

**CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY PANEL
9 MARCH 2022
6.30 - 8.40 PM**



Present:

Councillors Virgo, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, Mrs Hayes MBE, Mrs Ingham, Leake, Mossom, Parker and Temperton

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Kennedy

35. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

36. Minutes

The minutes of the Climate Change Advisory Panel meeting held on 9 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

It was raised that a visit had taken place at the London Road site with the Minister for Pensions and MPs to talk about the possibility of putting photovoltaic panels on the site. Councillor Mrs Hayes would be arranging a visit for Members in due course, with proposals brought forward once they had been developed.

37. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

38. Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report

Councillor Virgo introduced the Climate Change Advisory Panel and explained that this Advisory Panel meeting would be looking at the Council's Decarbonisation Plans.

The Climate Change Advisory Panel received the quarterly update from Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery on the Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report.

The presentation included the following highlights:

- The Climate Change Strategy was looking to work with partners, schools and young people.
- The action plan was looking to reduce carbon emissions that were under the Councils control, which was less than 2% of emissions, and to influence and lead community action against climate change through lobbying and promotion.
- So far, the Climate Change Advisory Panel had met four times.
- Looking forward, the Panel would be having a biodiversity update on the 25 April, a Plan update report in May, A report on local power generation in September and a quarterly update in November.
- Corporate decision making had been changed to incorporate and ensure that carbon emissions are now part of the report matrix.

- In the 2022/23 service plans, the climate change elements had been identified and flagged to ensure that they could be monitored and tracked.
- The public health team had completed an exercise of funding bids.
- A business survey had been undertaken, 51% of businesses had the intention of being more environmentally friendly, but just 12% had a specific target to chive net zero and only 5% had a deadline to this commitment.
- Councillor Mrs Hayes had led a ministerial visit to the land fill site on London Road, to discuss a range of possible projects.
- £154k of funding had been awarded for heat decarbonisation plans for all the Councils property stock.
- Highways and Transport and received a grant for £160k for active travel initiatives. The funds were being used to expand cycling routes in Crowthorne and Sandhurst and had allowed for promotional work to increase participation in cycling.
- The Council had secured £100k funding to roll out 32 residential electric vehicle charging points across the Borough.
- The PPP had secured £259k of DEFRA funding to help implement measures to reduce the impact of poor-quality air on people's health.
- It was noted that the same amount of staff resource was required for an unsuccessful bid as it was successful. The Council had been unsuccessful on the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Grant, Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund and a Department for Transport bid to improve cycling and walking between Crowthorne and Owlsmoor.
- The action plan covered the full breadth of council services and there were currently 46 live projects/initiatives.
- Parks and Countryside had recently finished a tree planting period incorporating 2795 trees over 20 sites.
- The total area of Habitats of Principal Importance had increased by 50.97 hectares mainly due to mapping ponds across the borough.
- The total area of Local Wildlife Sites had increased by 17.7 hectares with the re-designation of Lily Hill Park.
- A project to finalise the installation of a ground source heat pump at Westmoreland Park was ongoing, and the service was looking at increasing rainwater harvesting at a number of sites following successful trials.
- Funding had been secured to work on a bus service improvement plan.
- Partnership work was ongoing with the Eco Rewards Scheme and had continued to incentivise local schools and residents to choose sustainable travel options.
- Highways and transport would be undertaking a widespread consultation on walking and cycling habits within the borough.
- Performance in the council's food waste service had remained strong throughout the first 3 quarters, by the end of December the service had diverted over 5000 tonnes of food waste, which equated to 2.75kg per household per week.
- The average overall recycling rate had remained high at around 58%.
- Food Waste Action Week was between the 7 – 13 March 2022.
- The PPP had run an anti-idling car pumper sticker design with primary schools. A project to start education around engine idling and idling enforcement would be a focus for the service over the coming year.
- A communication plan was currently being developed for the strategy and outcomes.
- There had been 11 press stories issued between November 2021 and March 2022.

- There would be changes to verge maintenance in order to reduce climate change impact.
- There would be long grass left under trees throughout the growing season.
- This was not a financial decision or linked to savings.
- Communications regarding the changes would be released in the coming month on social media, the website and through press releases.

As a result of the groups comments and questions, the following points were made:

- Part of the grant process was to look at the worst performing properties.
- There was a database of all the properties in the area with their ECP ratings, which was 47,000 houses across the borough.
- Bids have to be undertaken as an authority area, so couldn't be done in conjunction with other authorities. But can join up with other authorities once the bid had been successful to enable a bigger buying power.
- There were links to all schemes on the council's website.
- The car club process had stalled with issues in getting a provider.
- It was requested that better ways be looked at for getting better cycling links in the smaller villages in the borough.
- The maintenance on highway would continue.
- It was reminded that residence shouldn't be cutting council wildflower areas.
- Residents should be cautious of any cold calls regarding schemes in the area, and research should be undertaken.
- It was requested that the EV charging points be put across the Borough as soon as possible.
- There were 2 air quality monitoring areas across the borough which were monitored by DEFRA.
- 32 sites in car parks had been identified across the Borough for charging points, the infrastructure for this needed to be put in place but the project was being implemented as quickly as possible.
- Reading had recently invested in an electric refuse vehicle, and a watching eye would be kept on this.
- Regarding the grants for insulation in houses, local authorities were not able to submit a joint bid with another authority.
- The criteria for the grants were set by Government and it wasn't thought that there was a disadvantage to not being able to submit a joint authority bid.
- The infrastructure in the north of the Borough needed more attention.
- The highways team had stated that the road network in the north of the borough made it harder to install cycleways. This would be clarified.
- It would be clarified with Highways to whether there would be member involvement with the consultation regarding electric charging points in car parks.
- Other Local Authorities has used pavements for cycle ways.
- A deep dive into pathways and cycleways would be brought to the Advisory Panel at a future meeting.
- CO2 measures had been published for the Borough and were making good progress against the targets.

The Climate Change Advisory Panel received a presentation on retrofitting the Bracknell Forest Council Estate from Hash Patel, Services and Energy Manager. The presentation included the following highlights:

- Property Services have secured £929k grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation fund, Salix as part of their phase 1 & 2 decarbonisation scheme.
- The initial phase 1 funding received £775k, from the public sector decarbonisation fund, for green retrofits.
- £350k was allocated to Sandhurst School for boiler conversion and £425k for thermal insulation of maintained schools.
- Additional funds were secured, from phase 2 to the sum of £154k, which would enable all of the councils' properties to have a heat decarbonisation plan produced.
- Bracknell Leisure Centre had flat roof replacement carried out over the sports hall during Spring 2021, 224 solar panels had been installed with capacity of 100 kWp which was an estimated annual saving of £14,250 per annum and an estimated annual CO2 reduction of 22 tonnes.
- Time Square had received an upgrade to the existing BMS system with a modern software this had reduced consumption by at least 5% and produced annual savings of approximately £6,600 and 14 tonnes of CO2.
- Downshire Golf Complex had upgraded and replaced the 10 car park light columns with LEDs, there had been an approx. annual savings of £5k and 7.8 tonnes of CO2. The future plan was to replace the remaining of the external lighting.
- At Sandhurst School there had been installation of 4 x 350 kW new gas boilers in 2020/2021 this produced annual savings of approximately £50k and 105 tonnes of CO2.
- The Science block, Plant room and Main block roofs had also been replaced at Sandhurst School, with insulation increased to meet current Building Regulations.
- The demolition of the entire Depot site would create a new Depot facility and would free up a third of the site for future development. The new facility would include a green roof to provide thermal insulation, an air source heat pump, installation of PVs on the roof and EV charging points.
- Future Schools 22/23 Energy Improvements included new flat roofs at Ascot Heath Primary School and Crowthorne C of E VC Primary. A Oil to Gas Boiler conversion at New Scotland Primary School and pitched roof replacement at Wooden Hill and Meadow Vale.

As a result of the groups comments and questions, the following points were made:

- Heat pumps had not been included at Sandhurst School due to timing and the nature of the buildings, as the fabric of the building wasn't appropriate for the technology.
- There was an export meter at the Leisure Centre but a program was also being looked at with legal in regards to a Power Purchase agreement.
- Members were pleased that work to the schools was a step in the right direction.
- The challenge was getting the funding for the schemes.
- It was requested that Community Centres be looked at.

The Climate Change Advisory Panel received a presentation on an introduction to Passivhaus & EnerPHit from Ben Humphries, a Director at Architype. The presentation included the following highlights:

- Passivhaus was a design methodology used to reduce energy and increase comfort in buildings was at the heart of Architype's design process.

- This had been undertaken for 15 years and had become a core part of Architype's business.
- There was a large gap between predicted energy use and actual energy use.
- In the past simple but energy consuming buildings had been produced, and presently complex but energy offsetting buildings had been deemed the way forward, however these were often unsustainable. Passivhaus looked to create simple but energy saving buildings with high comfort standards.
- Passivhaus standard was typically for new build, which brought down heating demands to a low level.
- EnerPHit standard was for Passivhaus retrofit standard.
- There was also a low energy building standard with was for buildings that were more complex and didn't meet the PH standard.
- Natural light was a high priority for Passivhaus.
- All schools were monitored against other schools in the areas for energy consumption benchmarks.
- Passivhaus wasn't just for new builds, but for retro fits as well, work was currently being undertaken with the University of Cambridge to convert a 1930 building.
- Work was being done with the Plymouth Marjon University campus for a net zero campus.
- There were now several thousand Passivhaus houses.
- Insulation and airtightness were key.

39. **Date of Next Meeting**

25 April 2022

CHAIRMAN