

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL

Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on Tuesday, 31st August, 2021 at 4.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors C Sampson (Chair), C Bower, A Bubb, A Bullen, S Collop, M de Whalley, I Devereux, J Kirk, S Patel (substitute for J Lowe) and M Wilkinson

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:

Councillor R Blunt – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development
Councillor P Kunes – Portfolio Holder for Environment

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillor Morley

BY INVITATION FOR EC21: Councillor E Nockolds and Fiona Matchett from West Norfolk Community Transport

OFFICERS:

David Ousby – Assistant Director
Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager
Ged Greaves – Senior Policy and Performance Officer

EC15: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Squire, Kemp and Lowe.

EC16: MINUTES

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Although not present at the meeting, Councillor Kemp had asked that the minute EC9 be amended to reflect her nomination to the Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee. The Chair confirmed that this was an accidental omission from the minutes and would be added.

RESOLVED: Subject to the addition of the above the Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

EC17: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

EC18: URGENT BUSINESS

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The Chair explained that he had an item of Urgent Business which related to Climate Change and the reason why it was urgent was because that it was pertinent to the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan which was being considered at the meeting.

The Panel agreed that the item could be considered as urgent business.

The Chair invited Councillor Kunes, Portfolio Holder for the Environment to address the Panel. Councillor Kunes explained that the Council had just released a press release indicating that the Council would be declaring a climate change emergency. This would be considered by Full Council at their meeting on 9th September 2021 as it had been submitted as a Notice of Motion. Councillor Kunes read out the Notice of Motion as submitted to Council as follows:

‘This Council has recognised the scientific and moral need to act decisively on ‘climate change’ for sometime and has introduced a portfolio, policy and measures to significantly reduce its impact on its carbon emissions and the environment, with an intent to support these going forward with a specific budget. It is now the right time with this Council focussed activity well underway for us to now declare a ‘climate emergency’ to magnify the global message of the need for action to local residents, businesses and partners in West Norfolk and signal our strong commitment to help them make positive changes.’

EC19: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34

Councillors Morley and Nockolds.

EC20: CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE

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The Chair informed the panel that their recommendations on the Balloon and Lanterns Policy would be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 15th September 2021.

EC21: WEST NORFOLK COMMUNITY TRANSPORT UPDATE

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The Chair welcomed Fiona Matchett from West Norfolk Community Transport to the meeting who provided the Panel with information on the work of the organisation as attached.

The Chair thanked Fiona Matchett for her presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Nockolds as the Borough Council's representative on West Norfolk Community Transport commended the organisation and the services they provided.

Members of the Panel that had used the service, or knew someone who had used the service made comments that the service was very helpful and reliable and thanked West Norfolk Community Transport for the work they carried out in West Norfolk.

In response to Councillor Bullen regarding media targeting, Fiona Matchett explained that they were looking at target area and promoting the service.

Councillor Blunt asked if Members could assist with promoting the service and Fiona Matchett explained that she was looking to promote the service through Parishes and Parish Magazines, and Councillors who were able to promote the service in their area were encouraged to contact Fiona Matchett for promotional material.

The Chair encouraged Members to promote the service within their communities.

Councillor Nockolds made reference to shop mobility, which was also a very important service and was promoted on the visit West Norfolk website.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

EC22: **CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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The Environmental Health Manager and Senior Policy and Performance Officer presented the Cabinet report which set out the Council's approach to the reduction of the district carbon emissions to net zero as detailed in the Strategy and Action Plan. The Panel was advised that the Borough Council would bring forward its carbon footprint net zero target from 2050 to 2035.

The Environmental Health Manager made reference to the background papers which had also been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. He also explained that work was ongoing to ascertain if it

would be possible to bring forward the carbon footprint net zero target by 2030.

The Senior Policy and Performance Officer informed the Panel that once the work on the action plan and strategy was underway work could be carried out to look at metrics and key performance indicators that could be introduced to monitor performance. The Panel could also request periodic updates.

The Chair thanked the Environmental Health Manager for his presentation and invited questions and comments from Members, as summarised below.

Councillor de Whalley made reference to the Cabinet recommendations and proposed that 'subject to a full public consultation' should be added. This was seconded by Councillor Bullen. Councillor de Whalley commented that he welcomed the Notice of Motion on the climate change emergency.

The Panel considered Councillor de Whalley's proposed amendment to the recommendation.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Kunes commented that any public consultation would delay the process and require considerable resources.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Bower commented that there were lots of schemes ongoing in the Borough to address climate change and the declaration of a climate change emergency now meant that the pace of actions would be upped.

The Chair, Councillor Sampson felt that Councillors considered the views of residents and fed them back to officers as appropriate, so a public consultation was unnecessary.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Kunes clarified that the action plan and strategy was for the Council, not for the wider Borough, so it may be that a public consultation would happen later on. He also commented that the Council were looking at ways to engaging the public, including public exhibitions.

Councillor Devereux made reference to the consultation responses which had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting and felt that these covered a lot of queries.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that public consultation at this stage would delay the process and would require additional resources.

Councillor Bullen commented that communication was key throughout the whole process.

On being put to the vote, Councillor de Whalley's amendment to the recommendation was lost.

Councillor Morley addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and made reference to finances, budgets and funding applications and the 2030 target. Councillor Bubb, the Chair of the Climate Change Informal Working Group informed Councillor Morley that they were holding their next meeting on 28th September and Councillor Morley could attend the meeting and discuss his issues there if required.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

1. That the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan be adopted.
2. That the Borough Council's carbon footprint net zero date be brought forward to 2035.

EC23: **URBAN WILDLIFE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

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The Chair of the Urban Wildlife Informal Working Group, Councillor Bullen, provided the Panel with an update on their work so far. A copy of the information provided to the Panel is attached.

Councillor Bullen explained that the Informal Working Group had also held a meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Environment.

RESOLVED: The update was noted and the Informal Working Group's final report would be presented to the Environment and Community Panel on 5th October 2021.

EC24: **PORTFOLIO HOLDER Q&A SESSION**

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It was confirmed that no questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting for Portfolio Holders to respond to.

Members of the Panel were reminded that this was a standing item on the Agenda should they have any questions they would like to submit in the future.

EC25: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

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RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

EC26: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 5th October 2021 at 4.30pm in the Assembly Room at the Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 5.35 pm