

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 APRIL 2023

Present:

Committee Members:	Councillor Brice (Chairman) and Councillors Brindle, Cannon, Cooke, Cox, English, Harper, Hinder and Munford
Lead Members:	Councillor Perry (Lead Member for Corporate Services)

113. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Gooch and Khadka.

114. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:

Councillor English for Councillor Khadka
Councillor Munford for Councillor Mrs Gooch

115. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

116. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

117. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

118. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

119. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

120. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

121. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

122. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from Local Residents.

123. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

124. FORWARD PLAN RELATING TO THE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference be noted.

125. BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN ANNUAL REVIEW

Councillor Perry, the Lead Member for Corporate Services, introduced a report setting out a revised Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan following the annual review. The Lead Member explained that:

- The purpose of the annual review was to bring the action plan up to date, taking into account relevant changes and new targets. The decision had been made to clarify which actions were within the Council's direct control and those that it could influence. Of the thirty-eight actions, ten were relevant to the Committee's terms of reference and at least five of these were building or construction related over which the Council had direct control.
- As part of the review, the opportunity had been taken to update the wording of the document to make it clearer and more concise and the actions had been aligned to the relevant Lead Members. However, it had to be said that the Action Plan affected all Members.

In response to questions, the Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager advised the Committee that:

- In terms of decarbonising the Council's buildings, the Officers had been working with APSI Energy to establish which were the biggest carbon emitters and develop a decarbonisation plan and timeline with priorities. With that in place, the Council could apply for funding to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for retrofitting and upgrading the Council's buildings and a similar process would be followed in subsequent years until the Council achieved as close to net zero as possible. Different ways of off-setting building by building would be considered as part of the decarbonisation plan.
- Fleet telematics software had been installed in all of the Council's vehicles and that had provided a good understanding of how vehicles were performing (mileage, idle time etc.) and been used to establish the carbon footprint of the fleet. A Green Fleet strategy had been developed by the Waste team, the idea being to look at the viability of upgrading to an electric vehicle when a vehicle reached the end of its life. At present this was a viable option for smaller vehicles up to transit van size. For bigger, more expensive vehicles, the

recommendation was to await developments in terms of nitrogen and other fuel types.

- An annual review process was built into the action plan. Performance indicators would be set up for all of the actions and progress on the implementation of the actions would continue to be monitored and updates given to the relevant Policy Advisory Committees on a six-monthly basis. With better data building by building, it would be possible to report back on the financial savings made.

During the discussion, Members were mindful of the tensions around support for local businesses and achieving the wider aim of carbon cost accounting in the procurement process, but did not feel it necessary to recommend amendment of the Action Plan.

The Committee welcomed the revised Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan as a comprehensive, strategic document, but agreed to recommend to the Executive that consideration be given to the appropriate way of giving more detail on how progress is being made on each action and how this Plan will be reported back on a six-monthly basis to the relevant Committees.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE:

1. That the updated Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan be approved.
2. That consideration be given to the appropriate way of giving more detail on how progress is being made on each action and how this Plan will be reported back on a six-monthly basis to the relevant Committees.

126. THANKS TO THE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed, seconded, and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Brice be thanked for her exemplary Chairmanship of the Committee over the last year.

127. DURATION OF MEETING

6.40 p.m. to 7.40 p.m.