

EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth

At 9.30 am on Wednesday 22nd September, 2021

Held as a Remote Meeting via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Harriet Pentland (Chair)

Councillor Tim Allebone

Councillor Jennie Bone

Councillor Dez Dell

Councillor Graham Lawman

Councillor Anne Lee

Councillor Elliot Keith Prentice

Officers

Also in attendance –

Ian Achruch

George Candler

Councillor Graham Lawman

Carol Mundy

Raj Sohal

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor Jan O'Hara.

2 Members' Declarations of Interest

None received.

3 Minutes from Meeting held on 18 August 2021

RESOLVED THAT: The EAP agreed the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18th August 2021.

4 Draft Corporate Plan

- The Chair invited George Candler (Executive Director, Place & Economy) to introduce the report, outlining the draft corporate plan.

The EAP considered the draft plan and made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The wording of the authority's priorities was interpreted as too vague at times and could therefore be amended for clarity.
- The implementation of percentage values in objectives would be valuable in order to allow for measurable targets as 'smart goals'
- Regarding the objective to embed low carbon technology, the wording should read 'ensure' rather than 'seek to ensure', for clarity.
- The title of the plan should include protecting open spaces - to include all green spaces, not just countryside.

- It would be valuable for the plan to emphasise and include more references to the benefits of green spaces on mental health; as well as general health.
- The objective title to demonstrate clear leadership in ‘tackling sustainability’ should be rephrased to ‘embracing sustainability’.
- The Executive Director of Place & Economy assured the EAP that he would reflect on its comments and feedback raised.
- The draft plan would be updated again, along with a covering note, to demonstrate the changes made. It was agreed the draft plan would be recirculated reflecting the changes after the meeting.

RESOLVED THAT: The EAP noted the report.

5 Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- The Chair invited Ian Achurch (Head of Development, Infrastructure and Funding) to introduce the report, outlining the planned development and implementation of electric vehicle charging points across North Northamptonshire.

The EAP raised several lines of enquiry into the report concerning:

- Whether two charging points, which had previously been deactivated in Corby, would become operational again.
- Whether usage statistics for charging points in Kettering would be made available.
- What the likelihood would be of new charging points being implemented before December 2021.
- The significance of considering the demand for charging points across North Northamptonshire from visitors and tourists, as the authority would need to establish an adequate number of charging points.
- The possibility of encouraging property developers to implement public communal charging points in new housing projects – potentially utilising solar power to combat issues of grid capacity.

In response, the Head of Development clarified that:

- The authority was seeking to re-implement charging points in Corby.
- Usage statistics would be brought to future meetings of the EAP, regarding the usage of charging points.
- The first phase of consultation for charging points had identified thirty potential host sites, of which only seven were currently progressing. As a result, the authority was seeking to continue to identify other potential sites, which could progress at a faster rate, before the end of the year.
- NNC would continue to investigate figures further, to determine the amount of charging points required to sufficiently meet demand from visitors, as well as local residents.
- There was no guidance on the Council’s website concerning charging point cable protection however, officers would explore developing a strategy in this area to increase online awareness.
- While property developers would certainly be encouraged to erect charging points in new housing projects, the authority would participate in further liaison with power providers to plan for anticipated power requirements across the area.

While overwhelmingly expressing its support for increased charging points, the EAP also raised concern regarding: the potential logistical problems of charging points facing the authority if 70% of local residents were anticipated to purchase electric vehicles in the next five years, the risks attached to the probable use of hydrogen to fuel larger vehicles and machinery and how charging points would be made available for residents of terraced houses.

Nevertheless, the EAP was supportive and maintained that it should be exemplary to other organisations and authorities in leading the way in promoting the increased implementation of electric vehicle charging points, in anticipation of the future.

To conclude, Councillor Graham Lawman posited that NNC would have to observe procurement rules and carry out a thorough consultation of the framework of the plan for charging points. The councillor assured the EAP that the executive was fully committed to this issue.

RESOLVED THAT: The EAP noted the report.

6 Close of Meeting

The next meeting of the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel would be held virtually, via Zoom, on Wednesday 17th November at 09:30am.