

Rother District Council

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| Report to: | Cabinet |
| Date: | 12 June 2023 |
| Title: | Climate Change Steering Group |
| Report of: | Ben Hook, Director – Place and Climate Change |
| Cabinet Member: | Councillor Field |
| Ward(s): | - |
| Purpose of Report: | To reconvene the Climate Change Steering Group and appoint Members thereto. |
| Decision Type: | Non-Key |
| Officer Recommendation(s): | It be RESOLVED : That the Climate Change Steering Group be reconvened and the Members be appointed thereto. |
| Reasons for Recommendations: | To reappoint the Climate Change Steering Group to enable it to continue its focus on the Council's Climate Change agenda. |

Introduction

1. Following the District Council elections in May and the formation of a new administration, Cabinet is requested to reconvene the Climate Change Steering Group (CCSG).

Background and considerations

2. In September 2019, full Council passed a motion declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and made a carbon neutrality commitment for Rother District with a target date of 2030 (Council Minute C19/38 refers).
3. At the subsequent Cabinet meeting, the cross-party CCSG was established, comprising seven Members and appointments made thereto; with two Cabinet Members and five non-Cabinet Members appointed. Steering Groups are established by Cabinet and can comprise both Cabinet and non-Cabinet Members.
4. Attached at Appendix A are the current Terms of Reference (ToR), which have been updated to reflect the additional role of monitoring the communication strategy for the enforcement of environmental offences agreed by Cabinet in February 2022 (highlighted). The ToR state that the Group will be chaired by the Lead Member for Environment and Transport; this will require amendment as this Portfolio role no longer exists (highlighted).

5. It was agreed to hold one meeting of the CCSG every six months in public, with informal, closed meetings more frequently to allow for officer progress reports in between formal meetings.
6. Since its establishment it has met on 16 occasions, with the last nine, being informal.
7. It is noted that whilst there is a desire to designate the CCSG as a formal committee of the Council, this would bring the formality and legal obligations in terms of local authority meeting administration and more time is needed to consider these matters in full.
8. In the meantime, it is therefore requested that the Cabinet reconvenes the CCSG and appoints Members thereto, in accordance with the current ToR. A review of the ToR can be undertaken when due consideration is given to the status of the CCSG in the coming months.
9. Members of the CCSG during the last administration and who have been returned to office are as follows:

K.M. Field, S.J. Coleman, P.J. Gray, P.N. Osborne and S.M. Prochak, MBE.
10. Following the appointments to Cabinet, it is noted that three Cabinet Members are former Members of the CCSG. Should all three wish to continue on the CCSG, the ToR will require amendment.
11. Cabinet is asked to reconvene the CCSG and appoint Members thereto.

| Other Implications | Applies? | Other Implications | Applies? |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Human Rights | No | Equalities and Diversity | No |
| Crime and Disorder | No | Consultation | No |
| Environmental | No | Access to Information | No |
| Risk Management | No | Exempt from publication | No |
| Interim Chief Executive: | Lorna Ford | | |
| Report Contact Officer: | Lisa Cooper, Democratic Services Manager 01424 787813 | | |
| e-mail address: | lisa.cooper@rother.gov.uk | | |
| Appendices: | None | | |
| Relevant previous Minutes: | CB19/49 CB19/76 CB21/89 | | |
| Background Papers: | None | | |
| Reference Documents: | None | | |

Rother District Council

**CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE****1. Purpose**

On 16 September 2019 Full Council passed a motion declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and made a carbon neutrality commitment for Rother District with a target date of 2030. The Climate Change Steering Group has been established by Cabinet to develop, plan and initiate the steps that the Council will need to take to meet this highly ambitious target.

2. Objectives

- To produce an action plan or strategy that is designed to ensure that the operations of the Council are carbon neutral by 2030.
- To agree and monitor a set of Key Performance Indicators to ensure that the Council meets its carbon neutral objective by 2030.
- To identify relevant existing powers that the Council may exercise, and any additional powers to be requested from Central Government, that could be used to encourage carbon neutrality throughout the district.
- To identify which policies, strategies and working practices of the Council might require amendment, and to outline a timescale for reviewing these.
- Identify and consult with existing external bodies and partnerships; and make recommendations on new partnerships that should be established to help achieve the 2030 target.
- Identify citizens across Rother who are climate champions for their communities and to use them to inform on ideas to implement locally.
- To investigate all possible sources of external and internal funding, including the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy's Climate Emergency Bonus Fund and match funding to support this commitment.
- Investigate what Rother District Council can do to minimise the emission of gases other than CO₂ which adversely affect climate change.
- To present a pre-consultation draft action plan to Council for consideration no later than 24 February 2020, including recommendations for next steps and resource requirements.

3. Scope

For the purposes of this initiative, the operations of the Council are considered to be any action taken by the Council either institutionally or through its Members, staff, volunteers, and contractors in the discharge of its duties.

In developing the action plan the Steering Group will need to consider the existing carbon footprint of the Council, existing and emerging carbon reducing technologies, opportunities for change in institutional and personal behaviour, the impact of Council property assets, and the likely financial cost and resource requirements for meeting the 2030 target.

The Steering Group will also consider wider issues related to climate change over which the Council might wield influence, but do not directly contribute to our own carbon footprint.

The Steering Group will also monitor the communications strategy in relation to the Environmental offences – Fixed and Civil Penalty Notices.

4. **Membership and Structure**

The Climate Change Steering Group will be a cross party group of seven Members. The Group will be chaired by the Lead Member for Environment and Transport and will consist of one other Executive Member and five non-Executive Members, reflecting a broad political balance.

5. **Meetings**

The Steering Group will meet regularly, the frequency, time and venue to be decided by the Members in liaison with officers. Meetings will be open to the general public and Members may also wish to organise public engagement events as part of the action plan development.