

# MINUTES OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

12 NOVEMBER 2020

## PRESENT:

**Members of the Working Group:** Councillors Roberts (Chair), Brader, Mrs Brown, Mrs Crane, McQueen, Picker and Roodhouse

**Officers:** Dan Green (Deputy Executive Director and Head of Environment), Raj Chand (Head of Communities and Homes), Stephanie Gibrat (Head of Growth and Investment), David Collins (Property Manager), Matthew Deaves (Communication, Consultation and Information Manager), William Winter (Asset Management Team Leader) and Veronika Beckova (Democratic Services Officer)

## 9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2020 were approved.

## 10. ECO FUNDING, GREEN HOMES GRANT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF CURRENT HOUSING STOCK

The working group considered briefing notes for Agenda Item 4 – ECO Funding and Green Homes Grant and Agenda Item 6 – Energy Efficiency of Current Housing Stock circulated in advance of the meeting. The Head of Communities and Homes, the Property Manager and the Asset Management Team Leader attended the meeting to answer questions.

### Green Homes Grant

The council did not make a bid in the first round of funding. This was due to various reasons including a very tight timescale. Applications for the second round of funding were due at the beginning of December. A bigger scheme was anticipated to come out in 2021/22 which the council could make a good case for.

A member of the working group noted that having a draft business case ready to be submitted when grants were announced would be beneficial to the process.

The working group was assured that officers were continuously looking out for grants and funds but assessing which pots of funding were suitable for the council to bid for and managing expectations were key.

## 11. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

The working group considered the discussion paper circulated in advance of the meeting. The Communication, Consultation and Information Manager attended the meeting to answer questions.

A member of the working group noted that Warwickshire County Council (WCC) have undertaken a lot of work in relation to the climate change agenda and enquired

whether there was an opportunity for the borough council to join up with the county council on some of the messaging.

The working group agreed that it was key to communicate the work of the Climate Emergency Working Group to the public. Further discussions would take place with the Communication, Consultation and Information Manager outside the meeting to formulate a suitable plan.

Following officers' suggestion, the working group agreed for a public survey on the topic of climate change emergency to form part of the green recovery process from COVID-19.

## **12. WEST MIDLANDS ZERO CARBON HOMES CHARTER**

The working group considered the draft charter circulated in advance of the meeting. The Head of Growth and Investment attended the meeting to present the draft charter and answer questions.

A member enquired whether installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging points in new developments was referred to in the draft charter. It was clarified that EV charging points were not specifically referred to in the document.

The comment was noted and the working group was asked to submit any further comments to the Head of Growth and Investment by Friday 20 November. The draft charter was scheduled to be discussed by the Zero Carbon Homes Officer Working Group at West Midlands Combined Authority at the end of November.

## **13. PROCUREMENT OF EXTERNAL SUPPORT**

At its meeting in September, the working group considered the scheme of work produced to enable consultants to carry out works to move towards Carbon Neutrality and the timeline proposed for the various steps of the tender process.

The Asset Management Team Leader provided a verbal update on the progress of the procurement of the external support.

Two companies made submission by the deadline and both would be interviewed prior to the contract being awarded. With the officers' agreement, a representative from the working group would be appointed to sit on the interview panel.

## **14. PARKS CONNECTOR NETWORK**

The working group considered the written update on the Parks Connector Network provided by the Green Spaces Officer. The Green Spaces Officer did not attend the meeting. Members of the working group had an open invitation to contact the officer directly if they had any questions on the project.

The Head of Growth and Investment informed the working group that Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) was seeking short, medium-

and long-term projects to consider as part of their long list for the next four years of funding. The Head of Growth and Investment felt that the Parks Connector Network project would be a suitable short-term project that CWLEP could support and take forward. The working group agreed for the Head of Growth and Investment to liaise with the Green Spaces Officer and officers from the WCC Transport Team to put the project forward for consideration by CWLEP.

## **15. NEXT MEETING – 10 DECEMBER 2020**

The working group was informed that the WCC Transport Team were keen to attend a future meeting and present on the local transport plan progress, the area strategy for Rugby, the sustainable transport agenda for the borough including the EV charging project and how the town centre spatial strategy would link in with those projects. Members agreed with officers' suggestion to focus the agenda for the January meeting of the working group on transport.

The following headings were noted as potential future agenda items for members' comment:

- the Sustainable Construction and Design Supplementary Planning Document;
- the Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document;
- relevant economic development items; and
- sustainable business grants and initiatives.

With the agreement of the working group, a forward plan of work for future meetings would be drafted by the DED in consultation with the Senior Management Team and key officers.

**CHAIR**