

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

18 July 2024

Climate Emergency Task Group

Background

1. The Climate Emergency Task Group (CETG) is a standing 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.
2. The task group has produced two reports with recommendations:
 - Energy and Transport & Air quality (29 September 2020)
 - Planning (13 January 2021)
3. At its meeting on 14 June 2022 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group 2022/23.
4. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [4 June 2024](#).

Membership

5. The membership of the task group from April 2024 is as follows:

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

Terms of Reference:

6. The task group's revised terms of reference were endorsed by the Environment Select Committee on the 9 November 2021. These are:
 - a) 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).

- b) 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.
- c) 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

Tree & Woodland Strategy (28 June 2024)

7. The task group received a briefing about the emerging strategy, which covered the following:
 - Why woodlands trees and hedgerows?
 - Policy background
 - Aims and objectives
 - Strategy structure
 - Strategy targets
 - Trees as an asset
 - Who will use the strategy
 - Timetable for Delivery
8. To increase the Wiltshire's tree cover to 17% by 2045 422 hectares of new woodland would need to be planted per annum or approx. 675,000 trees per year (Climate Strategy Delivery Plan for Wiltshire 2022-2024).
9. The task group asked about how the entire tree, woodland and hedgerow programme is being communicated more widely. How the strategy fits with the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans, and the council's use of its own estate. Also, how the strategy would be funded.
10. The task group welcomed the strategy but would encourage the council to implement it as soon as possible.
11. The task group will continue to monitor the strategy and has asked a number of follow up questions.

Forward work plan

12. The Climate Emergency Task Group forward plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Proposals

That the select committee:

1. Notes the update on the Task Group activity provided above.
 2. Notes the Climate Emergency Task Group's draft forward work plan, see Appendix 1.
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Cllr Graham Wright, Chairman of the Climate Emergency Task Group

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APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

12 July 2024	Climate Audit Briefing regarding an audit undertaken to assess whether the council has the structures, processes and governance in place to deliver carbon neutral ambition.
13 September 2024	Annual update on the Council's response to the Climate Emergency Assessment of performance against Climate Strategy.
18 October 2024 (tbc)	Climate Delivery Plan The development of new delivery plans for the Climate Strategy.
October 2024 (tbc)	Climate Change Adaptation Plan To review the council's draft plan.
2024	Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUGS2) Update on the government funded programme for retrofitting.
2024	Bio-diversity Net Gain Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a new planning policy with the potential to change the face of nature recovery in England.
2024	Local Transport Plan To understand the future strategy in particular active travel, electric vehicles charging.
2025	Carbon Offsetting Strategy Update on the development of the strategy.
tbc	Soft Plastic Recycling
tbc	Alternative fuels
tbc	Biogas To explore the potential for biogas as a replacement for natural gas and use in vehicles.