

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Sustainable Communities

Held at 9.30 am on Wednesday 14th June, 2023 as a virtual meeting, via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Harriet Pentland (Chair)
Councillor Jennie Bone
Councillor Jan O'Hara

Councillor Tim Allebone
Councillor Dez Dell
Councillor Roger Powell

Officers

Nicole Geary
Greg Haynes
Graeme Kane
Raj Sohal
Andra Stopforth

Transformation Project Manager
Climate Change and Sustainability Officer
Executive Director – Place and Economy (Interim)
Democratic Services Officer
Principal Planning Policy Officer

18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alison Dalziel.

19 Members' Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

20 Minutes from Meeting held on 26th April 2023

RESOLVED that:

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26th April 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

21 Carbon Management Plan Q1 Update

The Panel considered a presentation by The Transformation Project Manager, which provided a quarterly update regarding the performance of the North Northamptonshire Carbon Management Plan.

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Members queried whether the activity targets outlined in the presentation were available for the public to access.
- Members queried how the Voi scooter driver awareness courses formed part of the Carbon Management Plan. One member also questioned how the local authority intended to encourage residents to complete courses.

In response, The Transformation Project Manager clarified that:

- All activity targets were available for the public to view online within the wider Carbon Management Plan.
- The Voi scooter driver awareness courses encouraged the use of electric transportation, as potential riders often felt more comfortable through completing such courses. Course information was also made easily accessible through user-friendly webpages, which were promoted to local residents.
- One of the activities outlined in the plan included the development a new curriculum for mandatory carbon literacy training, which would be made available to all members and officers.

RESOLVED that: The report be noted.

22 Local Nature Recovery Strategy Engagement

The Panel considered a presentation by The Principal Planning Policy Officer, which outlined the North Northamptonshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Members suggested that sufficient funding would need to be provided to planning policy in order to support the LNRS in achieving its aims.
- Members queried whether the LNRS was intended to replace the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan, which expired in 2020, or operate in addition to it.
- Members acknowledged that the LNRS was a long-term prospect and queried whether with its completion, it would provide additional protection to areas from industrial development.
- One member expressed concern that certain open spaces and natural habitats within North Northamptonshire were no longer protected from industrial development, following the removal of their designation as places of 'historical and visual interest'.

In response, The Principal Planning Policy Officer clarified that:

- The LNRS had been formulated following the introduction of The Environment Act. As a result, the local authority intended to update the Local Nature Partnership in line with new regulations. Nevertheless the Biodiversity Action Plan remained relevant and had only 'expired' in title.
- The local authority was in the process of updating its local plan - the LNRS would serve as a key piece of evidence in strategic planning and form a material planning consideration for areas' priorities.
- Case officers would need to assess evidence and criteria when determining planning applications relating to open spaces. Larger areas for nature recovery would fall under other policies.

RESOLVED that: The report be noted.

23 EAP Sustainable Communities Forward Plan

The Democratic Services Officer presented the EAP Sustainable Communities Forward Plan and clarified that the agenda of the next meeting would include the following items:

- Kettering LCWIP
- Hackney Carriages De-Zoning
- Energy Contract Procurement

RESOLVE that: The report be noted.

24 Close of Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the EAP Sustainable Communities would be held on Wednesday 9th August 2023 at 9:30am.

Chair

Date