

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environmental Excellence Panel** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Thursday 12 September 2019** at **6.00pm** when there were present:

Mrs J Leggett – Chairman

Mr D J Britcher

Dr K E Lawrence

Mr J M Ward

Mr J F Fisher

Mrs S M Prutton

Mr K S Kelly

Mr S C Walker

Mr Brennan, Mr King and Mr Leggett also attended the meeting for its duration.

Also in attendance were the Director of Place, Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects), Environmental Management Officer (DBM), Environmental Management Officer (AO) and the Committee Officer (JO).

6 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mrs Cook.

7 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN AND POLICY STATEMENT

The report proposed the adoption of a joint Environmental Action Plan and Policy Statement with South Norfolk Council, which would set out both Councils' commitment to safeguarding the Environment.

It was proposed that the joint Policy Statement and Action Plan would replace both Councils' existing Environmental Policies and Strategies. The Action Plan would be reviewed on a six-monthly basis.

The report had been to the Growth, Infrastructure and Environment Policy Committee at South Norfolk Council for consideration earlier today. The Committee had requested that the Statement make reference to the monitoring of particulates and be subject to review every five years. The Committee would also like to have a formal meetings after the joint informal meeting, for decisions to be made.

A Member of the Panel noted the reference to planting 1 million urban trees in the Statement and suggested that a long-term view should be taken to ensure that appropriate trees were planted in suitable locations, as the costs of maintenance for very large trees could be prohibitive.

In response to question, the Director of Place confirmed that the draft Greater Norwich Local Plan, which would go out for consultation next month, would seek to require a 20 percent reduction in the energy requirements for new dwellings over current building regulations. This was an ambitious and contentious target and Members were advised that it might meet with opposition from developers on the grounds of viability.

It was suggested that the Action Plan include an ambition to 'Support the Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy that sought to improve energy efficiency in buildings in the Greater Norwich area.' The Action Plan should also make reference to support for other forms of renewable energy.

In answer to a query, the Panel was informed that the Courtauld Commitment was a voluntary agreement aimed at reducing food waste within the UK. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) was responsible for the agreement and worked in partnership with food retailers, manufacturers and suppliers, as well as local authorities. Broadland had yet to sign up to the Agreement. It was noted that Cabinet had approved signing up to Agreement and it was:

RESOLVED

That the Council would sign up to the Courtauld Agreement during Recycling Week (23 -27 September 2019).

A Member expressed her concern that the Action Plan did not set out how activities, such as turning sites into wildflower meadows, would be delivered and measured.

In response, the Panel was advised that the Action Plan was an overarching document that sat over a whole range of activities undertaken by the Council. The initial process would be to conduct a baseline exercise to allow targets to be identified, which could be brought back to the Panel in six months' time for consideration.

The Director of Place added that he did not want to put too much emphasis on data collection, to the detriment of the delivery in those areas that the Council had influence in.

The Chairman also stressed that the Action Plan was a living document that would evolve as it progressed.

Some Members suggested that the baseline for green infrastructure should include Norfolk Wildlife sites and show acreage, with a minimum size rather than including verges and other small parcels of land.

It was noted that it would not be necessary to adopt the same procedure as the Growth, Infrastructure and Environment Policy Committee had decided upon, as the Action Plan was only being reviewed every six months and no decisions would be made.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

To recommend that Cabinet recommends to Council:

1. the proposed Policy Statement; and
2. the proposed Action Plan; and
3. that the Action Plan be reviewed on a six monthly basis by the Environmental Excellence Panel.

9 WORK PROGRAMME

The following items were put onto the Work Programme:

Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waste Monitoring Review• Norse JVC Contract
Six monthly review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Action Plan Review

10 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.

11 WASTE WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Resources and Waste Strategy Update

The Government intended to introduce an extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging in 2023. The details of the scheme would be subject to further consultation.

A Deposit Return Scheme was also to be introduced from 2023. The specific details of the scheme including materials within the scope would be consulted on in 2020. The proposal was not popular with manufacturers and would ultimately lead to higher prices for consumers.

The Government was seeking consistency with household waste collection, with a set of minimum service standards, including fortnightly collections as a minimum. Plans for free garden waste collections looked likely to not happen.

Waste Services Review

The Panel were advised of the Commissioning Options being considered by the Waste Services Review Working Group.

The final recommendation report from the Working Group should be presented to the Environmental Excellence Panel at the 14 November meeting and then go to the 26 November 2019 Cabinet.

In response to a request the Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects) confirmed that she would be available to work with parishes on drafting a local Recycling Policy, if required.

Members noted the update.

The meeting closed at 7.29 pm.