

# **Report of the Chairman on the work of Environment and Sustainability Committee**

This report gives an overview of the main issues considered at the meeting held on 30 June 2021.

## **1. Nominations for the Development Sub-Committee**

- 1.1 The Committee agreed to nominate Cllrs John Doran and Dick Smith-Ainsley to Council for membership of the Development Sub-Committee.

## **2. Introduction to the Environment and Sustainability Committee**

- 2.1 The Committee was informed of some of the wide-ranging issues that would be coming before them in the forthcoming year.

## **3. Environment and Sustainability Committee – Terms of Reference**

- 3.1 The Committee noted its Terms of Reference.

## **4. Local Plan (revised Local Development Scheme timetable)**

- 4.1 The Committee considered a report setting out the timetable for producing a new Local Plan to reflect delays as a result of the pandemic, policy and guidance changes and political administration changes within the Council.
- 4.2 The Committee agreed the publication of the updated Local Development Scheme.

## **5. Formation of Strategic Planning Task Groups**

- 5.1 It was necessary to reconstitute the task groups previously set up, following the change to the Committee system form of governance.
- 5.2 The Committee also considered a proposal to seek an external opinion on the Local Plan was sought from a suitably qualified consultant.
- 5.3 The Committee agreed the following:

### **1. Local Plan Task Group**

- a) That the Local Plan Task Group comprise of 16 members, politically proportioned consisting of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, the Chair of Planning and one member from each ward in the borough.
- b) To delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee to agree the names of those ward members on the Local Plan Task Group.

- c) That the Chair and Vice Chair of the Task Group were elected by members of the Task Group at their first meeting.
- d) That brief minutes of decisions made by the Task Group were recorded and made available to all councillors on a confidential basis.

## **2. Staines Development Task Group**

- a) That the Staines Development Task Group comprise of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, the Chair of Planning, Councillor J. Sexton as Staines resident, and all ward councillors for Staines, Staines South, and Riverside and Laleham.
- b) That the Chair and Vice Chair of the Task Group were elected by members of the Task Group at their first meeting.
- c) That brief minutes of decisions made by the Task Group were recorded and made available to all councillors on a confidential basis.

## **3. Community Infrastructure Levy Local Spending Boards**

- a) That 5 CIL Local Spending Boards were created comprising all ward members from each locality.
- b) That the Chair of each CIL Local Spending Board was elected by the members of each respective Board.
- c) That the Committee recommend to the Spelthorne Joint Committee that the CIL Task Group includes the elected Chair of each Local Spending Board.

## **4. External Opinion on Local Plan**

To require the Group Head for Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair to seek an external opinion on the Local Plan options from a suitably qualified consultant. The Chair and Vice Chair would first seek Committee members' views on the issues they would like considered by the consultant and what should be contained in the person specification. Any contract awarded for this purpose not to exceed £10,000.

## **6. Outside Gym Proposal**

- 6.1 The Committee considered a request to conduct a public consultation exercise regarding the installation of 10 outdoor gyms in local parks.
- 6.2 Funding for the outdoor gyms and the location of the parks had already been agreed by Spelthorne Joint Committee using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding.
- 6.3 The Committee agreed to authorise the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services to initiate a procurement exercise to purchase and install OGE equipment in the parks to avoid delay and maximise health benefits to residents.

## **7. Climate Change Projects and Green Initiatives Fund**

- 7.1 The Committee considered a report providing details of projects undertaken to date and potential future projects to reduce our carbon footprint.

7.2 The Committee agreed to:

- 1) To note the report
- 2) Agree the draft Environment and Sustainability Action Plan, which sits within the wider draft Corporate Recovery Plan considered by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee at their meeting on 5 July.

## **8. Climate Change Working Group and Terms of Reference**

8.1 The Committee considered a report proposing the working group was reconstituted following the change to a Committee system.

8.2 The Committee agreed:

- 1) The setting up of a working group to focus on monitoring of actions towards carbon neutrality and to assess initial ideas on measures to address climate change before submission to the Environment and Sustainability Committee.
- 2) That Sandy Muirhead, Group Head of Commissioning and Transformation, contact Group Leaders and ask for expressions of interest for any members interested in joining the group.
- 3) To delegate authority to the Group Head of Commissioning and Transformation, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to agree members of the working group.

## **9. Community Orchards**

9.1 The Committee received a verbal report on Community Orchards.

9.2 The Committee agreed to note the report and add the subject to the forward plan for future consideration.

## **10. Forward Plan**

10.1 The Committee noted the forward plan and that the River Thames Scheme and Community Orchards would be added to the plan and other matters as they arose.

## **11. Training for Environment and Sustainability Committee Members**

11.1 It was agreed that training sessions would be arranged for members on areas of interest including Climate Change and Emergency Planning for those unable to attend the recent session.

## **12. Amendment to Specific Policies in the Adopted 2009 Local Plan**

12.1 The Committee considered a part-exempt report that had been referred to the Environment and Sustainability Committee by Cabinet at their meeting on 19 May 2021 concerning amendment to specific policies in the adopted 2009 Local Plan with a request that the matter be deferred to Full Council for a final decision.

12.2 The Committee considered it beneficial for a second external expert opinion to be sought and that this should be undertaken by the external consultant agreed under item 5 above.

12.3 The Committee agreed:

- 1) To note the advice received from Counsel at confidential Appendix 4 to the report considered by the Committee.
- 2) That in the light of this advice to seek a second opinion of Counsel's advice, but to continue with the current process which has been underway for the past two years to revise the Local Plan in its entirety.
- 3) The Leader and Deputy Leader write a strongly worded letter to Kwasi Kwarteng, the Constituency MP, expressing deep concern over the housing numbers allocation for the borough and extend an invitation to attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss the housing figures.

**Councillor Ian Beardsmore**

*Chairman of the Environment and Sustainability Committee*

**15 July 2021**