

**Environment & Rural Affairs Policy Development Advisory Group**  
**22 NOVEMBER 2022**

Present: Councillors: James Wright (Chairman), Paul Clarke, Joan Grech, Gordon Lindsay, John Milne, Bob Platt, Sam Raby, Kate Rowbottom and Diana van der Klugt

Apologies: Councillors: Roger Noel and Clive Trott

14 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 27 September were received.

15 **DEVELOPMENT OF A LOW CARBON PLAN FOR THE DISTRICT**

The Environmental Coordination Manager gave a presentation on the Council's Low Carbon Strategy. The strategy would include an Action Plan specific to Horsham District to drive its carbon-neutral ambition.

Baseline analysis had already taken place, which showed over 50% of the district's emissions emerge from buildings, and one third were associated with transport. It was noted that land-use was a net sink for carbon emissions. Whilst industrial and waste processes both had significantly lower emissions compared to buildings and transport, they were higher than the UK median.

Following interviews with stakeholders and research, it was anticipated that the strategy would include a number of interventions including: educational and behavioural change programmes; advice and support for residents and landlords regarding retrofitting existing homes; steps to help build a more sustainable transport network; and increasing renewable energy generation through partnerships.

Members noted the current timeframe for producing the draft Low Carbon Strategy and Action Plan, which would be considered at a future Cabinet meeting.

16 **CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLANNING FOR PARISH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCILS**

The Environmental Coordination Manager briefed Members on climate change action planning for Parish and Neighbourhood Councils. Workshops had been held, including an all-day session on 20 October where 27 delegates from 20 Councils attended.

The workshops would encourage Parish and Neighbourhood Councils to develop their own action plans, with support from HDC and the Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC). They would also be provided with a resource pack to help them with ideas on communication and fundraising.

17 **UPDATE ON WILDER HORSHAM DISTRICT**

The Environmental Coordination Manager gave an update on the Wilder Horsham District Project. A key focus was to give support for the River Adur and River Arun, both of which needed enhancing. External funding had already been secured to develop projects along part of the River Adur over the next two years.

The Group were also briefed on farm cluster groups, which allowed farmers to work together to benefit, for example, soil and water quality and wildlife enhancement. Possible sources of funding, including the Government's Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund, were noted. The Upper Adur Farm Cluster included around 37 farmers, and work was underway to establish a group for the Upper Arun area.

Members were briefed on the importance of urban areas, in particular Horsham Town, in providing the Nature Recovery Network across the district. Sites in Horsham Town had been surveyed and steps were being taken by the Parks & Countryside Team to enhance Council-owned land. Officers were meeting voluntary groups to discuss how they can support the project.

18 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & RURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**

The extract was noted.

*The meeting closed at 7.00 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm*

CHAIRMAN