

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AUDIT PANEL AT WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD 25TH JUNE 2021 AT 10:00AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

PRESENT: - Councillors C. Jay, S. Ager, S. Hicks.

Staff: J Sheehy - Town Clerk

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor C. Jay was appointed as Chairman of the Climate Audit Panel.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE & GROUP REMIT

Members reviewed the relevant Scheme of Delegation section and subsequently

RECOMMENDED that the Climate Audit Panel meeting frequency be increased from 2 to 4 per year, to be inserted into the standing meeting schedule.

3. EXAMINATION OF BUSINESS PLANS

Members performed an overview of existing business plans and identified the following objectives, tasks and recommendations in respect of each item:

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- **RECOMMENDED** the consideration of 20mph speed limits for all residential estates.
- **RECOMMENDED** that the signposting of all cycle networks be considered as part of the process.

SCRUTINY OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- **RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Applications & Transport Sub-Committee engage in a local planning policy debate and training exercise at an appropriate upcoming meeting and that such an item be considered as an annual exercise.
- **RECOMMENDED** that the Environment Committee explores how to work with developers for the creation of wildflower meadows on new estates.

HIGHWAYS AND PARKING MATTERS

- **AGREED** for the group to maintain legislative and regulatory updates concerning the introduction of electric scooters in Braintree District.
- **AGREED** to explore electric car charging capabilities across Town Council sites.

CCTV

- **RECOMMENDED** that the upcoming CCTV review report includes research on solar capabilities for existing CCTV equipment.

YOUTH

- **RECOMMENDED** the Youth Working Group correspond with local schools to explore climate priorities with children.

BUSINESS & GROUP ENGAGEMENT

- **AGREED** the panel would engage in a research exercise as to the solar capabilities and feasibility of group solar projects across Witham's industrial estates.

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT

- **RECOMMENDED** the Community Committee review pesticides as part of setting its allotment management policies.
- **RECOMMENDED** the Community Committee explore the scope for installation of communal composting facilities at the recently repatriated Cut-Throat Lane Allotment site.

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE FACILITIES IN WITHAM

- **AGREED** the panel would engage in a research exercise as to the solar capabilities and feasibility of group solar projects across Witham's industrial estates.

REVIEW OF FLORAL DISPLAYS

- **AGREED** to include a researched section on the "National Gardening Scheme" in the upcoming "Witham In Bloom" report.
- **AGREED** to include a section on climate benefits and bee friendly plantings for any future Witham In Bloom scheme.

PATH & CYCLEWAY PROGRAMME

- **RECOMMENDED** the Council engage a qualified consultant to advise on potential finishes and grades with an eco-friendly aspect, as part of the Path & Cycleway programme.

REVIEW OF STREET FURNITURE

- **RECOMMENDED** the Environment Committee consider the inclusion and installation of segregated recycling bins as part of this review.

BLACKWATER RAIL TRAIL

- **AGREED** an exercise could be commenced in engaging Essex County Council to improve biodiversity and wildflower growth along the Blackwater Rail Trail.

WITHAM CYCLEWAY STRATEGY

- **RECOMMENDED** the Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group commences work in partnership with the Climate Audit Panel to produce a draft Witham Cycleway Strategy in consideration of the District Cycling Strategy currently out to consultation.

TOILETS

- **AGREED** the C.A.P would commence an audit of toilet facilities managed by the Town Council.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS AND ACQUISITIONS

- **RECOMMENDED** to the Localism & Devolution Group that the acquisition of the Town Park, Maltings Lane sports pitches and War Memorial be elevated as priority climate items.

REVIEW OF COMMUNICATIONS

- **RECOMMENDED** to Policy & Resources Committee that the review includes a section on the Council's climate change priorities.

There being no further business, the panel concluded at 12:18pm.

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Councillor C Jay
Chairman

JS 01.07.2021