

**CLIMATE CHANGE CROSS-PARTY WORKING GROUP**

Thursday, 7 May 2020

**PRESENT** – Councillors Lee (Chair), Curry, Snedker and Harker

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Howarth and Tait

**ABSENT** –

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** –

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Margaret Enstone (Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer) and Hannah Fay (Democratic Officer)

**43 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY**

Discussion ensued on renewable energy; the pros and cons of Hydrogen as an energy source were outlined; the costs of introducing a new fuel versus the cost of making Council buildings energy efficient; and energy efficiency standards of new builds.

Members highlighted the need for updated emissions data in light of the current lockdown; noted that changes in working arrangements had moved carbon emissions from the workplace to the home environment; and noted that changes resulting from the COVID-19 lockdown may not all result in a reduction in carbon emissions.

The Climate Change Lead Officer advised Members that waste usage for the Council could not be separated from the Borough of Darlington waste usage; Members noted for future discussion.

**RESOLVED** – That the draft Climate Change Strategy be shared at Cabinet for consideration.

**DARLINGTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **CLIMATE CHANGE CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP**

Monday, 18 May 2020

**PRESENT** – Councillors Lee (Chair), Curry and Snedker

**APOLOGIES** – Councillor Tait

**ABSENT** –

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** –

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Margaret Enstone (Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer) and Hannah Fay (Democratic Officer)

### **44 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Climate Change Lead Officer advised Members that some further minor amendments had been made to the Climate Change Strategy following discussion with Officers; the strategy would be taken to Cabinet following agreement from the portfolio holder.

Following a question, it was confirmed that a table would be included in the strategy to detail responsible officers for each department; and the actions detailed within the strategy were subject to review.

**RESOLVED** – That Members note the update.

### **45 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY**

Discussion ensued on the draft climate change training programme, developed by the Climate Change Lead Officer. Members were advised that this would be uploaded onto Academy 10 for Council employees to access; a set of questions would be included at the end of the slides for employees to evidence their learning.

Member suggested the training be trialled on staff with less knowledge of climate change, to ensure the level and quantity of slides were appropriate. Members agreed that this training should be made mandatory for all Council staff and be completed by Councillors.

**RESOLVED** – That the training be released to all Council staff subject to appropriate sign off.

## **46 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair advised Members that a letter had been sent to Ben Houchen in respect of the Tees Valley Action Plan to ascertain if this had been updated and to question the actions being taken to reduce carbon relating to developments such as the Airport and Redcar steelworks. It was reported that the Tees Valley Combined Authority were developing a decarbonisation plan.

The Annual Tees Nature Partnership conference had been replaced with an online free event, taking place on 19 June 2020 with a theme of Local Nature and Local People.

Further discussion ensued on the effects of driving at 20mph on carbon reduction; that scientific evidence was required to support the justification of 20mph speed limits as a means to reduce carbon.

The Chair advised Members that a letter would be sent to acknowledge and to update the Climate Change Champions on the progress of the working group. Members agreed to discuss the Climate Change champions in further detail at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That Members note the update.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP**

Monday, 15 June 2020

**PRESENT** – Councillors Lee (Chair), Curry, Harker and Snedker

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Howarth and Tait

**ABSENT** –

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** –

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Margaret Enstone (Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer) and Hannah Fay (Democratic Officer)

### **47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

### **48 MATTERS ARISING**

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer advised Members that the Climate Change Strategy was due to go to Cabinet on 14 July; recommendations had been included in the report to make the climate change training module mandatory for all staff.

It was reported that the climate change training module had been forwarded to HR to include on the online training portal; work had begun on drafting a business resilience handbook; a review of travel plan was underway; and discussions had been held with the Young People's Involvement and Opportunities Worker to share information in school newsletters of the Climate Change Lead Officer role.

Members were advised that carbon emissions for Council transport would be determined from fuel burnt rather than from fleet mileage.

**RESOLVED** – That Members note the update.

### **49 CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPIONS**

Discussion ensued on training for Climate Change Champions; if approved by Cabinet, the e-learning will be mandatory for all staff; but will available before then to enable Champions to undertake as soon as possible.

In respect of expectations of the Climate Change Champions it was suggested that performance be measured against the actions identified in the Action Plan for each department; and Members felt that a framework was required for the Climate Change Champions to enable them to carry out their roles.

Members highlighted that success stories would be a useful tool to encourage engagement; discussion ensued in respect of success stories including the benefits of laptops versus paper in respect of climate change.

Members agreed that a Teams meeting with Climate Change Champions, following

their completion of the e-learning module, would be beneficial to help ascertain their wants and needs.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer ascertains the date e-learning module would be available and inform the Chair.

(b) That the Chair send a letter to Climate Change Champions to encourage completion of e-learning module.

(c) That a Teams Meeting be arranged with Climate Change Champions, following completion of e-learning module.

(d) That the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer will develop a framework for Climate Change Champions.

## **50 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Discussion ensued on cycling in the Borough and the Propensity to Cycle tool.

**RESOLVED** - That the Propensity to Cycle tool be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Climate Change Cross Party Working Group.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP**

Monday, 20 July 2020

**PRESENT** – Councillors Lee (Chair), Curry, McEwan and Snedker

**APOLOGIES** – Councillor Tait

**ABSENT** –

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Margaret Enstone (Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer) and Hannah Fay (Democratic Officer)

### **51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor McEwan declared an interest as a previous employee of APSE.

### **52 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

With regard to Minute 49 it was advised that a meeting with climate change champions had not yet been held, and this would be arranged once the champions had the opportunity to complete the climate change training module.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That a Teams meeting with climate change champions be held on 7th September 2020 at 1.30pm.

(b) That the minutes be agreed.

### **53 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**RESOLVED** – That the updated Terms of Reference be noted.

### **54 UPDATE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE LEAD OFFICER**

#### **(1) COUNCIL TEAM LEADERS/CLIMATE CHAMPIONS/TEAM MEETING W/C 24 AUGUST**

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer advised Members that the Climate Change Strategy had been approved at Cabinet and would be published on 27th July after the call-in period. A press release and internal comms had been drafted to be released upon publication of the Strategy.

Members were also advised that Cabinet agreed that climate change training be included in compulsory training modules; meetings had begun with lead officers to begin development of the Action Plan; and funding had been received from BEIS for feasibility of heat network, with funding for an external project manager.

**RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.

## **(2) BUSINESS RESILIENCE PLAN**

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer introduced the Business Resilience Plan (previously circulated) requesting that Members give consideration to the plan and provide feedback.

Member noted that the plan provided pertinent information for businesses but queried the source of the climate change data included in the plan, including climate change predictions. It was noted that the data source was UK Climate Projections 2018.

Discussion ensued on the rollout of the plan, including sign up from public and private sector businesses; and Members felt that assurance was needed to ensure the plan was robust, particularly in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. It was confirmed that the plan was purely advice for businesses to improve their resilience to climate change; and that rollout would be undertaken via the business resilience team within the Council and via business associations. A soft launch could be undertaken with a request for feedback from businesses.

Members raised concern in respect of floodplains in Darlington and those businesses that were at risk; and the availability of drainage and storage for excess rainwater. The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer confirmed that maps could be obtained from the Environment Agency in respect of those businesses at risk, which could be shared with the relevant Ward Councillors.

The plan would be communicated via a number of means to ensure wide communication and engagement, this included the Chamber of Commerce, Business Investment team within the Council; Ward Councillors; visits to local businesses by the Chair; and regular articles would be included in the One Darlington magazine in relation to this working group and could include signposting for the plan.

**RESOLVED** – That the Business Resilience Plan be noted.

## **55 PROPENSITY TO CYCLE**

Councillor Snedker gave a presentation on the Propensity to Cycle Tool; and detailed the benefits of increasing cycling in the North East using the E-Bike with a cycling level of 26.4 per cent, including 1,137 years and 200,000 sick days saved which totaled £93 million per year; as well as 38,000 tonnes of CO2 saved per year.

Other benefits of cycling were outlined including quicker journeys; more reliable; sociable; cost of storage to the Council would be much less for bicycles than that of cars; and damage caused to the roads by one car equated to 160,000 bicycles.

Members felt that in order to encourage cycling, there was a need for more and improved cycle routes in the town; and that a discussion with regular cyclists would be beneficial to ascertain the improvements needed to the existing cycling infrastructure.

Members were also advised that Youth Parliament had highlighted that current cycle routes were between workplaces and economic points; and felt that schools should be included on cycle routes to encourage more children and families to cycle to school.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That Members note the presentation.

(b) That Councillor Snedker invites representatives from the cycling community to the next meeting of this group.

**56 NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the next meeting of this group be held on 14 September 2020, 1.30pm.

(b) That cycling and climate change action plan be included on the agenda for the next meeting.



## **CLIMATE CHANGE CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP**

Monday, 19 October 2020

**PRESENT** – Councillors Lee (Chair), Curry and Snedker

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Tait,

**ABSENT** – Councillors McEwan

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillors

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Margaret Enstone (Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer) and Hannah Fay (Democratic Officer)

### **57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

### **58 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting be noted.

### **59 UPDATE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE LEAD OFFICER**

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer advised Members that a meeting with the climate change champions had taken place on 7 September 2020; a discussion was held on the actions being undertaken in the respective areas; a second meeting was held on 13 October for those unable to attend the initial meeting; and had agreed to meet every two months to discuss issues and share ideas.

Members were advised of a suggestion by a climate change champion for a battery recycling bin in the town hall; Corporate Landlord had agreed to fund the initial payment; the company would empty the bin for free after a certain weight; and a safe place to store the bin was to be identified.

A number of the climate change champions had completed the climate change training module and provided feedback; following this feedback the training module was updated and was due to be launched with the new Academy 10 online learning resource.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer had prepared a guidance note for Scrutiny Members; and that this was with Democratic Services for agreement.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer and Chair of the Working Group were maintaining their link with the Youth Partnership, who had been invited to attend a North East Youth breakout session at the Nature Partnership Conference; and the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer was due to attend the Primary Heads Forum in November to work with schools, with the aim to attend the Secondary Heads also.

The funds for the Heat Network Grant had been received and the recruitment of an

external project manager was in progress. Work was underway to submit a bid for the Carbon Skills Fund; this would then enable a bid to be submitted for the Decarbonisation Fund, which had a deadline of 11 January 2021.

The Business Resilience Manual was now available on the Darlington Borough Council website; and the Business Growth Team were assisting with the dissemination of the manual to businesses in the town.

**RESOLVED** – That the update of the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer be noted.

**(1) DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN**

The Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer introduced the draft climate change action plan (previously circulated), and in doing so advised Members that the actions detailed within the plan had been sorted by the principles outlined in the climate change strategy; that these were a wish list for the Council to strive to achieve; the actions had been shared with lead officers but to date no comments had been received. [NB comments have been received from Lead Officers subsequent to this meeting]

Following a suggestion by Members, it was confirmed that an Annual Report would be written; this would include details of the progress made against the actions in the climate change action plan; and that this would be published on the Council's website.

**RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.