carry out work under the domestic grant schemes
- Availability of energy efficiency grants for businesses
- Individual building decarbonisation plans
- Levelling Up project and removal of fossil fuels
- Proposed spend on remaining climate reserve budget
- Promotion of walking and cycling to school schemes
- Plans to improve cycle routes
- Sustainable transport links
- Natural burials
- Ecofest
- Economic development and encouraging green businesses

Cllr Khan ended by stating that he welcomed input from all Councillors and was happy to listen to ideas.

The Chair thanked the Portfolio Holder and officers for attending and presenting to the committee.

Resolved -

That the Committee notes the work going on at the Council over the past three years; and;

That the committee supports the ongoing work for the Net Zero Working Group and delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan.

123 Climate and Biodiversity - Natural Solutions

This item was merged with the previous agenda item.

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed