

**Minutes of the meeting of General scrutiny committee held at
online on Monday 26 April 2021 at 10.15 am**

Present: Councillor Jonathan Lester (chairperson)
Councillor Tracy Bowes (vice-chairperson)

Councillors: Barry Durkin, Jennie Hewitt and Louis Stark

In attendance: Councillors Ellie Chowns (Cabinet Member), Gemma Davies (Cabinet Member) and David Hitchiner (Cabinet Member)

Officers: Richard Ball – Director for Economy and Place, Ben Boswell – Head of Environment Climate Emergency and Waste Services, Nicola Percival – Waste Operations Team Leader, and Richard Vaughan – Sustainability and Climate Change Manager.

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Matthews and Wilding.

57. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

None

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

59. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021 be approved.

60. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

61. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

None.

**62. UPDATE ON EXECUTIVE RESPONSES TO THE COMMITTEE'S WASTE
MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC REVIEW AND THE REVIEW OF THE CLIMATE AND
ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY**

The Committee received an update on the executive responses to the recommendations of the Committee's Waste Management Strategic Review and the review of the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

Climate and Ecological Emergency

The Sustainability and Climate Change Manager introduced the report.

The Head of Environment, Climate Emergency and Waste Services commented on the recommendations that were listed as having being rejected explaining the reasoning behind this and the action that had been taken on each aspect.

The Cabinet Member – Environment, Economy and Skills emphasised that careful consideration had been given to the report. Whilst not all the recommendations had been accepted she considered that the climate and ecological change agenda was being driven forward.

The Committee discussed the response asking a number of questions to which answers were given and made a number of additional recommendations as set out below.

(The meeting adjourned between 12 noon and 12.10pm.)

Waste Management Strategic Review

The Head of Environment, Climate Emergency and Waste Services introduced the report.

The Waste Operations Team Leader reminded the Committee of the background to the review.

The Cabinet Member - Commissioning, Procurement and Assets invited questions.

The Committee discussed the response, asking a number of questions to which answers were given and made a number of recommendations as set out below.

A motion that consideration be given to fortnightly collection of black bin waste rather than 3 weekly in pursuing option 2 was lost.

RESOLVED:

Climate and Ecological Emergency

(number references in brackets are to the recommendations made to the executive to which the executive responses referred)

- That**
- (a) the Committee requests the executive to reconsider its response to those recommendations that have been rejected or accepted in part and the recommendations made during the debate and an updated response be presented to the Committee’s next scheduled meeting, clarifying in particular the misunderstanding that appeared to have been caused by the use of the word “rejected” which in several cases appeared misleading in the context of the detailed response;**
 - (b) subject to confirmation from the solicitor to the Council, the committee establish a standing Panel to monitor the executive response to the Committee’s recommendations, the members of the former task and finish group being invited to consider if they would wish to serve on this Panel in the first instance, with the Panel’s terms of reference to be reported to the Committee’s next scheduled meeting;**

- (c) further consideration be given by the executive to whether sufficient resources have been allocated to implement the recommendations of the review, mindful also of the need to manage the workload of officers;
- (d) (17) it be noted that this recommendation has not in effect been rejected but partly accepted and particular re-consideration be given to the production of a local list more swiftly than currently proposed;
- (e) consideration be given to the extent to which notes of meetings between the council and the Environment Agency and others can be made public, even if an abbreviated form to avoid disclosure of confidential information and included in the NMB agenda papers;
- (f) (20) consideration be given to introducing a mechanism to seek responses from Parish Councils to measure the effectiveness of the advisory notes issued by the Neighbourhood Planning Team in effecting change;
- (g) (30d) this recommendation should be revisited and explored more imaginatively and constructively, for example proactively working with Verging in Wild and any other groups within the County that can promote such schemes;
- (h) (32b) greater clarification be provided on the operation of a phosphate trading platform and what it entails as a briefing to Councillors and the NMB be invited to review the merits of the proposal with a view to information being added to the relevant section of the council's website in due course;
- (i) (33) the committee encourages the executive to continue to explore all solutions to protecting the River Wye SAC catchment including that the possibility for a Water Protection Zone to be proactively discussed with the Environment Agency;
- (j) (42) work is undertaken in conjunction with the transport team to undertake surveys with schools, to identify barriers and opportunities for active travel. A full survey to commence and report back with opportunities and recommendations by November 2021; and
- (k) (54) that this response be reconsidered with a view to developing a county-wide policy.

RESOLVED:

Waste Management Strategic Review

(number reference in brackets is to the recommendations made to the executive to which the executive responses referred)

- That (a) the executive's review of link between collection and disposal be welcomed.
- (b) a unified waste strategy be drawn up by the executive with an aim to provide an end to end waste service for residents

spanning from repair and reuse right through to collection and disposal;

- (c) there be greater clarity as to what happens to recycled waste generated within the County;
- (d) there be greater information and clarity as to what happens to all waste generated within the County;
- (e) any new contract should maximise the scope to reduce waste to landfill;
- (f) the executive explores options for disposal of waste likely to cause nuisance because of smell or other potential nuisance/hazard; and
- (g) (22) the executive be encouraged to explore the opportunity for the public to reuse material from HRCs on existing sites and elsewhere and via the website.

63. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

In discussion the Committee clarified what information it wished to see included in the report it had requested on the Council's response to the Covid19 pandemic.

The Committee agreed to establish a task and finish group to examine reduction of littering.

Reference was also made to the wish to bring forward items on NMiTE and the Police and Crime Commissioner, as listed on the programme, noting the possibility of also considering the Commissioner's proposals to combine the governance of the police and fire services.

RESOLVED:

- That
- (a) the draft work programme as set out at appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to noting the wish to bring forward items on NMiTE and the Police and Crime Commissioner, as listed on the programme, noting the possibility of also considering the Commissioner's proposals to combine the governance of the police and fire services; and
 - (b) a task and finish group on litter be established and officers be requested to prepare a scoping statement for consideration at the committee's next meeting and to take action to progress the establishment of the group to enable it to commence work swiftly following the approval of that scoping statement.