

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee



held on Monday, 10 October 2022 at 6.00 pm
This was an online meeting.

Open to the public, including the press

In attendance:

Councillors: Hayleigh Gascoigne (Chair), Eric Batts, Eric De La Harpe, David Grant, Alison Jenner and Bob Johnston.

Officers: Chloe Bunting (Senior Climate Action Officer), Candida Mckelvey (Democratic Services Officer), Dominic Lamb (Climate and Biodiversity Team Leader), Harry Barrington-Mountford (Head of Policy and Programmes), Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive – Place) and Heather Saunders (Corporate Energy Officer).

Guests: Cabinet member for Climate Emergency and Environment, Councillor Sally Povolotsky

15. Chair's announcements

Chair mentioned the upcoming Full Council meeting, noting the presence of many items related to climate and environment, for those interested.

16. Apologies for absence

None.

17. Declaration of interests

Declarations were as follows:

Councillor Johnson was a member of the Oxfordshire County Council Pension Fund.

Councillor Gascoigne declared that her partner wrote part of the PAZCO report, however there was no decision making about this within this meeting.

18. Urgent business

None.

19. Minutes of the last meeting

On page six of the agenda pack, a member noted that in the bottom bullet point of the woodland creator accelerator fund section, the word “varieties” should be replaced with “species”. Democratic Services Officer would change this word, with agreement given by committee.

Resolved:

The minutes were agreed as a correct record, with the above amendment made.

20. Public participation

None.

21. Update from task and finish groups

None.

22. Update from the Cabinet Member for Environment

Cabinet member updated the committee. Main points were

- Committee were welcomed to bring items of the CAP to committee for further detail. Items were agreed with service areas, and quarterly RAG ratings would be reported on.
- Decarbonisation of transport fleet was being looked into by climate officers, starting with reviewing the options from a free report the council received from the Energy Saving Trust.
- Climate e-learning module being set up for council staff.
- EAG meeting – main item discussed was the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan. City Science updated the group on PAZCO delivery. There was intensive consultation, and the draft action plan was ready.
- Cabinet Member was now part of the UK 100 Climate Leadership Academy. She was selected for the six-month programme, there will be further discussion and aims for getting our council further up the Climate Emergency UK and UK 100 score card for Climate Action Plans.

Committee asked questions of the Cabinet Member:

- Eastleigh used Biofuel for their fleet – can we use this as a temporary measure ahead of using electric? It was responded that the council’s fleet was small, and needed to be sustainable for the future, not a temporary solution. Investment with longevity was the aim.
- Solar farms were discussed by members, and Cabinet member responded that these were being discussed at Future Oxfordshire Partnership, and a holistic, county-wide view was needed. A strategic map of suitable sites was being asked for by Cabinet Member.

23. Environment Act update

Nothing to report in this meeting.

24. Update from the Climate Action Team

The Team Leader updated the committee on the work of the Climate Action Team.

- Priorities were being worked out for short and longer term, 3-5 years.

- Climate Action Fund update was provided on some slides which would be shared post-meeting. 13 projects were supported in the first round.
- The next funding round was due to open on 16 October, closing on 25 November 2022. Communications were to follow.
- Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme work was ongoing
- Retrofitting options were being investigated
- New energy saving at home information page on the [website](#)

25. Climate Action Plan (CAP) Quarter 1 2022-23

Cabinet Member introduced the report.

Developed with service areas, and approved by Cabinet recently, it was now before CEAC for consideration.

Cabinet member can take up any actions and comments raised by the advisory committee with Cabinet colleagues.

Committee commented on the following:

Theme 1:

- Cabinet member would ask the relevant Cabinet member regarding the status of the toolkit. (WOW3). Head of Policy and Programmes explained that this would be developed across quarter 2 and 3, and he welcomed members to email any comments and ideas for the toolkit.
- WOW6: Staff training – it was confirmed this was internal training. Cabinet member wanted to raise carbon literacy as training.
- WOW21: any progress on anti-idling? Cabinet member explained that there was no national policy to allow enforcement, particularly for contractors. Education was key to change attitudes to idling.
- Discussion had on electric cars, and coordination with developers to include EV chargers. Lack of robustness in policy on their installation, and whether the electricity supply was able to cope. Cabinet member explained that there were regulations in place to ensure safe installation, but we do not control building regulations. There were changes to building regulations to specify EV chargers. However, should we focus on encouraging new car ownership and parking or energy parks where people can utilise different fuel types whilst we transition.
- WOW17: Pool vehicles: can we encourage car clubs? Potentially a future topic for CEAC. Head of Policy and Programmes reminded that WOW17 itself was limited to corporate mileage.

Theme 2:

- SD2: Can we rethink waste collection ahead of contract change? Minimising mileage. Cabinet member responded that there was work occurring that looked at routing, however the actual waste created was another big issue that impacted the environment. Consideration will be given to bin collection days and frequency as part of these improvements. Members did discuss why fortnightly collections were important, and weekly for food waste, due to pest lifecycle issues. Food waste handling and waste collection was stated in DEFRA policy already.
- Discussion around plastic waste, and Cabinet Member explained that a lot of this was out of the district's control. Repurposing plastic in the UK was important, but central government movement on this was needed. We needed to urge residents to consume less to begin with. New waste contract will be informed from what central government states we will need to do.
- SD9: Planning development webpages – energy efficiency considerations for small planning applications as well as large ones? It was confirmed that all applications were covered.

Theme 3:

- Some items had no progress, particularly due to the office move, for example, a staff green travel plan would not be created whilst staff were moving location. Climate and Biodiversity Team Leader explained that progress will be showing up in future quarters.
- Tree planting – were there any projects in the pipeline? Climate and Biodiversity Team Leader explained there were no applications yet for this season (Nov-March). Cabinet member hoped to create a database of local groups to improve communications and uptake of such schemes.

Theme 6:

- C11: climate focus network meetings – Cabinet member stated there were no delays foreseen, but members should encourage communication with their local groups to empower them despite the lack of funding.

Theme 7:

- OP6: landlord funding for retrofit: no requests, can we reach out more? Cabinet member explained that government funding for retrofitting had decreased, and the cost-of-living crisis impacted this.
- OP7: queried, detail to be expected in the quarter 2 report.

26. Decarbonisation of leisure centres - update paper

Corporate Energy Officer introduced the paper.

The paper detailed the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding and how the council was approaching new rounds of funding bids for our assets, including history of previous rounds and lesson learned. A lot of work was involved to understand the new round's rules, which tended to differ each time.

Next round was planned for 12 October 2022. The council was on track to submit new bids for Wantage and White Horse Leisure Centres, due to collaboration amongst council teams to gather all the data needed and including recruitment of an officer whose expertise was in compiling external bids.

Committee discussed the paper:

- Confirmed that total funding for the country was unknown yet due to government changes, but this could be looked up.
- Rules had tightened in that whole plants (e.g., boiler systems) cannot be replaced unless proved to be end-of-life. There were a lot of specific rules that meant that officers were carefully considering the rules for each individual leisure centre (asset) and the impact of inflation on costs of works etc.
- Corporate Energy Officer considered that the changing energy costs meant that projects such as these would help financially.
- Discussion on the impact on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Councillors would need to prioritise the expenditure for CIL and the impact on demand for CIL should decarbonisation scheme bids be successful.

27. Future items

- Thames Valley Wildflower Meadow Restoration Project presentation. It was suggested by officers to create a member's only presentation with representatives of the project to learn more about it.
- EV charging – Chair explained that further information would come forward from Full Council, which would possibly answer some of the current questions from committee and inform this item to bring forward to CEAC at a later date.
- Climate Action Plan – to include vision on promoting car clubs across the district as a whole, not just corporately.

- Waste contract – it was too early to discuss, but a member asked to have discussion on what should be in the new contract in due course.

The meeting closed at 19:57

Chair:

Date: