

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

13 September 2022

Climate Emergency Task Group Update

Purpose

1. To update the Environment Select Committee on the work of the Climate Emergency Task Group since June 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 14 June 2022 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group 2022/23.
5. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [14 June 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.*

Recent Activity

Climate Strategy Delivery Plans (5 August 2022)

8. The task group received a briefing from Ariane Crampton, Head of Climate Programme on the draft delivery plans for the Climate Strategy. Since the Climate Strategy was adopted in February, there has been collaboration across the council to develop two delivery plans for the period 2022-24. The first one, the Carbon Neutral Council Plan, focuses on achieving the council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030. The second delivery plan focuses on actions that the council can take, either alone or in partnership, with others to lead the transition to a carbon neutral county.
9. A responsible service has been identified for each action and the relevant Head of Service or Director has approved the drafts, to ensure actions allocated to their area are deliverable.
10. The task group asked about how closely the delivery plan actions were aligned to the 'stretch' targets set out in the [Anthesis](#) reports. The issue of decarbonising the council's fleet vehicles was raised.
11. The delivery of more carbon neutral homes was discussed. The council's ambition is for new builds to be to the highest standard and will set this out in the Local Plan. Task group members raised the point that some Local Plan have already been adopted with zero carbon targets e.g. London, Reading. The rolling out of EV charging to residential areas, particularly social and council housing, was also raised.

12. How to deliver a carbon neutral county through partnership working was discussed. This is an area where the task group believes the council can take more of a lead working closely with parish and town councils. It was raised that the role of economic development will be important as will lobbying central government.
13. The Chairman of the task group welcomed the opportunity to see and comment on the drafts and recognised the amount of work that had gone into their development.

Climate & Environment Forum

14. The Climate & Environment Forum has been launched which is intended to be a mechanism for a regular two-way dialogue between the council and a representative group of local residents. It met informally in July 2022 with the first formal meeting scheduled for September.
15. Welcoming this arrangement, the task group asked about the recruitment process for members of the Forum and how current climate groups fitted into this new arrangement.

Wiltshire-wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) (2 Sept 2022)

16. The task group received a briefing from Heather Blake, Senior Transport Planner on the Wiltshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) and allied design guides. The council is in the process of developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for the principal settlements and market towns in Wiltshire, as well as the key routes between them. These are currently out for [consultation](#).
17. The task group asked about the lessons learnt from the COVID cycle schemes. Also, questions were raised about improving and securing places to park bicycles. Possible funding streams and their criteria were discussed as well as the importance of funding toward behaviour change. Drawing on local knowledge and in particular local cycle networks was also considered.

Forward work plan

18. The task group met to discuss its forward work plan on 1 September 2022. It was agreed to revise the plan over the next few months, in discussion with officers and the Executive, to better align it with the delivery of the Climate Strategy and other strategies and programmes key to the climate agenda.
19. The new plan will create a more effective focus for the task group and add value to delivering the net zero programme.
20. An interim draft forward plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Proposals

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

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APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

16 Sept 2022	Review of council's land ownership To understand the future of the council's land holdings, incl. county farms, with respect to food production, renewable energy, and tree planting.
tbc	Developing EV (Electric Vehicle) Charging Discussion with commercial providers about current good practice, funding models and Government support.
tbc	Update British Army Sustainability To update task group following briefing on 6 May 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
tbc	Local Transport Plan To understand the future strategy in particular active travel, electric vehicles and active travel.
tbc	Bio-gas To explore the potential for bio-gas as a replacement for natural gas and use in vehicles.