

Notes

Carbon Neutral Working Group

Date:	Tuesday, 3 August 2021
Venue:	Remote meeting via Zoom
Present:	<p><u>Councillors</u></p> <p>Tommy Threlfall (Chairman), Noreen Griffiths, Jayne Nixon, Bobby Rigby, Stan Trudgill and Viv Willder.</p> <p><u>Officers</u></p> <p>Tracy Manning, Kathy Winstanley, Mark Evans, Steve Fulton, Andrew Loynd and Gareth Matthews.</p>
Note Taker:	Hannah Kirk

1. Introductions and apologies

The Chairman, Councillor Tommy Threlfall, welcomed those in attendance to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillor Karen Henshaw and Councillor Chris Dixon.

2. Working Group Terms of Reference

Tracy Manning, Director of Resources, introduced a draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group. In doing this, she highlighted the role and function of the Working Group would be to provide recommendations to fulfil the actions within the Fylde Corporate Plan 2020/24 with respect to the following:

- Implement carbon reduction policies including plastics reduction, tree planting, energy efficiency and recycling.
- Design education and awareness programmes to support carbon reduction policies and actions; and
- Work with partners to deliver carbon reduction.

The first meeting of the Carbon Neutral Working Group would be to provide the opportunity for members to receive an overview from each of the lead officers on the respective areas. It was agreed that the first phase of the work of the Working Group would focus on how policy can be shaped to support carbon reduction for council led activities and initiatives.

At this juncture, the Chairman reiterated that he wanted continuity within the group and requested that members refrained from sending substitutes where possible, to ensure that expertise could be developed.

3. Subject Area Overviews

a. Tree planting situation report

Mark Evans, Head of Planning and Housing, gave a brief overview of the tree planting situation within Fylde. He advised that work had previously been done on increasing the number of trees planted within the borough through the Arboriculture and Landscape Strategy Working Group, which would be

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continued under the remit of the Carbon Neutral Working Group. It was confirmed that a document which would include emphasis on new developments having trees within them had been near to completion for some time. However, updates to the National Planning Policy Framework had led to amendments being needed. It was planned that this would go as a report to the Planning Committee for approval soon.

Mr. Evans also highlighted a new concept that was being worked up as part of the Council's capital programme which involves giving 15 trees to the 15 parish councils of Fylde to plant within their boundaries. It was planned that this would coincide with National Tree Week, which was due to take place from 27 November - 5 December 2021, as it was thought that this would have the greatest impact. It was reported that there was £25,000 budget to increase tree cover and that various bodies were being liaised with, such as The Woodland Trust, to maximise the budget.

Action: To consider the draft Arboriculture and Landscape Strategy at a future meeting prior to the Planning Committee be invited to adopt the same.

b. Electric charging points

Andrew Loynd, Technical Support Manager, gave a summary of electric charging points. He explained that there were 3 aspects to this: the Council's own fleet, provisions for the public on Council-owned land and provisions for the public on the highway. It was reported that the provisions for taxis on car parks was expected to be delivered over the coming months and would be open to public usage at first at there would be initial surplus capacity before the taxi trade geared up for full capacity use of the points.

Mr. Loynd advised the Working Group that there were 2 types of electric vehicle chargers to consider - fast chargers, which take up to 4 hours to reach a full charge and rapid chargers, which take between 30 minutes and an hour to do the same. Consideration had to be given on where the chargers could be placed due to the demand on electricity, in particular the rapid chargers. Mr Loynd further advised that while some proposals to location had been suggested, further investigation would be required as to the suitability due to the utility infrastructure.

When responding to questions, Mr. Loynd confirmed that following on from a recent report published by the government, it was said that of the 5,700 on-street chargers in the country, only 1,000 of them could be found outside of London.

Action: To consider policy principles with respect to Electric Charging Points at a future meeting of the Working Group.

c. Plastics reduction

Kathy Winstanley, Head of Health and Environment outlined the work being done on plastics reduction. She reported that work on the reduction of single use plastics had commenced some years ago. It was advised that the best strategy was to look at Fylde Council's policies on single use plastics, to then lead by example with local businesses and residents.

Mrs. Winstanley further advised that an audit of the Council's current single use plastic usage would help to inform an action plan that could be discussed with the Working Group, with the ultimate aim to work towards being zero single use plastic and to establish some targets to achieve as close to this as is feasible.

The Chairman informed those in attendance that Keith Ashcroft, the Area Director for Cumbria and Lancashire at the Environment Agency, had offered to provide some insight into the Environment Agency's approach to plastics reduction and he felt that it might be helpful, prior to embarking the audit process, to invite Kathy to attend the forthcoming meeting. An update on this area of work would be given to members of the Working Group at its next meeting.

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Action: To pause work on reviewing the internal use of plastics within the council until the forthcoming meeting with the Environment Agency to gain insight into how the agency has promoted this work.

d. Energy efficiency (buildings assets: gas, water, electric and energy efficiency)

Mr. Loynd offered a further report on energy efficiency across the Council's building assets. He offered various figures on the electric, gas and water supplies and advised that as the costs for utilities had increased over the past years, the amount spend across the Council's assets had stayed the same which reinforced the positive steps that had been taken to reduce the environmental impact. Work had been done to change street lighting across the Borough to LEDs and all refurbishments of Council-owned buildings and assets had taken into consideration improvements that could be done regarding energy efficiency.

When responding to questions, it was confirmed that solar panel systems had been explored but many of the buildings, such as the Town Hall, would not be suitable for this technology. However, the two main buildings at the depot could host such systems.

Action: To develop policy principles with respect to energy efficiency within building assets at a future meeting of the Working Group.

e. Fleet

Steve Fulton, Fleet and Depot Manager, gave an overview on the current fleet. He confirmed that there were currently no electric vehicles in the fleet but that it was an area being explored and vans had been trialled in the past. However, despite the advancing technology, it was difficult to find a vehicle that would not need regular charging due to the long distances into rural areas and the high-powered usage.

Mr. Fulton advised that within the capital replacement programme, vehicles were replaced every 4-7 years and that there was a small van and the mayoral car up for replacement in 2022 and that subject to funding, electric replacements could be sourced. Further to this, the current fleet was due to be replaced in 3 to 4 years' time and the cost of electric replacements would need to be discussed within the Working Group, as they could cost up to £400,000 each for a refuse vehicle, in comparison to the last vehicles purchased which were circa £150,000. Substantive use of electric vehicles going forward would also require an electricity sub-station to be installed at the depot so clearly this area required careful consideration. Combined with the potential costs, there was also the issue that this market was still maturing and shifting all the time with limited players (just one) in the market for larger vehicles like the refuse vehicles. For this reason, members agreed that this might be more of an area to keep a watching brief on whilst testing the market with respect some smaller vehicle purchases in the short-term.

It was reported that the Fleet Management Strategic contained commentary on vehicle replacements and the content of this could be reviewed by the Working Group. Mrs. Winstanley followed this by confirming that every possible option would be explored within the tender and procurement procedure when looking at replacements with a view to considering the cost-benefit analysis of some of the smaller replacements to be electric replacements namely a small van and the mayoral car which were both due to be replaced in 2022/23.

Action: To review the vehicle replacement commentary within the Fleet Management Strategic at a future meeting of the Working Group.

f. Recycling

A summary was offered regarding household recycling. It was explained that Fylde Council was part of a two-tier authority, with Lancashire County Council in control of the recycling and waste management aspect. Mrs Winstanley advised that the government were looking to enforce a form of curb side food waste collection by 2024 across every local authority, which could see a reduction in the amount of grey bin collections needed.

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It was further advised that public recycling containers were being explored again. However, when these had been used in the past, it was seen that inky a small percentage of people were separating their rubbish to be recycled, therefore leaving the bins to be deemed as general rubbish. This led to an increase in general bins across public spaces.

Gareth Matthews, Senior Waste Prevention and Enforcement Officer, explained further that a trial for public recycling bins would be taking place in Lytham, with signage and colourings to replicate the bins that residents had at their homes. It was confirmed that the results of this trial would be reported back to the Working Group for feedback due to the amount of contributing factors that would need to be considered, such as further locations and a potential increase in resources.

Action: To review the Recycling Policy and consider the outcome of the trial use of the recycling bin at Lytham at the next meeting of the Working Group.

At the conclusion of the subject area overviews, it was agreed that existing policies would be reviewed by the Working Group as the next phase of work - where they exist - starting with recycling. For other areas, policies would need to be developed in such areas as electric charging points and plastics reduction – although some work has been undertaken in these latter areas there is nothing established in writing which sets out the council's policy ambitions in this regard at this point.

4. Climate Change Outcome Survey

Mrs. Manning gave an overview of the Climate Change Outcome Survey that had been reported to the last meeting of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee. She advised that of the 126 respondents, there were concerns about the impact of climate change and that it was beginning to negatively impact several areas.

Further to this, Mr. Loynd highlighted that there were details within the report on what residents thought the Council could work to achieve, which could advise the actions of the Working Group. It was identified that there was synergy between what had been discussed and what residents had reported in the survey

5. Any Other Business

There was no other business on this occasion.

6. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.
