

**UNADOPTED
POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL**



CLIMATE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Climate Committee meeting held on Monday 20th January 2020 Council Chambers 49, High Street, Polegate 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs D Murray, Mrs M Piper, M Cunningham, S Shing (4)

Not Present: - Cllr J Harmer (1)

2 members of the public present

Minute Number	Resolution
12861	Opportunity for Public Comment None
12862	Apologies for absence Cllr J Harmer, S Shing (would arrive later due to other meeting)
12863	Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda Cllrs Mrs. M Piper & D Murray as directors of Polegate War memorial recreation ground CIC; Cllr D Murray as trustee of Wannock Village Hall, Cllr S Shing (County Cllr).
12864	Climate change matters (as per terms of reference) The chair read out the terms of reference and a detailed some of the items that would need to be produced for the report to full council, including: should the council declare a climate emergency; should the town council create a carbon strategy; could and should the council pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030; were there any grants that should be applied for, for decisions and actions on climate change; what the town council could do itself with regards to climate change. <i>Standing orders suspended</i> A member of the public felt that the council should refer to climate change rather than climate emergency. <i>Standing orders reinstated</i> A short discussion on the differing views of some scientists on the rise in CO ₂ levels and industrial gases ensued and the IPCC (The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) ¹ The committee discussed what the town council could do for example: ➤ Assessing its use of fossil fuels ➤ Assessing its use of Nitrous/Nitric oxides ➤ Looking at alternative forms of energy that the council could use ➤ Reporting on how it communicates what it was doing with the community A councillor mentioned that he felt the word emergency should be removed and the town

¹ <https://www.ipcc.ch/>

council should focus on education and change of what it did. He also stated he felt that the council should liaise with the local school to find out what the children wanted as well, as they would be the ones living in Polegate in 30 years' time. He spoke about the railway and cars sitting at the level crossing.

The chair stated that the officers of the council already liaised with the school and other authorities such as the County Council, Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough council and the Government and would continue to do so in regard to climate change as well. He also mentioned that the town council was the lower tier and each tier had certain things that they could tackle with regards to climate change.

A councillor stated that the town council could write to Network rail with regards to have an LED board showing the time that the barrier would be down for encouraging people to turn off their engines. Another councillor stated that some cars already had stop start. A councillor mentioned that he had seen these, and it was worth asking if they could put one at Polegate.

The committee discussed the way the council may be able to educate the residents to do things (*nudge*) but that they couldn't *make* people or enforce things.

The committee discussed other items that the council could take action on such as:

- Use of electricity
- Use of gas central heating
- Fuel use and the contractors that the town council uses
- To create a list of things that the council could do and influence

A councillor suggested the planting of more trees. This was accepted by the group as a good option and the chair mentioned that the improvements to Brightling road area included a lot more trees. The Councillor stated that maybe more trees could also be planted at Wannock.

A councillor mentioned encouraging car sharing, as she often saw one person in ne car and this may be an area where for example parents could be encouraged to car share taking the children to school (if they use cars) and this would also help with the parking situation around school opening and closing time.

A councillor mentioned that in the USA they had different lanes for car sharers which was faster than single occupied cars, but this was probably not feasible in the UK.

- The committee spoke about encouraging walking and cycling

The committee discussed transport for the south east, the overcrowded railways and how most of train users did not use the shops in the town. It also discussed the bus services and electric and cycle bike hire. The committee also discussed the fact that public transport had to be suitable to encourage residents to use the services instead of cars as it was a behavioural change issue.

A councillor commented that the town could had to look at what it could do first, for example energy use and management. Then once it had got those into place it could also sign post the residents to changes, they could make to help.

A councillor mentioned that encouraging walking would help not only the environment but people's health as obesity was on the rise and less cars would help with pollution.

A councillor asked what Wealden District Council did with its recycling, and possibly that if the residents knew what was happening to it, that would encourage them to recycle more.

The clerk was asked to find out.

The committee agreed that the website and social media would be good ways of promoting changes, however some councillors asked whether pamphlets could be distributed to residents to signal what the town council was doing.

It was agreed that the current building (49/51) should be looked at with regards to energy consumption (Electricity, insulation, LED lighting, double glazing, air conditioning/heating etc). Possibly an EPC. Green energy. Solar panels. Wind power? Heat pumps. EPC.

The committee discussed how much could the council save versus the carbon footprint. (return on investment).

They agreed that encouraging residents to plant one tree may be useful, (many trees were available free of charge) and asked what type of trees would be best for the environment. How quickly trees would grow and make an impact, which were best for bees/insects and whether fruit trees such as pears apples and cherries were useful. The clerk was asked to find out.

The chair stated that Brightling was going to have more (free) trees, and asked that the clerk look into whether it would be feasible for the town council to obtain the trees and then allow residents to plant them.

Cllr S Shing arrived at 8.05pm

A councillor mentioned that "willow trees" may be helpful.

A councillor asked if the District Council could be requested NOT to cut down mature trees.

The chair reminded the committee that they should be considering issues that was in the town councils' control and that communicating action plans to residents and "nudging" them into the right direction was also possible.

A councillor commented that the town council also had limited resources for the bigger issues, but that every little helped to improve the situation. He mentioned the use of combi boilers and heat pumps and how different items are considered energy efficient at one time and then change as technology improves such as changes from fluorescent to LED.

- The clerk was tasked to make a list of as many things that the council could do with regards to climate change, which could be added to.
- Councillors asked to find out the benefits of having tablets instead of paper for meetings and to look at the costs of producing paperwork for meetings.

The committee discussed electric vehicles (EV) charging points and what happens to the batteries once they are life expired.

There was a brief discussion on cycle racks and ESCC/network rail land.

A councillor commented that excluding elderly residents others could be encouraged to lower their home temperature to save money and the environment and potentially their boiler temperature. Also, air conditioning units in the summer.

The committee had a short discussion about Electric Vehicle charging points, filling stations and the length of time that it takes to charge a vehicle (often 30 minutes or more).

The committee also discussed the planning being outside of the town council's control, but the possibility of requesting additional items in the new local plan that will assist with climate change if they are not already in it. (Communal heating, solar, heat pumps etc) Currently this is not enforceable by Wealden DC.

It was agreed that the main areas to focus on would be:

- Reducing the impact of the town council's operations – what is within the town council's powers/ability
- Liaising with other councils to apply other initiatives (officers already communicate, Cllrs to also communicate through all levels of local government.
- Communicating what the town council is doing and what residents can do
- Understanding that not everyone is in agreement that there is a climate emergency
- Meet regularly to produce a final report for full council in 5 month's time.

Cllr Mrs M Piper left the meeting at 8.56pm

Clerk notes: Annual town assembly, theme climate change; friends of the earth to come to speak to council and possibly at the ATA, FAQ from friends of the earth and other climate change ambassadors; sign posting for residents; ask contractors what they are doing with regards to climate change, offsetting? List of items for action.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm

Signed by _____ Chair of the Climate Committee

Dated _____