

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

7 November 2023

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 6 June 2023 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group 2023/24.
4. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [19 September 2023](#).

Membership

5. The membership of the task group 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:

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

10. The task group met on the 9 October 2023 to consider the Update on the Council's Response to the Climate Emergency and revised Environmental Policy.
11. The task group raised questions about:
 - Wider efforts to reduce carbon emissions in the county.
 - Air quality
 - The demand responsive bus service in Pewsey Vale and encouraging more bus travel.
 - Improving the take up of active travel, particularly by engaging schools to develop their own travel plans.
 - Retrofitting houses and building carbon neutral homes both in the private and social housing sectors,
 - The continuing challenges of fitting solar panels to listed buildings and in conservation areas.
12. The report update report was subsequently discussed at Cabinet (10 October) and Full Council (17 October).
13. The Chairman of the task group and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Environment Select Committee also met with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change (20 October 2023) to discuss the forward work plan relating to climate change.
14. The outcome of that discussion can be seen in the revised task group forward work plan in Appendix 1.

Forward work plan

1. 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 forward work plan in Appendix 1

Cllr Graham Wright, Chairman Climate Emergency Task Group

Report author: Simon Bennet, Senior Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01225 718709,
email: simon.bennett@wiltshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

Late 2023 / Early 2024	Air Quality Action Plan Outcome of the consultation process.
Early 2024(tbc)	Local Transport Plan To understand the future strategy in particular active travel, electric vehicles charging.
Early 2024	Local Nature Recovery Strategy Each statutorily required local nature recovery strategy is specific and tailored to its area.
Early 2024	Climate Change Adaptation Plan To review the council's draft plan.
Spring 2024	Tree & Woodland Programme Programme begins autumn 2023, with update on progress available spring 2024.
Summer 2024	Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUGS2) Update on the government funded programme for retrofitting.
Summer 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.
October 2024(tbc)	Annual update on the Council's response to the Climate Emergency
2025	Carbon Offsetting Strategy Update on the development of the strategy.
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	Biogas To explore the potential for biogas as a replacement for natural gas and use in vehicles.