

CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP
Thursday 15 August 2019 at 7.30 pm
Committee Room 1 - Civic Centre

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive Councillors' declarations of interest (if any) in relation to any matters on the agenda.
3. Minutes (Pages 2 - 5)
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2019.
4. Matters arising
Any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.
5. Climate Change Strategy - Initial Report (Pages 6 - 10)
6. Work Plan (Page 11)
To review the Overview Working Group's work plan for the current year.
7. Matters of Urgent Business
Such other business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be received as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances to be specified in the minutes.

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP
HELD ON**

14 March 2019

7.30 - 9.10 pm

PRESENT

Overview Working Group Members

Councillor Tony Durcan (Chair)
Councillor Tony Edwards (Vice-Chair)
Councillor David Carter
Councillor Simon Carter
Councillor Jean Clark
Councillor Bob Davis
Councillor Michael Garnett
Councillor Maggie Hulcoop

Officers

Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing
Simon Hill, Head of Governance
Christine Howard, Youth and Citizenship Manager
Mark Philpott, Development Manager
Michael Pitt, Environment and Licensing Manager
Adam Rees, Governance Support Officer

26. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

27. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

28. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2019 be agreed as a correct record, subject to the removal of the duplicate entry of Councillor Simon Carter in the list of those present.

29. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

30. **WORK PLAN**

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted.

31. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - FINAL REPORT**

The Working Group received a final report on the Community Engagement Strategy, which set out an updated Strategy for adoption by Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the Working Group recommends to Cabinet that:

A The draft Community Engagement Strategy (attached as Appendix A to the report) be approved.

32. **HOUSES OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION - QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH THE LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

The Chair outlined the format of the question and answer session which would be as follows:

- a) Twenty minutes each for the Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing, and the Portfolio Holder for Environment to give their presentation and answer any questions.
- b) Twenty minutes for the Working Group to discuss Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
- c) Ten minutes to summarise and make a recommendation.

The Chair invited Councillor Mark Ingall, Leader of the Council, to the meeting. In response to questions by the Working Group, the Leader outlined the current arrangements surrounding HMOs. The 2004 Housing Act allowed councils to have an additional five year scheme for HMOs.

Some HMOs were well run, however where they were badly run this caused issues for tenants of the HMOs, as well as neighbouring residents. The number of HMOs was increasing and they were useful to the housing stock. It was important to use enforcement to ensure that existing HMOs were well run and that future HMOs were subject to planning controls.

The Leader said that Article 4 Directions prevented development under Permitted Development rights. They were not retrospective, but brought developments back within the Council's planning controls.

He hoped to see some form of landlord accreditation scheme and extra resources for enforcement so the Council could take a proactive role.

The Leader said that he felt a town wide Article 4 Direction would be beneficial, but enforcement also needed to be strengthened.

The Chair thanked the Leader for his contribution and welcomed Councillor Danny Purton, Portfolio Holder for Environment, to the meeting.

In response to questions, Councillor Purton said that HMOs were carried out under Permitted Development. There was a need to ensure that HMOs in existing developments met the same standards they would be expected to meet in new developments.

Covenant controls existed on all dwellings in Harlow, however the legal position was that there needed to be a legal reason to enforce them. The advice was that no such reason existed and therefore the conversion of housing to HMOs had been allowed.

Councillor Purton said that Article 4 Directions would mean that all HMOs would have to meet standard requirements in order to be granted planning permission. It was explained that any application for converting a property to a HMO would be subject to the Council's planning scheme of delegation.

Councillor Purton said he advocated a town wide Article 4 Direction.

The Chair thanked Councillor Purton and welcomed Councillor Mark Wilkinson, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing to the meeting.

Councillor Wilkinson said that he welcome any further controls on HMOs. They were critical in addressing housing need in Harlow and it was important they met certain standards.

Consistent enforcement of HMOs was needed and this should be carried out at an Officer level. There would be an additional resource requirement to enforce existing HMOs, and a further resource requirement if a town wide Article 4 Direction is implemented.

Councillor Wilkinson said he supported a town wide Article 4 Direction.

The Working Group agreed that Cabinet should be asked to look at the implementation of a town wide Article 4 Direction. The Working Group also agreed that sufficient resourcing needed to be made available to implement an Article 4 Direction and to support any planning and licensing enforcement surrounding HMOs.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Overview Working Group recommended to Cabinet that:

A A report is brought to the Cabinet meeting in December, which sets out:

- i) The steps for implementing a town wide Article 4 Direction which prevents the conversion of properties to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) under Permitted Development rights, with a view to the Council seeking the Secretary of State's approval to implement the Direction.

ii) The resource implications for:

- Implementing a town wide Article 4 Direction.
- Enforcing HMO licensing under the current licensing scheme.
- Enforcing HMO licensing should a town wide Direction be implemented.
- Planning enforcement arising from the implementation of a town wide Direction.
- Considering any planning applications arising from a town wide Direction.

33. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW
WORKING GROUP

REPORT TO: CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP

DATE: 15 AUGUST 2019

TITLE: CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY – INITIAL REPORT

LEAD OFFICERS: SENIOR MANAGEMENT BOARD (01279) 446004

CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS: REBECCA FARRANT, OPERATIONS MANAGER (01279) 446811

DEAN JAMES, OPERATIONS MANAGER (01279) 6687

RECOMMENDED that:

A The Working Group notes the report and the progress made to date.

BACKGROUND

1. The Climate Change Act 2008 established a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80 per cent in 2050 from 1990 levels. In June 2019, the Government passed new laws to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.
2. The Council recognises the importance of reducing its carbon footprint and use of resources in both its own operations and across the district and how this contributes to government legislation. In 2011 the Council adopted its first Carbon Management Plan, achieving a 25 per cent reduction over five years from building and transport related emissions, totalling 1083 tonnes of carbon. The Council's Carbon Management Plan 2016-2021 set the Council a target to reduce its carbon emissions by 25 per cent from its 2014/15 baseline emissions of 2,700,000kg (2,700 tonnes), the equivalent to 675 tonnes. On 18 July 2019, Cabinet agreed to extend the Carbon Management Plan timeline to 2021/22, unless the target is reached prior to this date.
3. At the Full Council meeting of 11 July 2019, Councillors unanimously backed a motion to declare a climate emergency in Harlow. The Council has made a number of commitments to prevent climate change, including reducing the council's net carbon emissions as far as possible and reducing the carbon footprint at a greater rate than it is already committed to do so, along with actions relating the effects of activities, beyond those directly emitting carbon into the atmosphere, on the wider environment.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

4. It has been identified that the climate emergency motion can be divided into three main work streams: Property, Environment and Community Leadership. Specific actions identified as part of the climate emergency declaration include installing photovoltaic panels on all public council buildings within the next two years where possible and new council built houses having a minimal carbon footprint. Progress on these actions is already being made. This includes:
 - a) Updated feasibility studies for photovoltaic panel installation at Civic Centre, Latton Bush Centre, Playhouse and Mead Park Depot are being commissioned, along with new studies for Leah Manning and Harlow Museum (previous studies in 2011 found installation to be unfeasible on grounds of cost, but there has been sufficient reduction in manufacturing costs for panels to re-visit this); and
 - b) Officers actively exploring options to minimise the carbon footprint of properties within its house building programme - set to deliver 177 new homes by 2022/23 - including construction process. Such options include:
 - i) Installation of insulation levels in line with Passivhaus standards;
 - ii) Alternative heating solutions in line with Climate Change Committee recommendations;
 - iii) Methods of increasing biodiversity, including SuDS, at each site;
 - iv) Identifying and using 'green' materials with low/zero carbon footprint;
 - v) Methods of reducing fleet and plant emissions during the construction of each site; and
 - vi) Installation of electric car charge points at a rate of one per 20 homes for new developments
5. The climate emergency motion also includes the creation of an action plan which focuses on reducing the impact of day to day living on the environment beyond that caused by greenhouse gas emissions. A number of short, medium and long term proposals for consideration have been set out for each of the three climate emergency motion work streams in the tables below. These proposals are likely to form a part of any future climate emergency strategies to be devised, once appropriate appraisals of viability in terms of financial and environmental impact have been carried out.

Table 1 – Property Work Stream

Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5+ years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating the use of single use plastics across all public council buildings by January 2020 • Installing photovoltaic panels on all public council buildings within the next two years where possible • Identify other energy efficiency measures to reduce carbon emissions i.e LED Lighting, on site energy generation • Encourage staff to cycle to work and further promote the cycle to work scheme • Encourage the adoption of water efficiency measures across all Council operational/public buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procure 100% renewable energy as part of energy supply contracts for electricity • Offset carbon emissions from gas consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd to switch over to electric power vehicles, plant and machinery • Switch over Harlow Council fleet to electric vehicles • Encouraging Veolia to consider alternative vehicles/fuel for vehicles when collecting household waste • Harlow Council to consider procuring own electric vehicle car pool fleet for staff to use for work purposes

Table 2 – Environment Work Stream

Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5+ years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting 1,000 new trees and hedgerows across the town in the next year. • Devise further tree planting strategies for the medium to long term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the building of new carbon neutral Council housing/retrofitting of existing Council housing stock to be carbon neutral • Consider planting of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging HTS to source battery technology for its electric vehicles from companies who ensure environmentally friendly lithium mining techniques

	<p>wildflower verges to reduce emissions, promote health and wellbeing and increase biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of water fountains in public places that reduces the use of single use plastic water bottles 	
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Table 3 – Community Leadership Work Stream

Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5+ years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promote schemes to encourage children to walk to school such as the Walking Bus initiative and WOW • Actively work with local stakeholders to reduce the use of single use plastics/single use items • Actively work with Public Health England to promote awareness of carbon emissions related to food production • Actively work with stakeholders and the public to promote the message of reducing waste • Work with community groups to promote and assist in tree planting schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirming the council's commitment to the Garden Town development's principles of sustainable transport. • Installing electric car charging points across all council car parks within the next five years where possible • Promoting the installation of electric car charging points in residential areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use/installation of SuDs on all large new builds in line with Planning Policy

IMPLICATIONS

Place (Includes Sustainability)

The proposals set out in this report demonstrate the Council's commitment to tackling climate change and will set some good practice standards in meeting the sustainability objectives set out in the emerging Local Development Plan.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Project Director – Enterprise Zone and Head of Environment and Planning

Finance (Includes ICT)

It is currently envisaged that the proposed projects will be funded in the main through the non-housing capital programme and that where scheme funding is not already allocated bids will be progressed as part of the capital programme refresh later in the appropriate financial year through the normal annual budget processes.

Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Deputy to the Chief Executive

Housing

As outlined in the report. The Plan will support ongoing energy efficiency initiatives that contribute to client change and is resourced and is being delivered as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing

Community Wellbeing (Includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

None beyond those contained within the report.

Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing

Governance (Includes HR)

The proposals within the report are in line with the approved referral made to Cabinet Overview Working Group, via Cabinet, from Full Council on 11 July 2019. If measures are approved by Members then suitable KPIs could be introduced to ensure effective monitoring.

Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None.

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

LED – Light Emitting Diode

SuDS – Sustainable Drainage Systems

WoW – Walk on Wednesdays

Cabinet Overview Working Group Work Plan 2019/20

Work	Thursday 15 August 2019	Thursday 10 October 2019	Thursday 28 November 2019	Thursday 16 January 2020	Wednesday 12 March 2020
Regeneration Strategy		Interim Report			Final Report
Local Council Tax Support Scheme			Report		
Treasury Management Strategy			Strategy Review		
Housing Strategy		Interim Report			Final Report
Climate Change Strategy	Initial Report				