

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

held on Monday, 4 October 2021 at 6.00 pm
Virtual meeting



The meeting was broadcasted live. Watch the recording here:
<https://www.youtube.com/c/southandvalecommitteemeetings>

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

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

Officers: Michelle Wells, Heather Saunders, Harry Barrington-Mountford and Suzanne Malcolm, Candida Mckelvey, Heather Saunders and Michelle Wells

Also present: Cabinet member, Councillor Catherine Webber.

60. Chair's announcements

Chair opened the meeting. He explained that we were having quarterly meetings in line with the quarterly performance reporting. There was a Q1 report at today's meeting.

Chair informed committee that Big Green Week had local events taking place across the district.

Draft documents related to the climate action plan will be circulated to the committee in due course.

61. Apologies for absence

Councillor Eric Batts sent his apologies.

62. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in respect of the agenda items for this meeting.

63. Urgent business

No urgent business.

64. Public participation

None.

65. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of 19 April 2021 were agreed as a correct record and the chair will sign them as such.

66. Task and finish groups updates

Councillor Jenner briefed the committee on the Joint design guide task and finish group. When completed and signed off, this report will be a supplementary planning document. It will be a material consideration in planning.

It will help applicants to meet good design criteria and it will be easy to follow.

There were several chapters. Climate and sustainability were focussed on within the task and finish group. Within the document, the climate action issue was explained, as was sustainability, and definitions of active and passive sustainable development. The guide contained information on reducing carbon emissions, standards and certifications, and reducing embodied carbon. Design principles were provided at the bottom of each section. There were links to the GIS data, which can be downloaded for your ward.

Councillor Johnston briefed the committee that the Biodiversity working group met briefly to set terms of reference. The next meeting was yet to be confirmed.

Committee discussed how the working group could be put to effective use. Chair of CEAC would speak to Chair of SODC CEEAC about the scope.

67. Tree planting on council land policy

Cabinet member for environment, Councillor Webber, introduced this report.

Active communities were keen to get on with planting. This was an important moment to allow this work to go ahead. There was a policy and application form that would need to be approved. This work would help in our tree planting ambitions and carbon reduction goals as a council. We hoped to activate the policy soon to enable planting during the upcoming season. Oxfordshire Tree Scape project was developing an interactive tree map to aid our work.

Suggestions from the committee included providing advice on tree and soil type. Some trees, such as ash, don't survive well on local soils. Other species had poor wildlife / insect biodiversity. The Oxfordshire tree scape map may be very helpful for this. Once the planting guidance in place was reviewed, proposals made by officers would go through the approval process with the policy. Discussion was had regarding tree end-of-life process. What species were best as building materials and furniture?

There will be comms work relating to this policy. Tree protection orders will remain a separate procedure to this document.

It was confirmed that the policy version in the meeting pack was the up-to-date version, but a 6-month review was added (not part of the policy document).

The policy was very well received by the committee.

68. Retrofit Scrutiny Report - Feedback from Joint scrutiny committee and discussion

Councillor Gascoigne introduced this report.

The group consulted experts in the field to find out about the barriers to retrofitting, including OxLEP and local colleges. There was specific training required for such works. The green grants funding was closed by central government, but the task and finish group looked into how we could be prepared for future funding opportunities that will help residents to retrofit their homes and the council to achieve carbon targets.

Some discussion was had around home insulation being important for the effectiveness of different forms of heating.

Regarding the costings for such works, discussion was had on encouraging those that can afford these works to drive demand. Look at methods to help people fund the works, such as loans.

This was a very well received report.

Resolved

To support the recommendations in the report of the Joint Scrutiny task and finish group on retrofitting.

Chair of CEAC will check with Chair of Joint Scrutiny committee, in order to ascertain the most effective way CEAC can support this work, and to check whether CEAC should make recommendations to Cabinet.

69. Future Oxfordshire Partnership - Environment Advisory Group

A verbal update from Councillor Webber, who was a representative of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, previously known as the Growth Board. Councillor Webber was reporting to committee on the Environment Advisory Group (EAG) strand of the Partnership.

There had been three recent meetings and presentations on the county carbon baseline data, the county transport plan, and a Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PAZCO) presentation.

The EAG officers group supports the work of the Partnership, to establish a forward plan, and a PAZCO delivery and a retrofitting plan. Cabinet member suggested that this could be a standing agenda item.

70. Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report - Section 4

Committee reviewed section three of the substantial report, focussing on the five scenarios within section four.

Some debate was had about the downsides of green hydrogen.

Resolved:

That committee favoured scenario four, "Oxfordshire leading the way".

71. Quarter 1 performance management report - theme 2

The committee focussed on theme two of the report – Tackling the climate emergency.

The report had been finalised after Cabinet approval. The focus of this report was on the achievements of quarter one. Any discussions about future improvements and outcomes should be directed to the relevant Cabinet member listed in the report.

The committee discussed future agenda items they would like to see. There was some discussion around bulky waste, and Chair would like to focus on this in future meetings next year.

A detailed update on EV park and charge project and leisure centre energy use was requested.

An annual report from the council on emissions was expected, and Chair hoped the committee could see this when its ready.

No recommendations were provided to Cabinet for this item.

Meeting closed at 19:37

The meeting closed at 7.37 pm