

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY SUB-COMMITTEE
OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY
ON MONDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7.30 P.M.**

Sub-Committee members present: Councillor A Dunford (Chairman)
Councillors A Crawford, E L Johnson and V Wright (part)
and G Wilkin

Others present: J Harvey – Sustainable Wantage

Clerk: W P Falkenau

A. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor I R Cameron, J T Hannaby, C Walters and C H Wills-Wright.

B. To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and non-registrable interests

These were to be given as the meeting proceeded

C. Statements and Questions from the Public, and discussion involving members of public

None.

D. To approve the minutes of the Sub-committee meeting held on 24 October 2022

The minutes were approved and signed.

E. Matters arising from the Sub-committee meeting held on 24 October 2022

a) Feedback from District Council Climate Emergency Committee

The Clerk had invited District Councillor Povolotsky to the meeting.

Councillor V Wright arrived.

The District Council was focusing its decarbonisation efforts on the Leisure Centres which were the highest users of energy. The contract for waste services was due to end in 2024. The new contract should be more environmentally friendly, but decisions would be affected by initiatives being pursued by the government and other factors.

b) Update re initiatives for Town Council to reduce its own carbon footprint

Councillor Johnson had updated the Council's carbon footprint calculation. He asked for this to be put on the Council's website with a view to seeking views on its suitability. **Action: Clerk**

The Town Council had subscribed to a carbon offset scheme and paid £36 for the year 2020/21.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Johnson

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED to make payments to the carbon offset scheme for the subsequent years.

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It was agreed to ask contractors employed by the Town Council to estimate their carbon footprint for the work undertaken. The purpose of this was to build up a knowledge of the carbon footprint involved. It was hoped in the due course to use carbon footprint as one of the criteria for placing contracts.

c) Update from Mr Wilkin of HARBUG

The Active Travel Group had developed a proposal for signposting for cycling and walking routes within the local area. The Clerk had referred this to his deputy for progressing. She would liaise with the responsible County Council officer and refer to the Leisure and Amenities Committee for approval. It was noted that CIL funding could be attributed to the expenditure. St Modwen's were to be asked to fund signage relating to Kingsgrove.

Mr Tranter had taken over as chairman of the Active Travel Group. It was agreed that he should be invited to attend future meetings of this sub-committee. **Action: Clerk**

Consideration was to be given to installing cycle toolkit stands and maps detailing routes.

d) Update from Sustainable Wantage

Councillor Crawford advised that he was a member of Sustainable Wantage. The Saving Energy leaflet had been distributed. Ms Harvey handed out a sheet detailing in numbers the activities of Sustainable Wantage in 2022. National Lottery funding was being provided to employ an additional person to support its work for the next three years.

e) Events

There was nothing further to report.

f) Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree Canopy project

The Clerk had not received advice of any planting schemes in Wantage. There had been a tree planting event on the Kingsgrove site.

g) District Council grant scheme

The Clerk had not proceeded with the grant application for the tree planting schemes due to the inability to meet the grant conditions.

h) Air pollution in town centre

The District Council Environmental Health Officer had advised that there was a diffusion tube by the Bell PH. The air quality in 2019 was deemed well below unacceptable levels and pollution levels had dropped further during the pandemic.

F. To consider draft letters to David Johnston MP regarding sewage in river water and sustainable building projects.

The Chairman had drafted a letter. She invited members to review and propose changes to wording of the letter. It was agreed that following this the letter should be sent. **Action: Clerk**

The letter concerning sustainable building projects was to be referred to the next meeting. **Action: Dunford**

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G. Review of progress on Action Plan and prioritization

The Action Plan was considered. It was agreed that items that were not strictly climate related and fell within the remit of the Leisure and Amenities Committee be removed from the Action Plan. **Action: Dunford**

The Wild Wantage tree planting project at the Manor Road Memorial Park was stalling. Ms Harvey agreed to arrange for the engagement with the District Council to be resumed. Councillor Crawford was to be copied in on email correspondence. **Action: Harvey**

The Chairman was to amend the Action Plan with the agreed updates and re-issue. **Action: Dunford**

H. Other Business

Shop premises leaving their exterior doors open

The exterior doors on some shop premises were being left open during the trading day, increasing the energy required to warm the premises. The businesses felt that if the doors were closed, customers would think the shop was closed. It was agreed to include in the newsletter an item discouraging this.

Council newsletter

The newsletter was being printed on recycled paper. There was a need to use paper that was also recyclable. The carbon footprint of the printing process and print delivery was also to be taken into account.

Action: Clerk

It was noted that Mr Wilkin was standing down as a member of the sub-committee but would continue to attend meetings as a non-member.

I. Dates of future meetings

8 June, 13 July, 11 September, 23 October 2023, 8 January and 19 February 2024

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.
