

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environmental Excellence Panel** held by video link on **Thursday 4 June 2020** at **6.00pm** when there were present:

Cllr J Leggett – Chairman

Cllr D J Britcher

Cllr S Lawn

Cllr S M Prutton

Cllr J F Fisher

Cllr K E Lawrence

Cllr J M Ward

Cllr K S Kelly

Cllr G K Nurden

Cllr L Hemsall and Cllr S Vincent also attended the meeting for its duration.

Also in attendance were the Director of Place, Director of People and Communities, Assistant Director Community Services, Environmental Protection Manager, Environmental Management Officer (DB-M), Environmental Management Officer (SM), Internal Consultancy Lead Waste, Governance Manager, Committee Officer (LA) and the Committee Officer (JO).

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Cook and Cllr Walker.

31 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

32 ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

The report presented the Environment Strategy, which was based on key themes to improve the local environment, as well as helping to address the wider environmental challenges of the global community.

The Panel had considered and commented on the draft Strategy at its meeting on 5 March 2020 and their suggestions had been incorporated in the final draft along with those of South Norfolk's Growth Infrastructure and Environment Policy Committee.

The report requested that the Panel consider and recommend that Cabinet approved the Environmental Strategy and the Work so far document.

The Chairman read to the Panel her Foreword for the Strategy:

The challenge we all face with regard to climate change is recognised across the globe. It is not a problem Broadland District Council can solve on its own. It means taking a lead with new initiatives, ensuring planning applications comply to all environmental regulations, partnership working with others, signposting communities, businesses and individual residents to ways in which we can improve our environment for future generations. Our plan is a living document and encompasses work which we started some time ago. It builds on our successes. As a council Broadland has the highest recycling rate in Norfolk and leads on largest tonnage of green waste. But we must all do better recycling more and generating less residual waste. We will be putting our own house in order using greener vehicles, exploiting technology to reduce business travel and eradicating single use plastics. I invite you all to work with us, on this journey, to protect and enhance our environment.

In response to the suggestion that the Council should aim to be carbon neutral by 2030, the Director of Place advised the meeting that this would require a fundamental change of mind-set in respect of Broadland's delivery of services and would have massive financial implications for the Council. For example the huge costs of a carbon neutral waste collection fleet or turning Thorpe Lodge into a carbon neutral office.

He estimated that even to do a feasibility study for such a project would take at least a year before it could be brought back Panel, as the resources for this were not currently available.

Members confirmed that they would like to see the additional resource put in place to carry out this work.

The Leader advised the Panel that this was an issue that would be considered when the Strategy was brought to Cabinet. He added that Members would need to have a clear understanding of where the funding would be found to meet such a target.

The Panel then went through the Environmental Strategy and made the following comments and amendments:

- Page 3
 - The Government's aim to be carbon neutral by 2050 should be noted, but the Strategy should set a more ambitious timescale and direct a dedicated resource to achieve it.
- Page 4
 - Insert a paragraph to explain that Broadland and South Norfolk were rural areas, with limited public transport and were, therefore, more reliant on cars which increased their emissions of CO₂.
- Page 5
 - It would preferable to compare both Districts with Norfolk as a whole, rather than Norwich.

- Page 7
- Baseline fly tipping data should be reported consistently in the Strategy. It was noted that page 7, referred to 2016/17, whilst page 28 referred to 2018/19 data.
 - It was questioned whether the cost of enforcement action against fly tippers represented value for money.
- Page 8
- Clarify that the spring clean of the Districts was carried out annually, as part of a national campaign.
 - Make clear that the work being carried out with town and parish councils was in relation to street scene services.
- Page 9
- It was noted that the Annual Air Quality report showed that although Broadland and South Norfolk did not have any areas where air quality management was a notifiable problem, there were areas where air quality was poorer than desirable. Monitoring in these areas would continue to be undertaken.
 - Comparisons with national air quality figures should also be included.
- Page 10
- Under *'how can you help us?'* refer to reducing use of fossil fuels.
- Page 11
- Explain that pre-planning application support would include advice on the tax benefits of land remediation expenditure.
 - Abridge the section on domestic heating oil spills.
 - Under *'what we are going to do?'* include: Encourage residents to move to a cheaper low carbon fuel or technology.
- Page 12
- Amend the following paragraph:

Developments in flood risk areas can only be considered is generally resisted in flood risk areas and would only be considered when informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment that identifies all sources of flooding and robustly demonstrates how these will be managed.
 - Under *'how you can help us?'* add the following bullet points
 - Install permeable driveways.
 - Fit soakaways and green barriers.
 - Garden with plants that require less water.

- Page 13
- The Strategic Approach for Sustainable Communities in respect of resilience should refer to 'communities', rather than 'residents'.
 - Sustainable Communities should be moved closer to the beginning of the Strategy. This was especially important in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Page 14
- The sign up for flood warnings web address should be turned into a shorter hyperlink.
 - A typographical error was identified.
- Page 15
- Make efficient use of land with densities dependent on-site characteristics, with higher densities and car free housing in the most sustainably accessible locations. ~~in Norwich. Indicative minimum densities are 25 dwellings per hectare across the plan area and 40 in Norwich.~~
- Page 17
- Use the best environmental management practices for land use to protect and enhance biodiversity. *Such as creating wildlife corridors between green infrastructure.*
- Page 21
- Combine the following bullet points:
 - Recycle more, recycle right – you can find out what goes in which bin.
 - Don't contaminate your bin.
 - Create a hyperlink for this web address on this page
 - Under '*how can you help us?*' include: home composting
 - Encourage ~~Breadland~~ residents to engage with food waste collections, where available.
 - Under Strategic approach add: Investigate opportunities to expand food waste service if possible.
- Page 23
- Review our own ~~fleet of vehicles~~ *policy*
 - ~~Investigate all options for new refuse depot with the potential to develop infrastructure to help us move to a greener fleet of vehicles.~~
- Page 24
- Include totals in the staff/member mileage and emissions table.
 - Under staff travel emphasise that home working would

continue to be encouraged.

- Investigate the infrastructure and installation required for the delivery of electric vehicle charging points. ~~at all council owned buildings.~~

Page 28 • Add the figures for 2018/19 litter picks and clean up initiatives supported.

Page 31 • Any initiatives to recycle and reduce contamination being promoted by the Council should be included in the delivery column.

- Broadland to be inserted in front of gross tonnage increase – food waste.

- Add a recycling target of 60% over the five years of the plan.

Page 32 • Staff/Members mileage figures to be added.

Work so far

- Page 50 • Add Harrisons Wood to the list of projects under the tree planting strategy.
- Reference funding secured by Broadland and Norfolk County Council from the Bure Valley Railway Path, and include quantitative information on footpaths, where possible.

Page 53 • Refer to *Broadland Thorpe* Lodge.

Page 54 • Delete reference to Zero Taxis, as they were no longer operating.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

1. To approve the content of the Environmental Strategy, as amended and
2. To approve the content of the Work so far document, as amended.

33 WORK PROGRAMME

The following items on the Work Programme were noted:

23 July 2020 • Waste Review

17 Sept 2020 • Recycling Initiatives

A response regarding the Norse JVC contract would be brought to the Panel, as soon as practicable.

34 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the remaining business because otherwise, information which was exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, would be disclosed to them.

WASTE SERVICES REVIEW

The Panel received an update on the Waste Services Review and development of the Business Plan.

The report set out the activities of the Waste Working Group and the progress they were making and the timeline for the Business Plan to be taken through the democratic process.

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.