

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE
17 JANUARY 2024

Minutes of the Climate Change Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote meeting on Wednesday, 17 January 2024

PRESENT: Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson (Chair)

Councillors: Gillian Brockley, Steve Copple, Mared Eastwood, Chrissy Gee, Ian Hodge, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Carolyn Preece, Dan Rose, Jason Shallcross and Sam Swash

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Dave Healey (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy), Programme Manager for Climate Change and Carbon Reduction, Climate Change Project Officer, Climate Change Officer, and Assistant Biodiversity Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2023 were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillors Dan Rose and Mared Eastwood.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

38. LAND USE REVIEW FOR BIODIVERSITY, CARBON STORAGE, AND FLOOD MITIGATION

The Chair introduced the item to receive a presentation on the work that is being carried out to assess the feasibility of schemes within the Council's land assets for resisting flood and drought while enhancing biodiversity and increasing carbon storage.

The Programme Manager for Climate Change advised that Molly Salter, Climate Change Officer, and Sophie Roberts, Biodiversity Officer, would give a joint presentation which covered the following main points:

- background
- project overview
- importance of the project
- climate emergency
- nature emergency
- project aims and objectives

- methodology
- ecological resilience
- carbon sequestration
- climate risk and adaptation
- national and regional policies
- Council policies
- a joined-up approach

Officers responded to the questions and comments raised by Councillor Dan Rose regarding data on available land, buffer zones, Flintshire County Council owned land, wildflower, biodiversity, woodland and meadowland. Officers also responded to the comments and questions raised by Councillor Allan Marshall around the B-line mapping system and hedge cutting.

Councillor Dave Healey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy, raised questions around biodiversity solutions for stemming the flow of the River Alyn upstream. Officers responded to the points raised by Councillor Healey and explained that work was ongoing in conjunction with the flooding management team on the feasibility of sites and AONB. The Programme Climate Change Officer also responded to the comments raised by Councillor Healey concerning the Moel Famau project, and funding for projects to advance further work.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received.

39. CARBON EMISSIONS OF FACTORY FARMING IN FLINTSHIRE

The Climate Change Project Officer presented a report on carbon emissions associated with farming, and the role of the Council in influencing carbon positive agricultural practices. He provided background information and reported on the main points as detailed in the report.

The Climate Change Programme Manager responded to a question from Councillor Dan Rose concerning contracts and tenant farmers and explained that there were different types of contracts and that there was the opportunity to update the contract terms to support objectives when due for renewal.

The Climate Change Project Officer responded to the question from Councillor Eastwood concerning the percentage of tenant farmers in relation to private land farming, and explained information wasn't available online regarding the location of private farms and that the National Farmers Union Wales may be able to provide further information. Councillor Eastwood proposed that the second recommendation in the report be amended to include the Farmers Union of Wales (FUW). Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson seconded the proposal and when put to the vote this was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That engagement with tenant farmers on Flintshire County Council land to understand their farming practices and activities to address climate change be supported; and .
- (b) That engagement with the National Farmers Union (NFU), the Farmers Union of Wales (FUW), and known companies, and private farmers, to understand how we can engage and promote best practice across the County be supported

40. UPDATE ON INQUIRIES

The Chair introduced the item to receive an update on the Committee Flood and Pensions Inquiries and discuss the next steps.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Democratic Services Manager provided the dates which were currently available to accommodate hearings to address the Inquiries. The Chair proposed that in consultation with the Democratic Services Manager, that sessions be scheduled from 12–16 February 2024 and this was agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

41. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The current Forward Work Programme was appended to the agenda for consideration. The Chair invited Members to suggest any further items they wished to be included on the Programme by email to the Chair or Programme Manager for Climate Change.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be adopted.

42. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

None.

(The meeting started at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 11.03 a.m.)

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Chair