

Notes of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group meeting

Date	09 / 03 / 2020
Time	10.30 to 12.00
Location	Cabinet Room, County Hall, Ruthin
Present	Cllr Bobby Feeley (BF); Cllr Barry Mellor (BM); Cllr Tony Thomas (TT); Cllr Brian Jones (BJ); Cllr Arwel Roberts (AR); Cllr Joe Welch (JW); Cllr Graham Timms (GT)
Apologies	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler (GK)
In attendance	Supporting Officers: Judith Greenhalgh (JG), Tony Ward (TW), Helen Vaughan-Evans (HVE), Joel Walley (JW), Nicola Kneale (NK), Tom Booty (TB) Member Observers: Cllr Martyn Holland (MH)

1. Welcome

Chair GT welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Notes and actions of last meeting

Minutes of last meeting agreed as accurate.

Actions of last meeting reviewed and update provided. See summary table below.

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ACTION	UPDATE
<p>HVE- to ask Welsh Government contact for slide pack from Octobers Climate Change Conference and copy of the highlight video once available</p>	<p>COMPLETED BUT DOC'S NOT RECEIVED</p> <p>Request made to Rhys Horan 11.02.20. Rhys Horan still waiting for documents from Welsh Government colleagues in order to send to us</p>
<p>HVE- to invite Rhys Horan (Welsh Government) and Ben Sears (WLGA) to April's working group meeting and organise for teleconferencing for Ben.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Rhys attending in person and Ben remotely for our meeting on 28th April</p>
<p>TW- organise away day for Highways, Facilities & Environmental Services (HFES) with a carbon/climate change focus. HVE to support.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>HVE attended HFES management meeting on 04.03.20</p> <p>HFES away day with climate and ecological change theme scheduled for 10.06.20</p>
<p>HVE- to put Lesley Griffiths (AM) letter drafting on the agenda for March's working group meeting (9th March)</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>On todays agenda</p>

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ACTION	UPDATE
HVE- to send email to Councillors re. public meeting attendance	COMPLETED Email sent 05.02.20
HVE- to draft email for Julian Malloy to send	COMPLETED
HVE- to design and prepare with officers the arrangements for the public meeting	COMPLETED Public meeting took place 25.02.20
HVE- to update public meeting attendee list	COMPLETED
HVE and JG- to pull together response to Friends of the Earth and Extinction Rebellion based on Members input	COMPLETED Response sent by Sharon Evans 05.03.20
HVE- to work with Corporate Communications on creating a set of webpages on our website for Climate and Ecological Change	ONGOING Initial design of pages agreed. Target to have pages live by end of March
HVE- explore with Steve Price and Corporate Communications the possibility	COMPLETED- PROPOSAL TO CONFIRM

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ACTION	UPDATE
of putting minutes of this meeting on website.	<p>This technically can be done using the existing ModernGov system. Proposal to make minutes from today's meeting and meetings in subsequent months onwards public.</p> <p>PROPOSAL AGREED BY GROUP</p>
<p>JG- continue to liaise with Extinction Rebellion contact regarding training offer and report back to working group</p>	<p>ONGOING</p>
<p>HVE- to progress strategy and action plan work accordingly</p>	<p>ONGOING</p> <p>See next steps paper as part of today's agenda</p>
<p>HVE- to send around Angela Loftus Planning Policy and Building Regulation slides as part of minutes</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>
<p>AL- to send around link to building regulation change consultation to working group members</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>HVE sent round with offer for Members to contribute to consultation response.</p>

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ACTION	UPDATE
HVE- to set up meetings for April, May, June, July and September (August-summer recess)	COMPLETED

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Update from Decarbonisation Agenda within Welsh Government

HVE provided the following update to the group:

Twenty First Century Schools Band B

- WG are re-evaluating the funding model and the design criteria so not including BREEAM as requirement for funding
- WG have been getting feedback that this does not lead to energy efficient or low carbon buildings.
- If it is no longer a requirement we can design better energy efficient/low carbon schools.

Carbon Reporting

- The final carbon reporting guidelines will be released 1st April, therefore on target.

Building regulations Part L (Energy) changes

- Building Regulations are devolved responsibility
- Current proposal for changes to the Energy Building Regulations is that no new development will have mains gas from 2021.

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3.2 Reflecting on working of the group and easy wins

Discussed later on in the agenda under next steps and activity plan (agenda item 4).

3.3 Public Engagement Period 21st January – 25th February

HVE provided the following update to the group:

Online submissions of public feedback

- 73 submissions received

Public Meeting held 25th February

- Over 60 people attended the meeting
- 104 people watched the meeting online
- Over 30 questions answered during the meeting

Twitter

- 26,936 people saw our Facebook post or tweet (“Impressions”)
- 610 “engagements”, i.e. the number of comments, likes, retweets, shares and post clicks
- 6 questions submitted via twitter on the night

Next steps

- Summary document responding to content received to be produced and hoped to be published by end of March

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- Looking into options to create sub group to Y Panel and host discussion topics for continued engagement
- Email mailing list to be able to send targeted information

Actions

1. **HVE-** add to April's agenda the following: More information on the ability to create a sub group to Y Panel and host discussion topics for continued engagement
2. **HVE-** send out an email to the mailing list letting them know the minutes of this meeting are available to be viewed online

4. Next Steps and Activity Plan for 2020/21

JG introduced the paper to the group and explained the salient points including the recruitment of an up to 37 hours dedicated resource to drive the activity forward and deliver the strategy and action plan during 2020/21.

GT thanked officers for the work and thought in mapping out the key tasks per month during 2020/21 to get us to where we need to be in terms of strategy, action plan and influencing budget setting process for 2021/22.

HVE explained the rationale for the order of tasks during 2020/21. Group discussion on certain aspects of the month by month plan, including Cross-Council working, tree planting, promoting community activities/funding opportunities, finance and budget setting process.

Group agreed the activity plan for 2020/21.

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NK explained there were community development officers in her team which can be used by City, Town and Community Councils to coordinate funding applications.

HVE took the group through the recommendation on how to build climate and ecological impact consideration into decision making.

Recommendation passed on how to build climate and ecological impact consideration into decision making.

NK explained that the Council also have new Socio-Economic Duties to consider and that this should be considered together with climate and ecological impact and any changes to decision making process/guidance done once. Group agreed.

Group discussed the £200k one off funding that has been made available for 2020/21 and how this money will be spent. JG/HVE explained it would be used to pay for dedicated additional resource, consultancy and match funding/seed funding to get “kick start” interventions/projects delivered during the year.

Group agreed the high level spend breakdown for the £200k.

Discussion around kick start actions list. Expanding EV charging infrastructure requires further feasibility study. Business cases for “off gas schools project” and “greening county hall project” close to being completed and will be assessed by the Significant Investment Group (SIG) in the coming months for delivery in 2020/21. SALIX interest free loan application being completed to help finance projects. Discussion around the potential to install a solar farm on council land- initial feasibility indicates that unlikely that there will be a piece of land suitable within Council ownership with a business case that is viable. This will be kept under review.

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1. **HVE-** Work with Gary Williams in delivering on the recommended approach to build climate and ecological impact consideration into decision making. Paper to be taken to Corporate Governance Committee to then recommend approval to Council for the change to then be made to decision making framework.

5. Staff Council Suggestions – Organisational response and actions

JG introduced the group to the staff council suggestion and organisational response/actions table. Looking for approval from the group to share this with Staff Council and build their suggestions into 9-year action plan wherever possible.

Group went through each of the Staff Council suggestions and the organisation response and suggested potential actions that had been written by the relevant officers within the Council. Recognition that some could become policy statements within the new climate and ecological change strategy, some could become actions within the action plan, some actions could be delivered in 2020/21 and others to feature in 9-year action plan (2021/22-2029/20).

Group approved the recommendation to share this document with Staff Council and build their suggestions into 9-year action plan wherever possible.

Actions

1. **HVE-** to share the staff council and organisational response/action document with Staff Council.

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6. Re-drafting letter to Welsh Government (Lesley Griffiths AM)

GT asked group to review the current draft of the letter to Welsh Government that was displayed on screen.

Group provided suggestions and edits.

Group approved the sending of the letter to Lesley Griffiths AM.

Actions

1. **HVE-** to make the adjustments to the letter as suggested and work with Sharon Evans to have the letter sent from Cllr Brian Jones.

7. AOB

2 items of AOB from BJ.

1. Suggestion to run a whole Members workshop in May or June for all County Councillors to feed into the strategy and action plan development including policy statement development.

Group agreed with BJ suggestion for the organisation to run a Members workshop

2. Suggestion to have an additional Countryside Services officer invited to attend the group each month to pick up on AONB and nature reserve management.

Group voted on suggestion and suggestion was passed to have an additional Countryside Services officer attend working group meetings.

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1. **HVE-** to liaise with relevant officers and BJ, TT and GT to make the arrangements for a Members workshop in May/June
2. **HVE-** to contact Huw Rees with the request for an additional Countryside Services officer to join the officers who attend the political working group monthly meeting.

8. Forward work programme and next meetings

HVE took group through the proposed forward work programme/agenda items for future meetings as outlined in the table below.

Group happy with the proposed items for discussion with the addition of the agenda item on “creation of a sub group to Y Panel and host discussion topics for continued engagement” as agreed earlier in the meeting.

Month	Proposed items for discussion
28 th April	<p><u>Theme: National Picture / Welsh Government</u> – Rhys Horan (WG) and Ben Sears (WLGA) attending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with Welsh Government and WLGA on this agenda - Support from National level - New Greenhouse Gas Reporting Regime (due to be launched by Welsh Government on 1st April)
13 th May	<p><u>Theme: Travel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our own fleet - Business Miles - Staff commute

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Month	Proposed items for discussion
10 th June	<p><u>Theme: Our first draft Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of draft - Planning for public consultation
21 st July	<p><u>Theme: Kick start actions and behaviour change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on progress with kick start actions - Communication and behaviour change amongst staff and councillors
15 th September	<p><u>Theme: Our final draft Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of final draft - Planning for political sign off - Feeding into budget setting cycle
November TBC	<p><u>Theme: Budget Setting Cycle and closing the group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans for closing the group subject to political sign off at Scrutiny/Cabinet/ Council in October - Feeding into budget setting cycle

Actions

1. **HVE-** to make changes to April agenda and invite relevant additional officers to future meetings accordingly to the theme.