

CCWG/04/21

Minutes of a meeting of the Climate Change Working Group held on Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 11.00 am by Zoom video call.

Present: The Mayor, Councillor D Kerr
Councillors M Coppock, M Isherwood,
and O Rose

In the chair: Councillor M Isherwood

In attendance: G Braybrooke, CEO of EEA
A Roberts, Town Clerk
S Cranmer, Operations Manager
S Trevor, Office Manager

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from:

Councillor M Jones

It was **resolved** to note the apology.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

It was **resolved** to note that no declarations of interests were made.

3. Energy Efficiency Association

The Chair welcomed Gary Braybrooke, CEO of the Energy Efficiency Association who highlighted a number of schemes and initiatives which could benefit the Council and residents of Oswestry.

These included:

- Green Homes Grant Scheme, which can help homeowners and landlords upgrade the energy efficiency in their homes.
- Big Green Book of 2011/12/13/14 and 2015.
- Kickstart Gateway – helping youngsters of 16-24 years of age on Universal Credit to get into employment

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Members were informed that a heat survey had currently been undertaken by Shropshire Council in Shrewsbury which identified that people were losing lots of money and energy in their homes. Schemes such as the Local Authority Delivery Scheme were available to help people with their energy.

Councillors were keen to distribute as much information as possible to the vulnerable and elderly people in the community on energy efficiency advice. Therefore, after discussion, it was **resolved** that:

- Mr Braybrooke would provide information on all schemes to the Town Clerk;
- This information would be shared as a social media campaign and leaflet distribution;
- Mr Braybrooke would be provided with information on what the Climate Change Working Group hoped to achieve for Oswestry;
- Oswestry Town Council would be provided with free membership to the Energy Efficiency Association;
- Mr Braybrooke would be invited back to the next meeting to take things forward.

The Chair thanked Mr Braybrooke for his presentation to the Group.

4. Notes

It was **resolved** to note the minutes of the Climate Change Working Group held on 16th September 2020 - **CCWG/02/20**.

5. MarRE renewable energy grant (50% of capital costs)

The Group were informed that the Council went out to tender for a photovoltaic solution for the roof of Powis Hall Market on Monday 11th January 2021. The timescale follows:

Issue Tender	11 th January 2021
Closing Date for Return of Tender	24 th February 2021
Interviews (potential)	w/c 8 th March 2021

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Contract Award 1st April 2021

Contract Commencement TBC

It was noted that the deadline for the EU funded schemes had been extended to 21st December 2021

It was also noted that the tender included commitments on the following:

- Modern slavery agreement
- Equipment lifecycle analysis and end-of-life recycling

The Operations Manager announced that there were already 25 Expressions of Interest from throughout the country.

As the Council has built into the budget the savings made for both the Guildhall and Powis Hall, a question was asked as to whether any surplus could be used on Central Car Park to charge vehicles once it was up and running.

It was **resolved** that the Operations Manager would approach Instavolt for a quote for another charger.

6. Peat and Compost

An enquiry to Greenfingers revealed that Cae Glas Park is moving to peat-free compost from 2021.

The Derwen College (who coordinate our hanging baskets and street planters) were asked by the Council if there were using peat-free compost. They revealed that they didn't use peat-free compost and that the plants they buy in from other companies were often grown in peat as they find it difficult to find specimens grown in peat-free compost.

The Operations Manager announced that the Derwen College had now got in touch with a peat-free supplier and proposed to use this in 6 of the planters in Oswestry this Summer. They also intended to approach a company who use reduced peat but who also intended to gradually phase this out, on the rest of the planters.

After discussion it was **resolved** that:

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- The Group would recommend to Council zero use of peat compost with effect from 2022 for planters and hanging baskets within the town;
- The Operations Manager would speak to all other suppliers of planters and hanging baskets concerning the use of peat-free;
- The Group would revise the whole scheme in the next couple of years;
- Recommendation that colourful bee-friendly plants be used in the planters and hanging baskets.

7. West Mercia Energy

Members were informed that from April 2021 Oswestry Town Council have signed up to an enhanced green electricity product from WME called “Your Green” electricity. “Your Green” electricity product ensures that ALL REGO’s are sourced from a generator or technology directly contracted with Total Gas & Power. This ensures that 100% of the REGO’s are purchased along with the associated generation. The sources remain solely wind, solar, and hydro. WME believe this provides increased traceability, transparency and reduces the perception of ‘greenwashing’ sometimes associated with REGO backed electricity.

Resolved the information be noted and that Council are made aware of the step taken.

8. Carbon Audit

Members noted that the Marches Energy Agency had updated the Carbon Audit to reflect on page 8 that West Mercia supply the Town Council with green energy which, when applied to 2020-21’s data, will substantially reduce the footprint. The data analyzed in the 2018-19 benchmark predates that supplier.

Resolved the information be noted.

Resolved the Operations Manager to update the audit with 2020-21’s data after conclusion of the financial year.

9. Wildflower Meadows

Members were informed that last Autumn 125 wildflower plugs were planted, and yellow rattle seed was sown on the site in Oswestry Cemetery chosen as a wildflower meadow, in conjunction with Shropshire Wildlife Trust volunteers. The area would not now be mowed until mid-Summer, at which time the arisings will be removed.

It was noted however that disposal of the green waste in the Summer could be a struggle as the current green waste supplier no longer provided the service. However, options and solutions were currently being looked into.

Requests were made by Members for a 200 metre stretch in the North of the Cemetery to be hedged using 3,120 trees; the consideration of oak and yew trees to be planted in the future, and also an apiary. It was **resolved** that these recommendations and the financial costs would be put forward to the Oswestry Cemetery Group to consider.

Following dialogue with Historic England, approval had been given for a wildflower meadow or similar treatment of the terraces of the Castle, however the Council still needed to have a dialogue with Oswestry Castle Redevelopment Project to ensure that this management technique has their support and fits in with future plans for access to and interpretation of the Castle.

A question was asked as to whether there were plans for a wildflower meadow in Cae Glas Park. It was therefore **resolved** that the Group recommend to the Cae Glas Park Group that the pocket of grassed area at the entrance of St Davids also be used as a wildflower meadow.

Councillor M Isherwood

Chair