

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 4 October 2022 (postponed from 22 September 2022)

Attendance:

Councillors
Laming (Chairperson)

Clear
Achwal
Batho
Cook

Pearson
Tippett-Cooper
Warwick

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Ferguson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community and Housing), Learney (Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency) and Wallace

[Audio and Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

There were no apologies for absence received at the meeting.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson announced that there may be some changes to the running order of the agenda for the meeting depending on Cabinet Member attendance.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 5 July 2022 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Stuart Evans, Laura Baker (representatives from the youth climate assembly) and Anne Weir (on behalf of WinACC) spoke under public participation regarding the Winchester District's Young People's Climate Assembly, their comments are summarised below. In addition, Councillor Malcolm Wallace addressed the Committee in relation to Item 6 (Biodiversity Grass

Management) and Item 9 (Work Programme 2022/23) and his comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

Stuart Evans and Laura Baker made reference to the following points:

- They outlined the findings from last year's Youth Climate Assembly held at the University of Winchester and raised awareness that off the back of the success of this event, a Citizen's Climate Assembly (led by WinACC) was due to take place in the Guildhall on 22 October 2022.
- It was noted that the findings of the Citizen's Climate Assembly would be reported back to the committee in due course.
- A large number of young people had attended the Youth Climate Assembly which covered themes regarding transport in Winchester, energy and the climate crisis and food zero waste and suggestions were made of ideas to take forward on these points.

Anne Weir (on behalf of WinACC) made reference to the following points:

- The funding sponsorship made available to host the assembly events.
- The focus of last year's event on young people which generated clear and positive feedback.

Members suggested that information regarding the forthcoming Citizen's Climate Assembly be circulated to all parishes across the district to broaden awareness of the event due to take place on 22 October 2022.

The Chairperson thanked all those in attendance for their contribution.

6. **CNAP REPORT: BIODIVERSITY GRASS VERGE MANAGEMENT (PILOT ROAD VERGE PROJECT) (HEP028)**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee. In summary, he made reference to the significant decline of biodiversity and expressed a wish to see plans accelerated with the southern parishes included over the coming year. He referred to local conservation groups who were keen to be involved to take this forward.

Councillor Learney introduced the report which set the proposed approach to Biodiversity Grass Verges Management (pilot road verge project) and the plans for continuation and expansion of the proposed changes to road verge and grassland management. Reference was made to the lessons learned, the need to promote a greater understanding of the works being carried out to grass verges, consideration of the ongoing maintenance of these into future contracts and the recognised need to increase biodiversity in the district. In addition, the report outlined how the council would address related biodiversity policies and actions in line with the council's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and carbon neutrality in relation to the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP).

The committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the report, in summary, questions on the following matters were raised which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and other relevant officers present:

- (i) The impact of roadside salt.
- (ii) Maintenance of verges at sight line junctions for road safety.
- (iii) Cultivation licences.
- (iv) Grass cutting regimes and monitoring processes,
- (v) Planned communications with members and Parish Council's.
- (vi) Community involvement in future progression of the scheme.
- (vii) Procurement and ownership of equipment.
- (viii) Ecological sites of importance and partnership working with Hampshire County Council.

RESOLVED:

1. That the comments of the committee be noted and the report be received;
2. That the new approach to road verge management in selected areas within New Alresford and Badger Farm, be continued; and
3. That the approach to other road verges and grassland within neighbouring areas of the district utilising the capacity of the newly purchased cut and collect machinery, be expanded

7. **REVIEW OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROVISION (PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Ferguson introduced the item which provided an update on the varied work being carried out in the community, particularly with number of disadvantaged groups in relation to health and wellbeing. The Health Improvement Manager gave a presentation which set out an overview of the community and wellbeing provision which contributed towards the council's 'Living Well' priority. The presentation also included a detailed update on Winchester district's position on Sport England active lives data, various community programmes, half term and school programmes, annual disability events, leisure centre provision and key projects with Everyone Active, community outreach work and the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Board and partnership working.

The committee proceeded to ask questions on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and Health Improvement Manager:

- (i) Target groups – key focus on the inclusion of hard to reach groups such as supporting mental health, learning and physical disability groups, young people, women and girls
- (ii) Performance Indicators for Winchester Sport and Leisure Park and Meadowside Leisure Centre – increases in membership, health outcomes and analysis following investment.
- (iii) Christmas activity programmes for children.

- (iv) Advertisement of group events.
- (v) Provider engagement with secondary schools and colleges.
- (vi) GP exercise referral schemes.
- (vii) Hydrotherapy.
- (viii) Sports club use of leisure centre facilities.

During debate, the committee thanked officers for the volume of work achieved and the ongoing engagement and events taking place and recognised the significant benefits and importance of improving health and wellbeing across the district.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

8. **COST OF LIVING CRISIS (PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Ferguson introduced the item and made reference to council's interventions announced at Cabinet at its meeting on 22 September 2022 and for approval by Council, in response to the cost of living crisis which were offered as a local response, in addition to government support.

The Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing gave a presentation setting out the broad areas of work the council would be looking to take forward to help support residents in through this difficult time. It was noted that a dedicated resource would be appointed to lead on this matter, co-ordinate activities day to day to pull together streams across the council and source emergency funding support in partnership with other organisations such as Citizen's Advice Bureau. Reference was made to five clear objectives and the committee's views were sought on these measures.

The committee proceeded to ask questions on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing:

- (i) Council 'Retrofit ready' programme to improve energy and carbon levels.
- (ii) Energy efficiency measures for privately owned properties.
- (iii) Webpage accessibility to provide direct links to support pathways, such as food banks and warm banks.
- (iv) Timescales to carry out energy assessments.
- (v) Improved engagement with residents – capturing groups that do not have internet or mobile access.
- (vi) Emergency Grant Fund – the need to assist and support local residents quickly and efficiently.

In conclusion, the committee requested that Members be given the detail of where the funds had been allocated from. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this information would be provided by the Strategic Director in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

9. **TO NOTE THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2022/23**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee. In summary, he made reference to the motion agreed at Council on 6 July 2022 requesting that senior representatives from Southern Water, the Environment Agency, Salmon & Trout Conservation, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and Natural England be invited to attend the committee which remained outstanding. This was to allow for a better understanding of the current levels of pollution and remedial action being taken.

In response, the Chairperson advised that Southern Water had been contacted to request their attendance and the Service Lead: Community Wellbeing agreed to take this matter forward for a timescale to be provided by relevant officers of when this may take place.

The Chairperson advised that along with the Air Quality Annual Update proposed to come forward to the meeting in December, it was anticipated that there would be an additional report to come forward to the committee on 1 March 2023 in relation to the new air quality plans next steps.

In addition, the Chairperson asked that the following items be added to the work programme as items to come forward for consideration in due course:

- (i) Solar Farms
- (ii) Environmental Impact – Airport flight paths

It was noted that representatives from the Citizen's Climate Assembly wished to provide feedback following the event on 22 October 2022 in due course.

The committee expressed concern regarding the number of items due to come forward to its meeting on 6 December 2022 and decided that the following item be moved onto 1 March 2023 on the work programme.

- (iii) Management of open spaces of ecological importance.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the inclusion of the items (i) and (ii) and the movement of item (iii), as set out above, the work programme for 2022/23 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.35 pm

Chairperson