

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

8 March 2022

Climate Emergency Task Group Update

Purpose

1. To update the Environment Select Committee on the work of the Climate Emergency Task Group since January 2022.

Background

2. The Climate Emergency Task Group (CETG) is a task group reporting to the Environment Select Committee. The task group's initial terms of reference were endorsed by the Select Committee on 3 September 2019 and were revised on 9 November 2021.
3. The task group has produced two reports with recommendations:
 - Energy and Transport & Air quality (29 September 2020)
 - Planning (13 January 2021)
4. At its meeting on 15 June 2021 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group.
5. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [12 January 2022](#).

Membership

6. The membership of the task group from July 2021 is as follows:

Cllr Clare Cape
Cllr Sarah Gibson
Cllr Tony Jackson
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Brian Mathew
Cllr Nick Murry
Cllr David Vigar
Cllr Ian Wallis
Cllr Graham Wright (Chairman)

Terms of Reference:

7. The task group's revised terms of reference were endorsed by the Environment Select Committee on the 9 November 2021. These are:
 - i. *To help shape and influence the development of Wiltshire Council's programme (in all relevant areas) for meeting its objective of making Wiltshire Council carbon neutral and seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 (excluding the geographical area administered by Swindon Borough Council).*
 - ii. *To scrutinise the delivery of this objective through the Climate Strategy (2022-2027) and its delivery plans, as well as key plans, policies and programmes, such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. Including the way in which the Council is measuring progress and how it is performing and reporting against baselines.*
 - iii. *To provide recommendations on other aspects of decarbonising the county including partnership working and community-led approaches as well as acting as a national role model.*

Full Council - Climate Strategy 2022-2027

8. On 15 February Council received the draft Climate Strategy for endorsement. The task group took part in the formal consultation (see CETG [Update](#) 9 November 2021, Appendix 1) as well as discussing early drafts of the strategy.
9. The Chairman of the task group, along with the Leader of the Council, Cllr Clewer, addressed a rally of the Wiltshire Climate Alliance (WCA) outside the Civic Centre before the meeting. This was almost three years since the Council declared a climate emergency.
10. The Chairman also took part in the debate at full Council on behalf of the task group. The task group welcomed the strategy as a sound start and noted that the Climate Emergency UK – Council Climate Plan Scorecard had ranked the strategy highly. The task group urged that the strategy should be the 'green thread' that ran through all of the council's decisions and actions.
11. The task group will continue its role as a critical friend in challenging the council to do more, and to move more quickly.

Forward work plan

12. The task group has agreed to review and follow up a number of the recommendations that it made to the Executive in 2020/21.
13. This will bring the group up to date with current policy and practice nationally and allow an informed consideration of the future delivery plans for the council. There will be a focus upon specific areas:

- Net zero planning policies ensuring that all new homes are carbon neutral
- Making all homes energy efficient
- Electric vehicle charging, including on-street charging and via taxi licensing across the county to enable a rapid transition to electric vehicles
- Encouraging active travel for short journeys undertaken safely either on foot or by bike
- Protecting woodlands and natural environment and substantially increasing tree cover

14. The draft forward plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on the Task Group activity provided.**
- 2. To note the Task Group's draft forward work plan.**

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APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

1 March 2022	Councillor Climate Working Group The Working Group (CCWG) has responsibility for ensuring that the work undertaken by officers, meets the 2030 climate ambitions, as set by full council in 2019. (Cllr Wright only)
9 March 2022	Local Plan - Update The Chairman of the task group being updated on the progress with the Local Plan.
18 March 2022	Woodland Trust Follow up meeting after discussion in July outlining changes to practice, new funding opportunities, local/regional projects.
April 2022 (tbc)	Climate Strategy 2022/2027 To look at the next steps in developing the Climate Strategy.
April 2022 (tbc)	Planning for Carbon Neutral Housing Initial discussion with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) about current developments in carbon neutral housing particularly in relation to planning.
May 2022 (tbc)	Developing EV Charging Discussion with commercial providers about current good practice, funding models and Government support.
June 2022 (tbc)	County Farms and Council Land Holdings To understand the future plans of the county farms in particular with respect to food production, renewable energy and tree planting.
June 2022 (tbc)	Natural England Funded Pilot Meeting to consider the pilot projects looking at rolling out local nature recovery planning, bio-diversity net gain and the environmental toolkit
14 June 2022	Environment Select Committee