

Environment Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2022 AT KENNET COMMITTEE ROOM.

Present:

Cllr Jerry Kunkler (Chairman), Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Mel Jacob, Cllr Dr Brian Mathew, Cllr Charles McGrath, Cllr Bill Parks, Cllr Iain Wallis, Cllr James Sheppard and Cllr Stewart Palmen (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Dr Mark McClelland and Cllr Mike Sankey

107 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Derek Walters, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Bob Jones, Cllr Rich Rogers and Cllr Nick Murry. Cllr Jones arranged for Cllr Stewart Palmen to attend as a substitute.

The Chair reminded committee members that if they cannot attend a meeting then they should be arranging a substitute where possible.

108 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

The minutes of the Environment Select Committee meeting held on 14th June 2022 were approved and signed.

109 **Declarations of Interest**

In the interest of openness Cllr Iain Wallis declared that he was an employee of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which related to item six, although he was in no way involved in waste management.

110 **Chairman's Announcements**

Recent meetings

Since the last select committee meeting on 8 March, the Chair had attended:

- Cabinet 21 June and 12 July
- Financial Planning Task Group 8 July

The Chair received briefings on the following:

- Future Chippenham 8 July
- Enhanced Highways maintenance 11 July

111 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

112 **Waste Management Strategy: Annual Review**

The Chairman welcomed Sarah Valdus, Assistant Director Environment, to the Council and to her first Environment Select Committee.

The Cabinet Member Transport Waste Street Scene and Flooding, Councillor Dr Mark McClelland, introduced the report. He outlined that it had been a difficult year with the strikes and labour shortages but emphasized that officers were working with Hills to ensure that they deliver. Head of Service Waste Management, Martin Litherland, provided more detail on the impacts of the pandemic, the financial implications of a deposit return scheme and funding opportunities from extended producer accountability. In addition, Assistant Director Environment, Sarah Valdus, reassured the committee that 90% of the plastic that Wiltshire Council collects is recycled in the UK.

Officers responded to a number of questions and comments from the Select Committee which included the following areas:

- Separate food waste collection. It was clarified that this was being investigated, but it was highlighted that currently food waste in Wiltshire does not go to landfill, it goes to energy production.
- Wiltshire Council still subsidises Green Johanna Hot Composters to allow people to manage their food waste at home.
- A recycling plant for Wiltshire to manage plastic waste was being approached with caution to ensure that the best approach is adopted.
- Low position in recycling league tables for local authorities and the reasons for this.
- Public engagement and education process to prevent misuse of recycling bins has taken the form of work with community groups and increasing the information available on the website. The results of a waste composition analysis were expected soon which would allow for more targeted communications.
- That it would be useful to benchmark against similar local authorities.
- Work was being done to look at changes to the service and contract renewals to follow the instructive timetable outlined by the Environment Act 2021.
- There had been a 21% reduction in reported fly tipping incidents, though the cabinet member expressed an interest in collecting more data on that going forward.

- The removal of waste from the system for reuse. Officers explained that this was easier for household recycling centres, in comparison to kerbside collection where it was harder to keep items in good condition.
- The potential for incentives to encourage businesses to offer refill schemes.
- The feasibility report into energy from waste from small scale waste plants was not actively progressing at the time.

The Committee thanked officers for their report.

Resolved:

That the Committee,

- 1. Notes the Household Waste Management Strategy update.***
- 2. Receives a further short update on progress with resolving the current issues facing the kerbside collection service at its next meeting (Sept 2022).***
- 3. Agrees to receive an annual update in 12 months' time,***
- 4. The annual update should include benchmarking information with comparator local authorities and individual milestones within the action plan.***

113 Retrofitting of energy improvement works of current council housing

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing, Cllr Richard Clewer, outlined the programme emphasising that the programme would start slowly then accelerate as it goes on. Then the Head of Strategic Assets & FM, Nick Darbyshire, delivered a presentation on the retrofitting programme.

Officers responded to a number of questions and comments from the Select Committee which included the following areas:

- The potential to use microwave boilers. It was confirmed that all avenues were being explored.
- Education on ventilation to help prevent mould and damp.
- Development of in-house capability to retrofit homes, with the current focus on ventilation and insulation.
- The ability to work around any supply chain hold ups.
- Retrofitting standards and ensuring the in-house team is upskilled to work to those standards.
- The difficulty of retrofitting listed buildings.
- Supporting early adopters of retrofitting within the general public.

The Committee thanked the officers for their presentation.

Resolved:

That the select committee:

- 1. Notes and welcomes the progress made in implementing the housing energy efficiency programme (HEEP).**
- 2. Is invited to inspect one of the retrofitted properties at a future convenient date.**

114 **Construction of zero carbon homes**

Cllr Clewer and Director Assets & Commercial Development, Simon Hendey, outlined the need to provide the best quality Zero carbon housing for the people of Wiltshire.

Residential Development Manager, Laura Young, delivered a presentation on this and highlighted the aim to use as local a provider as possible, for example Dorset.

Officers responded to a number of questions and comments from the Select Committee which included the following areas:

- All of the zero carbon homes in Wiltshire would have solar panels and solar tiles were also being considered.
- Accessibility to the rural community, as bridges could cause an issue. However, it comes with the same guarantees as traditional housing.
- The life expectancy of the portable units was 60 years, although expected to be closer to 100. They would be permanent structures and have to be accredited through BOPAS.
- The difference in carbon emissions between the modular builds and traditional builds. This information was not available yet however in terms of comparing volume of waste produced in the building process, this would be much less for the modular homes.
- The project is running on schedule, they are just waiting for planning permission.

Resolved:

That the select committee:

- 1. Notes and welcomes the progress to date.**
- 2. Notes the future programme and the commitment to delivering carbon zero homes.**

116 **Forward Work Programme**

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the Forward Work Programme, subject to any additional items agreed by Committee at today's meeting***

117 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

118 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is on 13 September 2022 at 2pm.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.30 pm)

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