

# Climate Change Advisory Committee

Notes of a Meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Committee held on the **24<sup>th</sup> March 2022**.

## **Present:**

Cllr. Barrett (Chairman);  
Cllr. Feacey (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Anckorn, Blanford, Campkin, Ledger.

## **Apology:**

Cllr. Mulholland

## **Also Present:**

Cllrs. Clokie, Ovenden, Walder.

Head of Environment & Land Management, Head of Housing, Housing Asset Manager, Development & Regeneration Manager, Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager, Strategy and Policy Development Manager, Project Manager Carbon Neutrality, Waste & Recycle Education Officer, Member Services Officer.

## **1. Declaration of Interest**

- 1.1 Cllr. Feacey made a Voluntary Announcement, as he was on the Management Committee of UK LPG.
- 1.2 Cllr. Walder made a Voluntary Announcement, as her husband worked on a project called GAPP.

## **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- 2.1 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th and 17th January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **3. Housing Decarbonisation Project**

- 3.1 The Housing Asset Manager introduced this item and made a supporting presentation to the Committee in addition to the report, which set out the Council's objectives to achieve the net zero carbon agenda. The presentation covered the following subjects and points:
  - Stock background
  - The Energy Survey by Engie
  - Meeting the Challenge

- Dovetailing into the PM Programme
- Grant Funding
- History
- Engie Survey Data
- Social Housing Retrofit Accelerator
- EON

3.2 The presentation was then opened up to the Committee and the following points and questions were raised:-

- The Housing Asset Manager elaborated on some acronyms used in the presentation including an Archetype, which was a concise type of property (where each property could be matched to an Archetype). SAP stood for Standard Assessment Procedure for measuring the energy efficiency of a property. Equans was the new name for the company previously known as Engie.
- A Member commented how encouraging it was to see that ABC had been looking at carbon and energy efficiency for the last couple of decades, and were now well prepared for the task of zero carbon emissions. She asked if Members could receive breakdowns of ward allocations and how they were performing.
- ABC had previously been unsuccessful in their bid for the Government Decarbonisation fund and a Member asked if anything could be done to ensure a successful outcome in future. Engie and the Social Housing Accelerator and EON could assist ABC with completing the application for the bid admissions. The data shown was unavailable at the time of earlier bid submission, but now it was available it would greatly assist with the bidding process.
- The Head of Housing spoke about alternative sources of electricity and explained that the cost for council tenants could be prohibitive. It was something the Council were considering and expected central government were as well.
- A programme of works for double-glazing and loft insulation had been designed and the cost of this was being considered in terms of offsetting.
- ABC worked closely with other Local Authorities, with the Head of Housing chairing the Kent Housing Group. There was also a newly formed Asset Management Group.
- The installation of triple glazing windows was not considered beneficial and the cost was too great to justify.
- A full time Officer to assist with bidding processes was highly desirable, and the Head of Environment & Land Management advised there was a working assumption that a two-person Climate Change

team would be implemented in the future. In the meantime, assistance was being sought from Equans and EON with bid applications.

- ABC Officers had researched Energysprong and deemed it too costly to achieve. Half of ABC properties already met EPC ratings with good energy credentials.
- A Member asked what carbon offset measures the Housing Team had in mind. The Housing Assets Manager explained that the option appraisals had not yet been processed, so he was unable to provide that specific information at this stage. This was something that would be available in the future, further down the line.
- The cost of implementing measures to bring a property to a minimum EPC Band C was estimated at an average cost around £35k per property, would include planned maintenance work. These figures would be revisited once the data had been collated. In addition, an annual review of the HRA plan would also be undertaken – the HRA was ring fenced and could not go into deficit. The current housing stock figure was 4900. It was estimated that approximately 50% of those properties required improvements.
- Two properties were still in EPC Band G and some still in F. The least efficient properties were often easier to make changes to increase to band C, as the measures needed were fairly standard and easy to implement. The ones just below D were expected to already have standard measures such as double-glazing, insulated walls and roofs, and so it was often more challenging to bring these up into band C.
- The Chairman thanked the Head of Housing and Housing Asset Manager for their presentations and he asked the Head of Housing to report to him when Housing were in a position to prepare the next report for the Committee. He had visited Berry Place and had noted that there was extra capacity for a solar array on the roof. The Head of Housing assured the Chairman this was already a consideration for the Housing Team.

**Resolved:**

**That the Report be received and noted.**

## **4. PV on Roofs Report**

- 4.1 The Development & Regeneration Manager introduced this item and said that he concurred that it was important to maximise use of solar photovoltaic (PV) on Council buildings. He then gave a presentation to the Committee, which covered the following topics/themes:

- 100 arrays and projects initiated to produce sustainable energy
- Carlton Road
- Stour Centre Car Park
- Ellingham Industrial Estate
- Blindrooms Lane
- Challenges
- Future of the Programme

4.2.1 The presentation was then opened up to the Committee and the following points and questions were raised:-

- The Chairman asked the Development & Regeneration Manager to send an email to the Committee to advise when he expected the tender process for procuring solar panels to begin.
- The Chairman wanted noted his request for the Council to acquire a site (if not Blindrooms Lane, then an alternative) for a solar panel array. The Development & Regeneration Manager confirmed that the Council were always on alert for alternative sites, as and when they became available. Sites including Julie Rose car park were being considered and more innovative methods including cladding.
- Animal grazing could continue at sites where solar arrays were installed. The ecological impact was minimal.
- In response to a question asking whether solar panels could be installed on privately owned houses, it was confirmed that domestic properties can become carbon heavy due to the need for individual inverters.
- A request was made for a timeline for each project/initiative. Post Meeting Note – The Head of Environment & Land Management advised that each project was on Pentana and were being updated there as they were in pursuit of the agreed Corporate Plan. Consideration would be given as to how best to pull them out and represent them for the Committee.
- Concerning Carlton Road and the sleeving agreement, a Member asked whether ABC were technically able to run cables to provide electricity to other sites. The Development & Regeneration explained that there was not much take up presently for this. He added that where the Council had influence was where they would endeavour to reduce the carbon footprint.
- The Chairman requested a brief be emailed to him regarding the viability of Blindrooms Lane in Kingsnorth for a large solar array.
- A member commented that the lifespan of solar PV was in the region of 20 years, and therefore the ones on the Stour centre would soon approach the end of their life cycle. She asked whether newer replacement panels would takes up smaller space. The effectiveness of panels had increased over time, so rather than reduce the size of the array, it was more carbon efficient to increase the number of panels. Consultation and consideration was

undertaken when installing them in car parks, as to the impact on the surrounding environment.

- The Chairman thanked the Development & Regeneration Manager for his report and asked he attend the Committee in July to discuss the viability of a wind farm in Ashford.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be received and noted.**

## **5. Tree Planting Project Update**

- 5.1 The Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager gave a presentation to the Committee, which outlined and gave details on the project through the following headings:
- Project Background
  - Heat Mapping Exercise
  - Our Planting Approach
  - Progress to date
  - Community Engagement
  - Impact of Plantations
  - Miyakwi Method
  - William Road
  - Next Steps
- 5.2 A Member commented that there was some Parishes were becoming confused when completing the paperwork, and the Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager confirmed that he and the Head of Environment & Land Management were happy to assist any Parishes, and the deadline was not set in stone. Community Forums were also invited to be involved in the project
- 5.3 The % of trees likely to be lost would hopefully be under 5%. The impact of a dry summer could increase losses, but obviously, it was impossible to predict the British weather through the summer. Nature would be left to take its course and the whips were very hardy so would hopefully endure and take root. The possibility of orchards being planted was raised and the Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager said that there would be opportunities for this in the future; fruit trees were more expensive than whips and not always available at the sizes for the trees in this particular project.
- 5.4 Funding for the project was predominantly from the Forestry Commission.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be received and noted**

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