

CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP – 8 February 2021 at 11am

PRESENT:

Cllr J Clark (Chair)	Marshal Scott
Cllr A Knox	John Heap
Cllr S Bibby	Colin Hirst
Cllr R Thompson	Mair Hill
Cllr D Berryman	Michelle Haworth
Cllr S Fletcher	
Cllr S Atkinson	

APOLOGIES: none received.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

These had been drafted for consideration. The members approved them as follows:-

1. The working group has been constituted by Policy and Finance Committee at its' meeting held on the 19 November 2019 to consider how the Council is meeting the challenge of Climate Change.
2. The purpose of the group is to consider in further detail the challenge of climate change both in how the Council provides its own services and how it provides wider support to the community in their efforts to tackle climate change and to present the findings to Policy and Finance Committee with suggested actions.
3. Nominated Members of the group are:
Councillor Clark (Chair)
Councillors, Atkinson, Bibby, Berryman, Fletcher, A Knox and Thompson.
4. The group will meet as necessary.
5. 4 nominated Councillors of the working group need to be present to be quorate.
6. The working group does not have any delegated decision-making powers.
7. The working group will consult with the relevant Chairs of other service committees as appropriate.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2020 were approved as a correct record.

ACTIONS FROM MINUTES

The actions from the meeting were considered. This meeting had taken place just before the Coronavirus lockdown. Since then there had been a break in committees.

The report scheduled to go to Policy & Finance on a lot of the actions was drafted. The Chair asked for a review and confirmation of those issues.

The request to P & F to support a grant application to One Carbon World in order for our carbon footprint to be calculated was discussed. This would give a benchmark of where RVBC are up to. The grants had now reduced to 50% of the cost instead of 80% = £1500 (£3000). Marshal agreed this could go ahead without the permission of Policy & Finance committee.

ACTION: It was confirmed that One Carbon World be procured to calculate the carbon footprint of RVBC.

It was felt useful for details of the performance certificates of council properties to be gathered together so that an assessment could be made on what improvements might be made. John Heap reported that work was constantly being carried out in this area eg improved insulation, LED lighting, change of suppliers of energy.

ACTION: It was agreed that Michelle Haworth would pull together the status of each building and prepare a report for the next meeting.

The request for P & F to consider a grant of £15,000 to River Ribble Trust towards their tree planting campaign was considered again. Members were agreeable to supporting this but wanted more details about the contract to be entered into and specifically the measures of carbon mitigation. Mair Hill would draw up the contract to include the elements suggested once more information had been sought.

ACTION: Michelle Haworth to find out from RRT exactly what the scheme is and prepare a report to P & F asking for £15,000 contribution to Ribble Rivers Trust tree planting project

UPDATE ON LOCAL PLAN FROM A CLIMATE CHANGE PERSPECTIVE

Colin Hirst gave an update on the Local Plan. The publication of the White Paper had stalled the Plan a little, and updating the evidence has also been put on hold as the impact of Covid-19 was not yet known.

Existing legislation meant that climate change must be reflected in the Plan and the Council needs to be able to justify and demonstrate any stance taken. Policy framework around sustainable development and eco systems already exists in the current Plan. A meeting of the working group would be arranged soon.

Members asked how tree planting in new developments was measured and if energy efficiency standards were monitored in housing grant procedures.

The big changes in National legislation were also highlighted with regard to electric vehicles, gas boilers, wood burning stoves, fibre broadband – all of which would have a profound impact on a rural area such as Ribble Valley.

ELECTRIC COUNCIL VEHICLES – INCLUDING TAXIS

John Heap reported that electric vehicles had been on the agenda for the last 20 years. Battery technology and the geography of Ribble Valley were not helpful in

moving this forward. In those areas where electric vehicles are used the terrain is mainly urban and flat. However, the use of electric vehicles in lighter operations is improving all the time and evaluation of the ones that most lend themselves to it were being considered. Logistical issues had to be examined with regard to where and how vehicles could be charged. To move to cleaner technologies would mean adding to the capital programme considerably. A move to hydrogen power would be better and a hydrogen charging station could be hosted at the depot. A request to trial an electric refuse vehicle had been made. It was suggested that looking at work patterns might be useful in ascertaining the best vehicles for electric use.

It was noted by the members that there needs to be an acceptable balance between environmental performance, running costs, and capital investment.

RVBC had installed 7 double charging points on 2 car parks in Clitheroe at a cost of £40k. Putting them on residential car parks (x 3 owned by RV) could be investigated.

With regard to taxis, an amount of grant had been made available from the Government to develop on-street charging facilities but this came under the remit of LCC. LCC had installed on-street charging points in several areas of the borough.

Mair had looked at incentives other councils had used to encourage the use of electric/hybrid taxis. She was informed that Blackpool have a big fleet. Our current policy only incentivised the use of newer vehicles.

ACTION: John Heap would arrange the trial of an electrical vehicle at the depot in order to assess the baselines and investigate installing charging meters on RVBC residential car parks.

ACTION: Mair Hill would contact other councils to find about the use of electric/hybrid taxis.

HOW CAN SERVICE COMMITTEES CONTRIBUTE?

It was felt that an action plan / strategy was needed for RVBC so that the climate change agenda could be pushed forward for service committees to consider as part of each report consideration. A change of attitude was required so it was automatically considered and embedded in everything that the Council does.

An idea was to look at the strategies of other 'like' councils to see if they could be adapted into something RVBC could adopt.

ACTION: Michelle Haworth would look at this and formulate a report for the next meeting of the working group.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for **11am on Monday 8 March 2021**.

The meeting closed at 12.51pm.