

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

Head of Service:	Ian Mawer, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development
Report Author	Mark Rachwal
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

Summary

This report recommends the continuation of a councillor Working Group for 2026/27 to oversee the implementation of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan. It proposes terms of reference for the group to be approved.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree the continuation of the Environment and Sustainability Working Group (ESWG)**
- (2) Approve the terms of reference for the Working Group as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (3) Agree to appoint members to the Working Group as set out at section 3.1 below.**
- (4) To authorise the Vice Chair of the Environment Committee (Chair of ESWG) and in their absence the Chair of the Environment Committee to invite councillors, stakeholders and officers to the Environment and Sustainability Working Group as required.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The continuation of this Member Working Group will support the delivery of the Council's commitment to addressing climate change.

Environment Committee

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2 Background

- 2.1 The Council has agreed to have a Climate Change Action Plan put in place with targets to reduce the Council's environmental impact with a view to it becoming carbon neutral by 2035. It was also agreed that this plan would be owned by the Environment Committee.
- 2.2 To help ensure that the objectives set out in the Climate Change Action Plan are achieved, a working group of members should be established. The proposed terms of reference for the group are set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The group will comprise five members: The Vice Chair of the Environment Committee (Chair of the Working Group), 2 Majority Group (Residents Association) Members of the Environment Committee and 2 Minority Group Members of the Environment Committee.

3 Membership

- 3.1 The Environment Committee is asked to appoint the following members to the working group:
 - The Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee (to preside as Chair of the working group) – Councillor Alan Williamson
 - 2 Residents' Association Group members of the Environment Committee – TBC
 - 1 Labour Group member of the Environment Committee – Councillor Rob Geleit
 - 1 Independents Group member of the Environment Committee – Councillor Julie Morris

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Impact Assessment

- 4.1.1 The establishment of the Working Group will support the delivery of the Council's commitment to addressing climate change.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

- 4.2.1 None arising from this report.

4.3 Safeguarding

- 4.3.1 None arising from this report.

4.4 Dependencies

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4.4.1 None arising from this report.

4.5 Other

4.5.1 None arising from this report.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The modest additional cost of administering the Working Group would be borne by existing budgets.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** With the implementation of the Local Government reorganisation, there is no annual capital programme cycle for 2027/28. Any proposed projects for 2026/27 will require external sources of funding.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 sets a statutory target to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 by 2050. In May 2019, the UK Committee on Climate Change recommended that the UK government increase the statutory target to Net-Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This has now been formally adopted.

6.2 The Working Group has no decision making powers but it will report its recommendations and views to the Environment Committee where necessary.

6.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** none arising from the content of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Work with partners to reduce our impact on the environment and move closer to becoming carbon neutral.

7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the Annual Plan and a key Council priority is to address Climate Change.

7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** The proposed Working Group will help to monitor progress on achieving the objectives set out in the Climate Change Action Plan.

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** The establishment of the Working Group will contribute directly and significantly to improving the Council's sustainability practice. It will also contribute to enhancing community safety in areas such as tackling poor air quality.

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7.5 **Partnerships:** The Climate Change Action Plan includes specific actions to promote wider understanding and action through the variety of relationships that the Council has with other organisations operating in the Borough, including those that are subject to formal contracts.

7.1 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** None.

8 Background papers

8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- n/a