

Lancashire County Council

External Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th July, 2019 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Edward Nash psc (Chair)

County Councillors

D Stansfield	B Dawson
A Ali	D Foxcroft
M Barron	Mrs L Oades
L Beavers	J Shedwick
S Clarke	B Yates
C Crompton	

County Councillor's Malcolm Barron, Bernard Dawson, Barrie Yates and Lorraine Beavers replaced County Councillor's Cosima Towneley, Gillian Oliver, Anne Cheetham and Tony Martin respectively for this meeting.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Constitution: Chair and Deputy Chair; Membership; Terms of Reference

The report presented set out the constitution, membership, chair and deputy chair and terms of reference of the External Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2019/20.

Resolved: That;

1. The appointment of County Councillors Ed Nash psc and David Stansfield as Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year be noted;
2. The Membership of the Committee following the County Council's Annual Meeting on 23 May 2019 be noted; and
3. The Terms of Reference of the Committee be noted.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 April 2019

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 16 April 2019, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. Interim rapporteur report: Lancashire Energy Strategy

The Chair provided an update to the Committee on his initial findings as rapporteur on the Lancashire Energy Strategy. A single slide presentation was also displayed during the meeting (a copy is set out in the minutes).

It was noted that following the government's requirement in 2009 to reduce carbon emission by 36% by 2020, Lancashire had already met this target. Yet there had been significant change in approach and technology during the last ten years which it was felt that the council needed to catch up with. Much work was being done across the county but not necessarily in a co-ordinated way. It was suggested that either a task and finish group be established to review this further or that additional members of the Committee be invited to assist in a rapporteur capacity to help bring everything together.

Resolved: That;

1. The interim rapporteur report be noted.
2. County Councillor Ed Nash psc continue to rapporteur on carbon reduction on behalf of the External Scrutiny Committee.

6. Electricity North West: Leading the North West to Zero Carbon

The Chair welcomed Helen Norris, Stakeholder Engagement and CSR Manager, Helen Boyle, Strategic Decarbonisation Manager, and Mike Taylor, Customer Engagement Manager and Strategic Projects from Electricity North West (ENW) who gave a presentation to the meeting. A copy of the presentation is set out in the minutes.

The presentation provided the Committee with an update on Electricity North West's leading the North West to Zero Carbon Emissions plan outlining their work for the next six months.

In response to questions it was confirmed that:

- Electricity North West's community energy fund known as 'Powering our Communities' was an annual project that would hopefully open again for bids around September/October 2019.
- Air source heat pumps whilst expensive to install, were cheaper to run and a more efficient form of energy. Incentives were also in place to encourage the uptake of renewable heat technologies amongst householders.
- More could be done to save electricity by reducing the use of lighting and using natural light more or using LED lights. A culture change was needed to ensure energy efficiencies were made by the end user. It was

highlighted that using less equalled more capacity on the network which in turn meant that more could happen.

- On how Electricity North West communicated with small businesses and end users to start the transition, the Committee was informed that they were looking to build a strategic dialogue with the larger stakeholders, such as the county council to discuss how they could help and support them to get the information out there and to filter the information down. More engagement at grass roots level was needed.
- Solar will generally pay for itself within five years. Electricity North West was looking for businesses to encourage solar uptake on rooftops.
- Headroom was created in the network from previous initiatives successfully completed by Electricity North West. Electricity North West had also forecasted the impact onto the network from the uptake of Electric Vehicles and other technologies. Further information on the possible constraints was set out in their 'Distributed Future Energy Scenarios' document.
- By controlling the voltage on the network, the 'Smart Street' grid side energy efficiency project would help to create capacity on the network and provide a saving for the customer.
- Work was underway to set the framework for the next price control period which was due to start on 1 April 2023, and would likely run for five years.

The Committee noted that a representative from the county council was needed to sit on Electricity North West's Sustainability Advisory Panel, to help deliver their role in the transition to low carbon.

The Committee in formulating recommendations raised the following suggestions:

- A need to influence district councils to implement low carbon technology conditions on planning applications.
- Explore partnership working opportunities to establish a community heat network.
- Hold a green summit for Lancashire and possibly with Cumbria.
- The county council to lead by example.
- Invite appropriate representatives from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, Lancashire Renewables Ltd, Lancashire Energy HQ and the county council's energy team to future scheduled meetings of the Committee.
- County Councillor Ed Nash psc to continue as rapporteur on behalf of the Committee and report back on low carbon technology and legislation.

The Committee also noted that the Cabinet Committee on Climate Change and the Environment and a Cabinet Working Group on Energy and Environment had been disestablished.

Resolved: That;

1. The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Environment and Planning give consideration to holding a Green Summit in Spring 2020.
2. The Cabinet give consideration to the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on Carbon Reduction.
3. The new Chair of Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited be invited to a future meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee to explain the new Lancashire Energy Strategy and activities arising from the key findings.
4. Representatives of Lancashire Renewables Limited, Lancashire Energy HQ and the County Council's Energy Team be invited to attend a future meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee to explain the work they are undertaking in relation to low carbon technology.
5. Working through the Lancashire Leaders, all district councils and the unitary authorities across Lancashire be encouraged to make carbon reduction a consistent factor in all planning applications and local plans; and adopt a checklist of low carbon technologies to include but not limited to solar, electric vehicle charging points (including wireless) and heat source pumps.
6. County Councillor Ed Nash continue to function as a rapporteur and report back at the next scheduled meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee on findings relating to low carbon technology and legislation.

7. Chair's update

The Chair provided an update to the Committee on the progress made by the Flood Risk Management and Preparedness task and finish group.

It was reported that the task and finish group had met on 10 June 2019 with United Utilities to discuss the adoption of Sustainable Drainage Systems amongst other aspects. In addition a scrutiny inquiry session was held on 8 July to review the future of Flood Action Groups (FIAG) across Lancashire.

It was noted that the Committee had received a response from its letter dated 7 June 2018 to the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, regarding adding water companies as statutory consultees on planning applications. The Committee was informed that the response indicated that local planning authorities could add water companies to a locally specific list of 'non-statutory' consultees. It was suggested that the Committee should write out to all of Lancashire's district councils to advise them to ensure that the relevant water companies are included as a non-statutory consultee for their planning applications. It was also suggested that the Flood Risk Management and Preparedness task and finish group be asked to review the response in further detail and to determine whether a further letter be written to the Secretary of State.

Resolved: That,

1. The update be noted.
2. The Flood Risk Management and Preparedness task and finish group be asked to review the response from the Secretary of State and to determine how to proceed.

8. External Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20

The report presented set out the External Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for the municipal year 2019/20.

It was noted that the Flood Risk Management and Preparedness task and finish group report would hopefully be presented to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 15 October 2019.

Resolved: That, the report be noted.

9. Urgent Business

There was no item of Urgent Business.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee would take place on Tuesday 15 October 2019 at 10.00am in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston