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Climate Change Board

13 January 2022

A MEETING OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD WAS HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2022

Councillor Burgess

Councillors Mrs Huggins, Chegwyn, Hylands, Jessop, Johnston, Meenaghan and Mrs Morgan

63. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

There were no apologies, and reduced numbers

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

65. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD

66. DEPUTATIONS

There were none

67. PUBLIC QUESTIONS- STANDING ORDER 3.5

There were none

68. REDUCTION OF PAPER USE BY COUNCIL BOARDS

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Corporate Policy and Community Safety regarding the setting up of a Task & Finish Group to consider opportunities to reduce paper use by Council Boards.

In answer to a Members question, Officers advised that they were still collating data on paper use within the Town Hall and were liaising with other departments to obtain the figures.

A Member advised that there would need to be a cultural shift, and the technical infrastructure and such considerations as licenses for online provision of reports would need to be taken into account.

A Member advised that Hampshire County Council had been paperless for some years, with Councillors having no option.

Members recognised that some Councilors may struggle with long screen times due to sight/eye issues.

Members felt that all Councillors and Officers own and use some form of device, but recognised that IT issues were frequent and may need specialist support.

RESOLVED: That the Board approved the establishment of a Task & Finish Group to consider opportunities to reduce paper use by Council Boards and report back to the Climate Change Board within 6 months with its findings.

69. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report by the Climate Change Officer seeking approval for the Climate Change Strategy to be approved and recommended to Full Council.

In answer to a Members question Officers advised that the report author had received input from various officers across the Council, but there was no Member input into the draft report.

Members were advised that the strategy would need to be incorporated into the Policy Framework within the Constitution on its next update.

A Member commented that they felt the report was vague and weak, containing the barest minimum in order to be seen to be doing something, with no timescales, and needs tightening up.

A Member proposed an Amendment which was seconded.

Members were reminded that the Strategy was the aspiration not the action plan, and had been written in line with the agreed Framework.

A Member wished to allay the fears that Community and Youth Groups would not be listened to, and acknowledged that there were members of the community that were better informed on some matters than Members.

Members were keen to include young people and were disappointed that more had not come forward to join the Partnership, although they were advised that the Chair of the Partnership and the Principle of St Vincent's would be creating a working group from their pupils under the Partnership. There was hope that some other mechanism could be adopted to increase Youth engagement.

A Member wished to acknowledge the number of nature related initiatives already happening citing Grange Farm, the wild meadow programme and other eco systems in place.

A Member brought the Boards attention to Priority 10 within the strategy, and reminded them that the Draft Local Plan contained contingencies for protection of the natural environment.

The Board voted on the amendment:

Add at end:

- i) **With Forewords by a representative from each Political Group, not just a representative of the Conservative Party, the Foreword wording to be**

provided by each Political Group Leader and not be subject to approval or amendment by members of another Political Group

- ii) With the addition of a Council commitment to the terms of the 'Nature Emergency' motion from the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust which states:

We are in the middle of a nature crisis. Almost half of all UK wildlife is in long term decline and 15% of species are at risk of extinction. The climate emergency is only hastening this destruction of the natural environment, damaging habitats and disrupting ecosystems. Yet it is these very habitats that have the potential to lock up carbon and fight back against rising global temperatures. It is essential that we not only protect these spaces, but let them thrive - for the benefit of people, planet and nature.

As we recover from the COVID-19 crisis, the need for nature-rich green spaces where we live and work is clearer than ever and will help health, education and the economy build back stronger. We recognise that action must be taken now to remedy this and to put nature into recovery at a local level, in support of regional, national and international work to do the same.

This council resolves to:

1. Declare that we are experiencing a nature emergency, recognizing that:
 - a) Nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this.
 - b) A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society
 - c) The nature crisis and the climate emergency are intrinsically linked

RESOLVED: That the amendment was lost.

The Proposer felt that the amendment would have strengthened the document and no longer wished to be associated with it.

An Amendment was proposed and seconded.

A Member wanted to ensure that the Water companies would be included along with other utility companies.

The Board voted on the amendment:

Propose change to order and widen scope to specifically mention key organisations such as voluntary sector and utility companies to further highlight the breadth of key stakeholders needed to support change and our collective journey to net zero.

Engagement

Through community and individual action- The Council will encourage and enable individual and community action, helping address emissions and resilience measures over which the Council does not have direct control.

Through young people- the Council recognizes the long-term interest of young people, so it is exploring engagement preferences to ensure that these mechanisms are appropriate and effective.

Through business- The Council will seek to empower local business to build a green economy and not only adapt but be part of the solution and seek innovation. The Borough's Local Plan will have climate change at its centre with other strategies and policies aligning accordingly.

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Through key organisations- The Council will work with the third sector, government bodies, education establishments, utility companies, housing associations, transport operators, strategic partnerships and other bodies that have the potential to make significant impact.

RESOLVED: That the Board agreed the amendment.

A Member was concerned that the endorsement or statement of intent had been included without the agreement of all Party Leaders.

Members were reminded that the inclusion of the endorsement or statement of intent had been included in the framework for the Climate Change strategy and been voted in favour for at the last Board meeting. Its purpose was as a statement to acknowledge Climate Change and the need to take action.

Members discussed the need for an amendment to remove the placeholder statement, but none was proposed.

RESOLVED: That the Board approved the Climate Change Strategy with the amendment and recommended to Full Council that it be adopted.

70. ANY OTHER ITEMS

CHAIRMAN

Concluded at 7.02 pm