



ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 19 JUNE 2024

Venue:	Terrace Room, ARU Peterborough, University House, Bishops Road, Peterborough, PE1 5BW	
Time:	11.00 am – 12.00 pm	
Present:	Councillor Bridget Smith Councillor Lara Davenport-Ray Dr Nik Johnson Councillor Nicola Day Councillor Lorna Dupre Councillor Steve Tierney Councillor Mike Todd-Jones Emma Garfield Tim Jones	South Cambridgeshire District Council (Chair) Huntingdonshire District Council Mayor Peterborough City Council Cambridgeshire County Council Fenland District Council Cambridge City Council (online attendance) Business Board Business Board
Apologies	Councillor Martin Goodearl	East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes

1	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from Cllr Goodearl and Cllr Todd-Jones. Cllr Todd-Jones could not attend in person but joined the meeting remotely for the discussion. He was not able to vote and did not count towards quoracy.
2	Declaration of Interests
	There were no declaration of interests made.
3	Election of Vice-Chair
	On being proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Dupre, Cllr Davenport-Ray was unanimously appointed as Vice-Chair for the Committee.
4	Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Action Log
	<p>The minutes of the meeting on 11 March 2024 were approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>The Action Log was discussed by the Committee and Members made the following comments:</p> <p>a) Officers reassured Members that a map to visualize the geographical spread of housing projects would be circulated to the Committee.</p> <p>b) The Strategic Planning Manager provided an update on the engagement with National Highways citing the following key points from their report on the A14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 165,000 trees had been planted between October and April• Innovative planting methodologies were used.• Non-plastic biodegradable tree guards were utilized; This was the largest scheme to use

	<p>these non-plastic tree guards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of a local nursery reduced transportation trips. • There would be monitoring of tree establishment over a five-year period. • Different fertilizers and soil improvers had been adopted. <p>c) The Committee also discussed how proactive engagement with National Highways regarding the ongoing work on the A428 could be beneficial in order that the same innovative planting strategies could be replicated.</p> <p>d) An update on the delivery of Net Zero villages funding would be included as part of the Climate Change report presented at the Committee's next meeting on 31 July.</p> <p><u>ACTIONS:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers to produce a map to show the geographical spread of housing developments in the CPCA area and to circulate this to Members. 2. The full text of the response from National Highways to be circulated to the Committee. 3. Officers to draft a letter to National Highways, on behalf of the Committee, seeking reassurance and further information about land use and planning strategies for the new road A428 4. National Highways to be invited to a committee meeting in a year's time to present an update on the replanting progress.
5	<p>Public Questions</p>
	<p>No public questions were received.</p>
6	<p>Forward Plan</p>
	<p>It was resolved to:</p> <p>A Note the Combined Authority's Forward Plan for June.</p>
7	<p>Director's Highlight Report</p>
	<p>During discussion the following points were noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The report was a high-level overview report because of the restrictions of the pre-election period but a more substantive report would be presented at the meeting on 31 July. b) Members were reassured that items they were expecting, including a report on the £100k homes, the Climate Change Programme and the Infrastructure Delivery Framework, would be reported on in detail at the July meeting. c) The Executive Director confirmed that Dan Horn was the Fenland representative on the Place Directors' group and that he and other Fenland officers were engaged with the Infrastructure Delivery Framework and Future Fens Project. d) It was noted that there was a commitment from the Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network project team to have an open invitation to all constituent authorities to discuss use of the site for their own vehicles. The Strategic Planning Manager would provide an update on any progress on this at the next meeting. e) The Chair referenced the cost of electric refuse vehicles at circa £400k and also the long lead in once ordered, highlighting the commitment that was needed in order to move to electric vehicles. f) Members had attended the Locally Determined Contributions Workshops and keen to ensure shared learning between that piece of work and the Shared Ambition and State of the Region to reinforce the environment theme. g) The Environment Agency's Fens 2100+ programme was one of the longest term and important pieces of work being done in the CPCA area and should be very much on the Committee's radar.

	<p>h) A request was made for the Committee to receive a presentation on the Locally Determined Contributions, highlighting the need for a simplified explanation to aid understanding.</p> <p>i) The Infrastructure Delivery Framework (IDF) was work being done which was not part of a spatial framework, although it was recognised that clearly everything happens in a place. Officers worked closely with planning authorities in the constituent authorities.</p> <p>j) The IDF would enable the CA to articulate the infrastructure deficits, seek new funding opportunities and develop detailed work for specific high-impact sites.</p> <p>k) The need for balancing environmental enhancement with economic development was emphasised and committee decisions should ensure parity between environmental and economic priorities.</p> <p>l) The agriculture sector was very aware of the need to balance sustainable businesses and their environmental impacts.</p> <p>m) The importance of addressing water management and flood risks was highlighted in the Middle Level Commissioners report MLC001-Standing-Advice-MLC-System-Capacity-v1-May-2024.pdf (middlelevel.wpenginepowered.com) which warned that the pumps that kept the Fens from flooding had been working at full capacity over the winter. The Mayor requested that the Committee and the Chair work with him on raising awareness of this issue and the Chair proposed integrating concerns into the risk register.</p> <p>n) There had been a workshop for all of the constituent councils' fleet managers to discuss best practices for alternative fuel usage, and a follow-up workshop to discuss technical aspects was being planned. Peterborough City Council (PCC) had already purchased vehicles that could use Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) for their highways fleet and the use of HVO for their waste and street scene vehicles was now being explored.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>A To note the Director's Highlight Report</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p> <p>1. A presentation on Locally Determined Contributions to explain their role and purpose to be organised for a future meeting of the Committee.</p>
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8	Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
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	<p>The Strategic Planning Manager introduced the report which asked the Committee to make a recommendation to Board requesting that they delegate authority to the Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee to approve a draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy for public consultation</p> <p>During discussion the following points were noted:</p> <p>a) The strategy aimed to map areas important for biodiversity, identify potential areas for enhancement, and proposed actions to realise proposals and improve biodiversity.</p> <p>b) The strategy was integrated into the planning system to satisfy the biodiversity net gain requirement, allowing developers to earn extra credits for contributing to identified areas.</p> <p>c) The team aimed to deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by March next year, but emphasised the need for meaningful public engagement with public and stakeholders before then. Allowing the Committee to sign off the draft plan, once it was ready and go out to public consultation, rather than wait for CA Board approval, would enable the proposed timescales to be met.</p> <p>d) All constituent councils had a formal 28 days to respond and say whether they objected to the LNRS going out for formal consultation and this too had to be built into the timing</p> <p>e) Members were encouraged to ensure their own councils' committee timings allowed them to discuss the strategy within the given timeframe.</p> <p>f) Members acknowledged the changing guidelines from Natural England and DEFRA on the LNRS and emphasized the need for flexibility and revisiting the Plan, if further work on it was</p>
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	<p>needed.</p> <p>g) The wording of the recommendation was clarified by Members</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>A To recommend that the Combined Authority Board delegate authority to the Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee to approve a draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy for public consultation</p>
9	<p>Budget and Performance Report</p>
	<p>The Finance Manager introduced the report which provided an update of the financial position for 2023/24 and an analysis against the 2023/24 budget up to the period ending January 2024.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were noted:</p> <p>a) The separation of the GSEnz Hub figures was noted and welcomed by Members.</p> <p>b) The Executive Director highlighted that there were a number of different reasons for the underspends shown in the report; some of that was due to programme design but was also often about the timing of receipts for specific programmes.</p> <p>c) Members were interested to know about on which projects and where the Rural Communities Energy Fund had been spent. The Executive Director would ask officers to include details on this as part of their update on the Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSEnz) which was coming to the July meeting</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>A To note the financial position of the Environment and Sustainable Communities division for the financial year 23/24 and Board approved carry-forwards.</p>
10	<p>Work Programme</p>
	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>A That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee Agenda Plan be noted</p>
11	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p>
	<p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 31 July 2024.</p>

Chairman at the meeting on
Wednesday, 19 June 2024