

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 December 2022

Attendance:

Councillors
Laming (Chairperson)

Achwal
Batho
Cook

Pearson
Warwick
Westwood

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Clear

Deputy Members:

Councillor Tippett-Cooper (as deputy for Councillor Clear)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

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

[Audio and Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies for the meeting were noted as above.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR THE MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Westwood be appointed as Vice Chairperson for the meeting.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

4. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson sought clarity regarding Southern Water attendance at the committee in relation to discussions surrounding water quality. In response, the

Strategic Director confirmed that discussions had taken place with Southern Water who would be sending a representative to attend the next meeting of the committee.

5. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 4 October 2022 be approved and adopted.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Chris Holloway (on behalf of WinACC) and Councillor Wallace spoke in respect of Item 8 (Carbon Roadmap and Actions), their comments are summarised under the relevant minute below. In addition, Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee in relation to Item 7 (Discussion from Solent Freeport), Item 10 (Air Quality Update) and Item 11 (Review of CIL) and his comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

7. **DISCUSSION FROM SOLENT FREEPORT BY CHAIR, MR BRIAN JOHNSON (VERBAL REPORT)**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee. In summary, he made reference to the planning development and traffic impacts of the freeport and the measures being taken to reduce carbon emissions as a result.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Brian Johnson, Chairman of Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd to the meeting to provide a verbal update on how the freeport was likely to impact Winchester district.

Mr Johnson provided an overview, setting out the background and context of freeports in respect of the current UK legislation, the reasons behind local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) coming together to co-ordinate a bid for the region and the key steps carried out to date in the approval process.

He highlighted the importance of the three tax sites for the region; Dunsbury Farm (north of Portsmouth), the Navigator Quarter (the north end of the airport and some of the old railway yards in Eastleigh) and Southampton waterside sites (made up of the end of Southampton port, Solent Gateway, strategic land reserve (formerly Dibden Bay), land released in the oil refinery and Fawley waterside and set out the advantages for the region in relation to the generation of employment and business rate retention.

Mr Johnson responded to detailed questions from members on the following points:

- (i) Planning and Traffic Impacts – In response to points in Councillor Wallace's deputation, Mr Johnson reported that significant funding had been placed into green development and that both these matters had

been closely assessed as part of the business case model and specific numbers could be provided if required.

- (ii) Tax sites – Proposed plans for the Eastleigh railway line and Chicken Hall Lane access
- (iii) The challenges of changing the rail freight timetable with Network Rail
- (iv) The future of the M3 and Solent Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)
- (v) Custom site and Tax site benefits and the inclusion of enterprise zones

In conclusion, the Chairperson thanked Mr Johnson for his informative update and attendance at the meeting and welcomed further updates to come forward in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the verbal update be received and noted.

8. **CARBON ROADMAP AND ACTIONS (HEP030 AND PRESENTATION)**

Chris Holloway (on behalf of WinACC) and Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee.

In summary, Chris Holloway made reference to the following points:

- Congratulated the council on setting 2030 as a target and for commissioning the WSP report to provide an overview and stated WinACC were in full support of the report recommendations
- WinACC expressed concern that aspects within the report appeared to fail to meet the 2030 target.
- Welcomed the top priority given to using solar power and generating more renewable energy, although considered 50mw peak to be too low.
- Considered that focussing entirely on electric vehicle charging should be investigated further and explored along with other measures.
- Renewable energy heating measures in home was important and suggested that the good ideas set out in the Local Plan in relation to letting standards for new homes should be linked.
- Urged the council to continue to be more ambitious than the WSP report suggested by continuing its progress towards achieving the 2030 target

In summary, Councillor Wallace made reference to the documentary 'The Letter: A Message For Our Earth' which set out an unprecedented call to action for climate change and highlighted the severe and significant impact that it was already having on the world which he encouraged the committee to watch.

Councillor Learney introduced the report which outlined the scale of the challenges facing the district and the need to go greener faster to enable the district to play its part in preventing the catastrophic effects of global warming currently predicted. The report set out the actions needed to make the biggest

difference by recommending priorities and the contribution from many others that was essential. The report was an overview to be used as an evidence base to update the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP), among other documents, to accelerate the council's progress towards achieving net zero.

The Sustainability Officer gave a detailed presentation which provided an update on the Carbon Neutrality Roadmap and set out the context, the objectives of the roadmap, the project outputs, the key findings of the consultants and the next steps to be taken, including extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders.

The committee proceeded to ask questions on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Corporate Head of Economy and Community and the Sustainability Officer:

- (i) Easy wins in the short term for additional emissions that need to be removed i.e. decarbonisation of private cars, increases in the use of electric vehicles (EV) and number of EV charging points – It was noted that there was a plan to increase EV charging points in focussed areas where higher EV usage was indicated.
- (ii) Working with the commercial businesses and industries
- (iii) Modelling figures – revisions to include the rising costs of energy prices
- (iv) Housing Association involvement in the process as stakeholders
- (v) Land management and land ownership – the involvement of landholders as stakeholders
- (vi) Increases in the tree planting programme
- (vii) Electric heating and green hydrogen use
- (viii) Carbon Offsetting
- (ix) Waste collection and the implications of the Waste Management Strategy
- (x) Low traffic neighbourhoods
- (xi) Fabric first approach
- (xii) The diversity of energy generation
- (xiii) Retrofit programme

During debate, the committee thanked officers for the work carried out on the development of the roadmap to date and for the informative presentation received.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report and presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted; and
2. That the adoption of the Carbon Neutrality Roadmap as the evidence base from which to develop future council strategy, be supported.

9. **CROWDFUNDING OPTIONS (HEP029)**

Councillor Ferguson introduced the report which examined the impact of the council's crowdfunding platform and highlighted the background of the Crowdfund Winchester grants scheme set up in 2019 which brought together a

number of grants schemes into a single fund. The report outlined the impact of the scheme showing that in many ways the scheme had achieved what had been hoped by raising additional funds and improving innovation. However, the challenges of the scheme were also recognised, including the officer resources required to support the scheme and the additional demands placed on applicants.

The Town Centre and Community Manager stated that it was recognised that some principles of funding, including the innovation and the leveraging of additional income generation, had seen the platform manage to raise an additional £58,000 income over the three year period. However, due to down turn and lack of activity due to the Covid pandemic impacting on take up, this amount did not equate to the level originally anticipated, therefore when the three year contract ceases at the end of December 2022, the council would no longer continue to provide the crowdfunding platform as a fundraising option as part of the grant funding programme and alternative options were set out in the report for consideration.

The committee proceeded to ask questions on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Town Centre and Community Manager and the Funding and Development Officer.

- (i) The measures taken to improve the application process to access funds on the platform, modifications made to improve inactivity and the use of staff resources.
- (ii) Promotion and overview of the different internal grant funding schemes available.
- (iii) Continued dialogue with Parish Council's via drop in sessions etc (with the involvement of Ward Members).

RESOLVED:

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

10. **AIR QUALITY UPDATE (PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee. In summary, he made reference to the following points:

- Air Pollution being a major public health concern contributing towards premature deaths each year and its management remained paramount both nationally and locally.
- He queried how much further the council should be targeting over the next five years and the accuracy of the modelling which was key to setting the correct goals.

Councillor Porter introduced the item and referred to the continued good news that air quality was improving following the dramatic improvement experienced during the Covid lockdowns in 2020. However, the council was not complacent as particulate matter (PM2.5) remained in excess of the world health

organisation stringent standards and the return of people to the offices had increased statistics slightly. It was noted that efforts would be focussed along the Romsey Road and working on an air quality strategy which endeavours to reset and increase the council's targets.

The Service Lead: Public Protection gave a presentation which set out the current position in the review of the air quality action plan which had been in place since 2017 and expired after a five year period with new proposals expected to be imposed by central Government imminently. He highlighted the key points in the latest position, in line with statutory standards, and set out the direction of work to be carried out going forward.

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

- (i) The granular measurement of the fluctuations in the plotting points on a daily basis.
- (ii) The timescale for alterations to the traffic flow to improve air quality along Romsey Road – reliance on the Movement Strategy and focussing on journeys during peak times of the day.
- (iii) Air alert, air quality and congestion – It was noted that the council does not currently breach the daily mean standard so would not warrant the use of the air alert app accessible in other areas.
- (iv) Use of electric vehicles for waste and discussions with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) to discuss progress with an electric fleet.
- (v) Use of signage to encourage road users to utilise engine start/stop vehicle features when they are stationary in traffic congestions.
- (vi) Network Rail – there was a move away from diesel engines for passenger trains but these largely remained in place for the transport of freight by rail.
- (vii) The effect of using masks to protect people from particulates

RESOLVED:

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

11. **REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee. In summary, he made reference to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding being a key contributor to improving infrastructure across the district and how CIL was allocated. He stated that since 2014, over £8m of CIL funding had been collected in Winchester. However, only 26% of CIL funding collected in the southern wards had been allocated to that area and he asked for any updates to the scheme to recognise the disparity in the allocation of CIL funding for projects.

Councillor Porter introduced the item which provided an update on the history and use of the CIL from 2014 to date. It was noted that the CIL Strategy would

be revised for Winchester in 2023. The committee's approval was sought to revise the strategy and further progress the processes in place as a working party with the revised CIL Strategy to come back to the committee at its meeting in March 2023.

The CIL Implementation Officer gave a presentation that was circulated with the agenda, setting out the background to CIL which had been in operation for nine years and collected over £21m. The presentation outlined the range of infrastructure that CIL could be used to fund, the charging rates in comparison with other local authorities and the changes to CIL and its gradual replacement with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. It was noted that there were three specific matters for consideration by a working group, these included:

- A review the CIL charging rates;
- A review of the infrastructure list; and
- A review of the criteria used for awarding CIL funding.

The committee proceeded to ask questions on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and the CIL Implementation Officer:

- (i) The impact of CIL on the cost of housing.
- (ii) The receipt of CIL contributions and funding in the South Downs National Park (SDNP).

RESOLVED:

1. That officers discuss with members of the committee a timetable for a working party to review CIL in due course; and
2. That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted

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

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the inclusion of an item regarding Water Quality with attendance by representatives from Natural England and Southern Water at the next meeting, to the work programme for 2022/23 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.20 pm

Chairperson