



## Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee

**31 July 2024**

Title: Public Questions

Public Report: Yes

### Question 1 – from Chris Pointon, Cambridgeshire Climate Leaders

To Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee

Question:

We welcome what we hope is the unblocking of funds for climate action by rural communities. However we are concerned that, without co-ordination, there will be duplication of effort, missed opportunities for innovative ideas, and a failure to achieve the scale of impact we all want to see from this funding. Will the CPCA and the districts commit to collaborating to identify and connect similar projects across districts? The Climate Leaders network of over 80 people taking action on climate and nature in communities around the region is ready to help.

### Question 2 – from Alana Sinclair, Cambridge Carbon Footprint

To Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee

Question:

As the committee knows, Cambridge Carbon Footprint and its community partners around the region are eagerly awaiting the chance to bid for funds under the new Opportunity Fund. We have several community-focussed projects that could easily be deployed within this financial year. However, the time is ticking, and we're concerned that "final timescales will be driven by capacity to manage the process" has echoes of the Net Zero Villages programme. Will the committee ensure that the Opportunity Fund is adequately resourced to enable it to finalise the programme criteria, run the bidding and make allocations at a pace that the climate emergency and our net zero targets demand?

### Question 3 – from James Rixon, Melinda Rigby and Matthew Tulley, Cambridge Retrofit Hub Team

To Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee

Question:

Having waited for over two years for vital funding to be released for climate action in our villages, we are pleased to see a new plan for deployment of the Net Zero Villages funding by the districts. We do however have concerns about increased overheads with this approach, and also would like to be reassured about the districts' capacity to deliver the programme, especially those whose climate programmes are not far advanced. What assurances have the districts provided to CPCA that they are ready & able to deploy the funds fairly, effectively and without excessive administrative overheads within the very short remaining time frame this financial year?