

Minutes of a Meeting of the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held remotely via video conferencing on Wednesday, 26 May 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Marc Davies (Chairman), Clive Davies, Euros Davies, Gareth Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies, Meirion Davies, Elizabeth Evans, Keith Evans, Gwyn James, Dai Mason and John Roberts

Also in attendance: Councillors Rhodri Evans, Gareth Lloyd and Alun Williams (Cabinet Members)

Officer in attendance: Mr Russell Hughes-Pickering- CLO Economy and Regeneration, Mr Lyndon Griffiths – Corporate Manager, Property Services, Mrs Bethan Lloyd Davies, Carbon Reduction Energy and Asset Management Performance Manager, Mr Allan Bailey, Programme Manager, Mrs Lisa Evans, Scrutiny Support and Standards Officer and Mrs Dana Jones, Democratic Services and Standards Officer

(10:00a.m. – 11:35am.)

1 Procedure

In the absence of the Chair at the start of the meeting, it was agreed that the meeting be chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Euros Davies.

2 Apologies

Councillor Lyndon Lloyd MBE and Rhodri Davies apologised their inability to attend the meeting.

3 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None.

4 Achieving Net Zero by 2030 - Action Plan

Consideration was given to the Report and Action Plan on Achieving Net Zero. The Carbon Reduction Energy and Asset Management Performance Manager provided Members with a power point presentation. It was reported that at the Full Council meeting of Ceredigion County Council on the 20 June 2019 agreed to:

- Commit to making Ceredigion a net zero carbon Local Authority by 2030
- Develop a clear plan for a route towards being net zero carbon within 12 months
- Call on Welsh and UK Governments to provide the necessary support and resources to enable effective carbon reductions

Further to this, on the 5th March 2020, Ceredigion County Council declared a global climate emergency, committing to meeting the most significant challenge facing our county and our planet.

It was reported that the document sets out how the County Council intend to respond to the climate emergency. It explains why they need this Net Zero Carbon Action Plan and why the 2030 target was so important to tackling climate change. The Action Plan assesses Ceredigion's current operational carbon emissions and outlines the challenges associated with the ambitious 2030 target.

The Focus of the net-zero action plan was as follows:

The focus was currently upon operational energy usage and emissions (Scope 1 and 2 emissions), as these are routinely recorded and calculated annually as part of the annual review of the Carbon Management Plan. There was a need to calculate and understand the carbon footprint of the Local Authority as a whole (to include Scope 3 emissions), which would be undertaken once the Welsh Government publish their reporting methodology, release of which has been delayed by COVID. The additional emission sources will likely include:

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|-----|-------------------------|
| (1) | Mobility and Transport; |
| (2) | Procurement; |
| (3) | Land Use; and |
| (4) | Buildings. |

This Plan had been formed based on the Member-led motion put forward in June 2019, the contents should be considered on the basis of whether it articulates the desired vision going forward.

Anticipated Next Steps:-

Short-term (next 3 - 12 months)

- Net Zero Action Plan to Cabinet/Council
- Integration of Net-Zero Action plan into Corporate Priorities, to ensure progress is monitored and reported.
- Further work to progress schemes already identified, which will contribute to delivery of emission reductions
- Continue discussions with Welsh Government and District Network operators over grid capacity issues within the county.

Medium-term (next 18 months - 2 years)

• Upon release of Welsh Government reporting methodology, full baseline exercise needs to be undertaken, to expand emission monitoring to also include emissions from:

- Mobility and Transport;
- Procurement;
- Land Use; and
- Buildings.

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As a result, there would be many other actions that emerge over time, which will need to be identified and progressed further.

- Once the Council had a complete baseline carbon footprint, they would be able to look more specifically at projects and schemes that would contribute to emission reduction and carbon offsetting – this would also need significant financial investment.
- Continue work that is effective in delivering emission reductions, focus on projects that are proven to deliver positive outcomes.
- Analyse and assess where information, resources and policy changes are needed to support the move towards net zero carbon.
- Initial annual review and update of Net Zero Action Plan – to Scrutiny, Cabinet summer 2022.

Long-term (next 2+ years)

- Net-Zero Action Plan to be reviewed and updated periodically, to ensure progress.
- Further delivery of projects that provide significant carbon reductions, these will likely be more complex, larger in scale and value, this may include carbon sequestration, tree planting.
- Zero carbon working practices should now be embedded throughout Local Authority working practices
- All new schemes, projects and developments in Ceredigion should be being delivered in a manner that contributes to our net-zero ambitions

Several members stated that they agreed in principle with the need to address this issue, however, concerns were raised regarding the cost implications of this plan to achieve the targets outlined; and that a business plan was required. In response, Officers stated that the plan had derived from the motion of the County Council. It was reported that the actual plan was achievable as work had already been carried out with numerous projects in the past and future achieving zero carbon. It was reported that funding would be available from the Welsh Government to assist and therefore a plan in place as detailed as this was required.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED:-

- (i) that a cross party working group be established as part of the current carbon group to push forward the plan;
- (ii) that the committee receive a regular update report every six months; and
- (iii) to recommend to Cabinet that they write to WG on the urgency of providing the reporting methodology

5 Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 03 March 2021 and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes

It was AGREED to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 03 March 2021.

Minute 4- Ash Dieback – An update would be obtained from Officers on the cost implication of this plan.

6 Forward Work Programme 2021/22

It was AGREED to note the content of the Forward Work Programme 2021/22 as presented subject to following additional items in the future:-

Ash Dieback - update

Achieving Net Zero by 2030- every six months

Refuse collection

Confirmed at the meeting of the Committee held on xxxxx