

Lancashire County Council

Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 27th April, 2023 at 10.30 am in
Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present:

County Councillor Rob Bailey (Chair)

County Councillors

M Salter	J Oakes
A Ali OBE	A Schofield
S Clarke	J R Singleton JP
G Dowding	A Sutcliffe
Y Motala	

The Chair announced that Item 6 - Net Zero - Decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate would be taken after Item 9 – Date of Next Meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Anne Cheetham.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 16 March 2023

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 16 March 2023 be approved as an accurate record.

4. Lancashire County Council Environment and Climate Strategy

The Chair welcomed to the meeting County Councillor Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, Andrew Mullaney, Director of Environment and Planning and Debbie King, Acting Head of Planning and Environment.

The Committee was presented a report which gave an overview of the county council's Environment and Climate Strategy, which set out ongoing and planned activity to achieve the strategy's ten key objectives. An update on activity being



undertaken to transition the Lancashire economy away from carbon by 2030 was also provided.

A presentation to compliment the report was delivered at the meeting, and a copy is set out in the minutes.

Comments and queries raised by the committee were as follows:

- It was recommended by officers that queries over LED lighting brightness levels were taken to the Highways Department to investigate further. The committee was informed that street lighting was there to illuminate traffic and not as a crime prevention measure. Officers agreed to follow up the impact LED lighting had on criminal activity and report back to the committee.
- Officers clarified that under the Cosy Homes Scheme, technical surveys were conducted on a residential property before cavity wall insulation was installed, to prevent damp from occurring in properties could be deemed structurally unsuitable for the scheme.
- It was noted that homes which had structural problems from older schemes in place before the Cosy Homes Scheme was introduced could be reported to Trading Standards.
- On the use of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) to develop electric vehicle charging in library car parks, it was explained the funding could not be used for destination or workplace charging as it was intended for on-street residential areas.
- Officers were looking into additional options for on street electric vehicle charging and other suitable locations to establish electric vehicle charging hubs to service multiple residential properties.
- On whether the Woodland Accelerator Fund would be used to replace trees that had damaged public footpaths, officers explained that the policy was being updated to ensure the right tree was planted in the right place. Additionally, a specialist council tree team had been created to provide advice and creative solutions and to ensure the correct tree was planted to prevent damage in residential areas whilst providing a green amenity.
- Capability funding had been made available from central government to help improve local authorities' ability in specialist areas such as woodland planting, electric charging and nature recovery. The recruitment of four woodland officers through capability funding would help to provide access to specialist Grants from the Forestry Commission.
- A request was made for the tree policy to be amended so that trees were planted in the highway rather than on pavements. It was noted that planting new trees within vehicle carriageways would present a number of challenges, as this could take up residents' parking spots but also cause issues with utilities such as underground sewage pipes, water networks and cables.
- In response to a query on the low number of electric vehicle charging points installed to date, it was reported that pilot funding was being used to expand cable-tray charging. The numbers were low as the concept was still in a proof of concept phase. A capital fund of £10m had been set aside with the intention to install additional charge points to service multiple residential properties. In order to identify suitable sites, officers would be reviewing the



public's behaviour to determine the type of charge point that would be best served eg lamppost charge point or rapid charge point.

- It was highlighted that the installation of cable-tray charging points was for those residents without parking provision on their own property. Traffic Regulation Orders would be required, as the cable trays would operate across a publicly accessible road and pavements.
- Officers confirmed they would look into the possibility of working with Parish Councils to install electric vehicle charge points in car parks owned by the Parish Council.
- On attenuating and storing increased rainfall and the slow release of water, officers explained that central government was due to implement part of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to establish Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Approval Bodies, and it was expected the county council would take on that role. All future housing developments above a threshold of one dwelling would be required to have a Sustainable Drainage System.
- On reducing non exhaust emissions, the committee was informed that there were a number of complimentary aspects in place to provide a choice of modal options alternative to the private car. Around £40m would be invested into public transport through the Bus Service Improvement Plan. In addition, £55m had been awarded from the Levelling Up Fund for projects in East Lancashire to improve bus services, active travel and Accrington rail station. Furthermore, £5m had been awarded by Active Travel England from its Active Travel Fund 4 and a further £1.1m from the Active Travel Capability Fund.
- It was highlighted that the Home Upgrade Grant would no longer be used for funding boiler replacements. The focus would instead be on a whole house approach, looking at energy efficiency measures to reduce a buildings energy costs. Around £38,000 was estimated to be available per eligible property. The Scheme was interlinked with other support services on energy saving advice, bill management and managing household debt.
- A £1m Heat Pump Grant had been made available for businesses to change their heating systems following the outcome of an energy audit to change their energy systems.
- A number of community led projects for alternative energy use were underway and the county council was supporting some of these. Examples given to the committee were the replacement of oil dependence in Chipping with ground source heat pumps and the Rossendale Net Zero Terraced street project.
- It was suggested that the Strategy be amended to reflect the information provided at the meeting on community led projects.
- It was felt that a plan to get to net zero was missing from the strategy. Officers clarified that a number of the programmes currently underway were in their infancy and a baseline assessment report due to be completed and submitted to the Carbon Disclosure Project in July 2023 could form the future basis of reports to the committee.
- It was suggested that a Transport Decarbonisation Strategy be created detailing progression towards net zero by 2030. It was noted that the plan to encourage modal shifts with travel would be set out in the county council's forthcoming Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). Government guidance was awaited. However, it was understood there would be a strong emphasis and expectation for decarbonisation in local transport plans.



Resolved: That;

1. The Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee welcomes the baseline assessment due for submission to the Carbon Disclosure Project in July 2023 and the carbon reductions that will emanate from that.
2. A copy of the baseline report be provided to the committee.

5. Changes to Waste services

The Chair welcomed to the meeting County Councillor Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change and Steve Scott, Head of Service Waste Management.

The committee was presented a report which provided information on two key issues that would force change within the council's Waste service in coming years:

- The end of the council's existing landfill contract in 2025
- The Environment Act 2021

In anticipation of these changes the Waste service team, had developed a waste processing strategy. Details of the wider implications for the council were also provided.

Comments and queries raised by the committee were as follows:

- It was noted that a report seeking approval to modify waste facilities to process food waste through anaerobic digestion methods, would now be considered by Cabinet at its meeting scheduled on 6 July 2023.
- Whilst nationally consistent waste collection processes would become a legal requirement, the challenges for the council included whether adequate funding would be available and the equal distribution of monies. It was noted that the collection authorities (district councils) had different collection arrangements in place and different contracting arrangements.
- On the amount of food waste likely to be collected and the large distances travelled to then process it, it was felt smaller and more local food waste processing plants would be more appropriate. It was explained that officers hoped to expand the waste processing facilities at Farington Waste Recovery Park. Whilst officers could use modelling techniques to help indicate the amount that might be collected, it was not clear how well the public would buy in to this process. Officers would monitor the amounts being processed to help determine whether there was a business case to expand the facilities at the Thornton Waste Recovery Park.
- On communicating waste collection changes with the public, the committee was informed that a back to basics campaign would be launched in the first



instance to refresh the public's knowledge and understanding of what can and can't be recycled.

- It was confirmed that Lancashire County Council did not have a binding contract to collect a specific quantity of food waste, as the food waste recovery parks were owned by the Council.
- Officers noted that the waste recovery parks could be offered commercially to companies if food collection was lower than the capacity available to process food waste.
- It was queried whether the anaerobic digestion technology for processing food waste was already installed. The technology was in place and needed minor modifications to process food waste. The cost to purchase the modifications for Farington waste recovery park was around £1m. It was noted that the savings as a result of the energy production would significantly outweigh the capital investment needed to modify the facilities at Farington.
- The Lancashire Waste Partnership had received presentations from WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme Charity) and LARAC (The Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee) on modelling potential amounts of food waste that took into account findings from what had occurred in Wales and other areas.
- On applications made by external organisations to process Refused Derived Fuel (RDF), it was noted that engaging in long-term contracts with external applicants was not being considered, as the length of contract of 10-15 years was deemed too long and restrictive.
- Officers explained to the committee that once the Farington Waste Recovery Park began to process a substantial amount of residual and food waste, it would provide the opportunity to reopen the centre and allow for more school, public and community group site visits to take place and encourage more public engagement with waste collection processes.

Resolved: That the report on changes to Waste services be noted.

6. Work Programme 2022/23

The committee was presented a report which provided members of the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee with the committee's work programme for 2022/23.

Resolved: That the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2022/23 be noted.

7. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee would be held on Thursday 29 June 2023 at 10:30am in Committee Room B – The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston.



9. Net Zero - Decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate

The Chair welcomed to the meeting County Councillor Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, Mel Ormesher, Head of Service Asset Management, Paul Binks, Highway Asset Manager and Denise Jepson, Energy Team Manager.

A report was presented to the committee which provided information on the strategy being created to work towards achieving net zero carbon emissions for the Lancashire County Council estate. A copy of the draft Energy Strategy 2024-28 was included under Part II of the agenda at Item 11 - Appendix B to Item 6 - Net Zero - Decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate.

Comments and queries raised by the committee were as follows:

- It was confirmed that over 600 school buildings were not included in the decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate strategy, as responsibility for decarbonisation was delegated to other educational authorities such as school governing bodies, trusts and dioceses.
- It was suggested that the Tree Maintenance Strategy 2023 should be brought to the committee, before it was put to Cabinet towards the end of 2023. In considering the suggestion it was felt that the matter be considered at the work programming session for potential inclusion on the committee's work programme for 2023/24.
- The committee was informed that, following the installation of Photovoltaic Arrays (PV) in Clough, Leyland and Garstang libraries, that there were plans to utilise this technology in more libraries within the council's portfolio. The committee was informed that in the first instance, the policy was to undertake a fabric first approach and review requirements around insulation and maintenance of buildings and then switching out fossil fuel systems. A bid for funding from the Skills Fund setup by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero had been submitted to obtain support for detailed surveys to be carried out on council buildings and some libraries were included in the list. The outcomes of those surveys would help inform design schemes in readiness to procure suppliers and to then submit a bid from the Department's Capital Fund.
- It was noted that due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and change in working practices, energy usage within the county council buildings had reduced in recent years.
- The council was working with LASER to review land assets and the potential for energy generation. In addition, the council was looking specifically at the opportunities for the installation of renewables within the Lancashire County Council's operational property portfolio.
- LASER also provided technical expertise and advice to assist the council in submitting strong bids for additional funding.

Resolved: That; the report on Net Zero - Decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate and appendix B be noted.



10. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

11. Appendix B to Item 6 - Net Zero - Decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Resolved: That Appendix 'B' to Item 6 – Net Zero – Decarbonisation of Lancashire County Council Estate, be noted.

H MacAndrew
Director of Law and Governance

County Hall
Preston

