

Bill Jarvis– Representing Extinction Rebellion Wiltshire

To – Chairman of Environment Select Committee

We have further questions on progress of the Task Group in addressing the Climate Emergency

Question 1

Task Group

We understand that the Scrutiny Committee agreed to pass on the actions to the Environment Committee and that they have now set up a Task Group charged with those actions.

Please can you:

- 1. confirm that this is correct.**
- 2. Confirm that questions previously fielded by O&S on 19th March will be fully answered by the Task Group**
- 3. provide details of their remit**
- 4. confirm when the first set of forward actions and recommendations will be released**

Response:

The Climate Change Task Group was established by the Environment Select Committee on 23rd April 2019. The task group met for the first time on 4th June 2019 where they elected Cllr Graham Wright as the chairman of the task group. Their remit, including consideration of the issues & topics mentioned in the questions to the 19th March 2019 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, will be decided by the task group membership during their scoping work.

This scoping work began at their first meeting and will continue at their next meeting on 20th June 2019 and is being guided by the motions from Full Council ([Motion 13](#) and [Motion 15](#)) along with the following resolution from the 23rd April 2019 Environment Select Committee:

- a) develop recommendations and a plan to achieve making the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 along with undertaking a carbon / renewables audit;
- b) agree parameters with the relevant Cabinet Member or Portfolio Holder that represent the council impact on the environment and can be accurately

- reported to council on a regular basis, to potentially include those measures suggested in the motion to Full Council;
- c) for the Task Group to consider information collected from the Rapid Scrutiny: Plastic Waste in Wiltshire's roads; and
 - d) and for all comments from [today's debate](#) to be considered by the Task Group

Updates on the task group's work will be shared under the Task Group Updates agenda section of this committee.

Question 2

Carbon/Renewables Audit

1. **Please confirm that the Audit required as part of item 3 of the Climate Emergency Motion has been commissioned**
2. **Please advise the name of the Consultant appointed and the scope of works agreed.**
3. **Please advise on the timing of the release of this audit and the likely frequency of updates**

Response:

The Climate Change Task Group will consider and make recommendations regarding the audit as part of its work programme once its scoping process is complete.

Question 3

Engaging with the citizens of Wiltshire

For any of the plans developed by the Council to be successful they will need to full support of the people of Wiltshire.

To give that support the people need to be given factual information on the reasons why the Climate Emergency exists and why the plans to deliver carbon neutrality by 2030 are necessary.

Please can you advise:

1. **what plans are in place to have public meetings/workshops on the issues and how will they be advertised?**
2. **if the Task Group will use those meetings for climate change education and discussion on ways the County can tackle the problem locally?**
Potential opportunity to have people's assembly type meetings to facilitate such discussion.
3. **Whether, as is being considered and used by other Councils, the Task Group is prepared to consider a Citizens Assembly as a way of providing guidance on the elements that might be tackled by the County?** A Citizens Assembly would help to take politics out of the debate.

Response

The task group will be undertaking a number of knowledge building exercises and will consider attendance at any public meetings and/or workshops as a way of facilitating this.

The Task Group will consider the idea of a Citizens' Assembly and its conclusions will be reported to the Environment Select Committee, through its standard 'Task Group Updates' agenda item.

Question 4

Capital Benefits

The Council must stop selling off public assets for short term financial gain or balancing books.

We need all the land we can get for community schemes as difficult times lie ahead (community energy, allotments and feeding/housing programmes, rewilding, treeplanting on a massive scale, etc).

If land has to be sold, the equity released should be invested in addressing the Climate Emergency.

What we don't need is more commercial units, many of which are already empty. The Council need to understand that the world is changing and not plan for the past.

Please advise how the Task Force will address this problem

Response

The task group has agreed on a number of areas of areas of interest for their investigation during their first scoping meeting, these included: planning; land use; and business and industry. The task group will consider whether the topic of asset disposal will fall within the remit of their work.