

CLEANER & GREENER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. McArthur (Chairman)

Cllrs. Bayley, Collins, G. Darrington, Griffiths, Raikes and Roy

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Barnett, Dr. Canet, Carroll and Firth

Cllrs. P. Darrington and Purves were also present.

Cllr. Andrews was also present via virtual media platform, which does not constitute attendance as recognised by the Local Government Act 1972.

1. Appointment of Chairman

Resolved: That Cllr McArthur be appointed Chairman of the Advisory Committee for 2021/22.

(Cllr McArthur in the Chair)

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

Resolved: That Cllr Carroll be appointed Vice Chairman of the Advisory Committee for 2021/22.

3. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee held on 16 March 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

5. Actions from Previous Meeting (if any)

There were none.

6. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman, gave an update on services within her portfolio. From the 1 July 2021, the Dartford and Sevenoaks Environmental Health

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Partnership would come to a close and the Environmental Health team would return to the Council Offices in Sevenoaks.

Within Direct Services, a parking enforcement contract with Tandridge District Council had been won for the next three years and a tender had been put in for 15 additional electric vehicle charging points from Kent County Council for the Council's car parks. There had been a restructure of staff as well as a refurbishment of the offices at Dunbrik. A solar powered bin had been brought to Bligh's Meadow in Sevenoaks Town for a trial run. The Waste and Recycling service had been a finalist in the Association Public Services Excellence Team of the Year Award.

The Licensing team had resumed the taxi knowledge test for new applications for drivers. There was new safeguarding training which was underway. Pavement licensing had been introduced to help hospitality businesses, this had been a success particularly on Bank Street in Sevenoaks Town.

It was acknowledged that the work of Facilities Management had allowed more staff to return to work in the offices quickly following the Covid-19 lockdown.

7. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee (if any)

There were none.

8. Net Zero 2030 Update - Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy

The Principal Planning Officer (Policy) presented a report which outlined the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy (LEEVs) as part of the Council's commitment to be Net Zero by 2030. Transport remained the largest carbon emitting sector in the UK and Sevenoaks District had the highest level of registered electric vehicle ownership in Kent. The Strategy would aim to help the Council promote low carbon travel, improve the electric vehicle charging network across the district and continue the transition to a zero-carbon emissions vehicle fleet wherever possible.

Members asked questions of clarification. It was clarified that there were currently charging points at 12 locations across the District as shown on the map within the report. Use of hydrogen technologies had also been considered as well as electric vehicles. Members were advised that the length of time it took to charge the vehicles depended on the type of charging point and vehicle as they varied, however, those with off street parking could also charge at home. Currently, the charging points in the Council's car parks were free to use.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impact under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

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Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy, be agreed.

9. Air Quality - Update on the Development of a new Air Quality Action Plan

The Acting Environmental Health Manager presented the report which updated Members on air quality within the District. The Department of Environment Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had required the Council to publish its air quality monitoring data. The District was showing trends of improvement therefore it was proposed that 5 of the 9 existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) be requested to be revoked. It was proposed that a Working Group be set up to consider measures to be introduced in the Air Quality Action Plan and that the 'Air Alert' scheme be brought to a close.

Members asked questions and discussed the report. It was clarified that the proposed AQMAs the Council would request to revoke had been consistently below the national objective levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) or small particulates (PM₁₀) and were very unlikely to exceed them. Air Quality was generally worse in areas where vehicles had to accelerate and decelerate such as town centres.

Members discussed measures to encourage residents to do more active travel and drive less in order to reduce local air pollution including collaboration with Kent County Council on schemes such as developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M20 AQMA on the basis of the assessment undertaken by BV, be agreed;
- b) officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M25 AQMA (PM₁₀) on the basis of the assessment undertaken by BV, be agreed;
- c) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO₂ levels do not exceed objective levels at the roundabout at London Road, Westerham and residential properties along the A224 and B221 near to the M25, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M25 AQMA (NO₂), be agreed;
- d) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO₂ levels do not exceed objective levels at receptors along the A224 London Road flyover, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of M26 AQMA, be agreed;

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- e) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO₂ levels do not exceed objective levels as residential properties at Phillip Avenues / Ladds Way / Cyclamen Road, Swanley, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the A20 AQMA, be agreed;
- f) following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener, the Deputy Chief Executive & Chief Officer of Planning & Regulatory Services' constitution of a Working Group of up to 15 Members and Officers (with a quorum of 5) to develop a shortlist of workable measures to be tested (scenario testing) to quantify their impact upon Air Quality within the AQMA, explore possible measures which could be included in the Action Plan and report to the next Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee, be authorised; and
- g) the District Council's withdrawal from the 'Air Alert' scheme as provided by Sussex Air and Imperial College and alternate and comparable 'Air Alert' information be made available on the Council's website, be agreed.

10. Work Plan

The work plan was noted with the addition of an item on Tree Policy and an item on Budget 2022/23: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) at the meeting on 12 October 2021.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.00 PM

CHAIRMAN