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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, 17 November 2022

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Lisa Jerome 01438 242203

committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: R Broom (Chair), A Mitchell CC (Vice-Chair), Ashley-Wren, S Booth, A Brown, J Brown, M Creasey, M Downing, B Facey, C Parris and L Rossati

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 20 OCTOBER 2022

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Environment and Economy Select Committee meeting held on 20 October 2022.

Pages 3 – 10

3. INTERVIEWS WITH HCC EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO FOR ENVIRONMENT & CHAIR OF HERTFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PANEL

Members will receive a presentation from the Hertfordshire County Council Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment, Cllr Eric Buckmaster and from the Chair of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Panel, Cllr Graham McAndrew.

A copy of questions that the Chair set for these Members is attached.

Pages 11 – 12

4. UPDATED MAPPING EXERCISE DOCUMENT FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY REVIEW

To consider an updated Mapping Exercise Document for the Climate Emergency Review.

Pages 13 – 40

5. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

To consider any Part 1 business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

6. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 20 October 2022

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Rob Broom (Chair), Adam Mitchell CC (Vice Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Adrian Brown, Jim Brown, Matt Creasey, Michael Downing, Bret Facey, Claire Parris and Lorraine Rossati.

Start / End Start Time: 6pm
Time: End Time: 8pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 20 SEPTEMBER 2022**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Select Committee held on 20 September 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **INTERVIEW WITH EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

The Chair welcomed the three SBC Executive Portfolio Holders for Deputy Leader, Culture, Leisure, Children and Young People, Cllr Richard Henry; Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council, Cllr Sandra Barr and Community Safety, Equalities, Health and Older People, Cllr Jackie Hollywell.

Executive Portfolio Holder for Deputy Leader, Culture, Leisure, Children and Young People, Councillor Richard Henry

The Committee had received a written response from the Executive Portfolio Holder for Deputy Leader, Culture, Leisure, Children and Young People, Councillor Richard Henry, to questions that the Chair had set in advance of the interview session.

The Chair asked Cllr Henry to expand on the issues that had been provided in writing.

Councillor Richard Henry made the following comments:

- In time, there would be opportunities for low carbon buildings linked to the new leisure contract.

- Regarding the cost of the utility bills for the new leisure contract, there won't be a big saving in year 1, but there would be carbon saving in future years.
- The current buildings are not at all energy efficient. A balance needs to be struck between what to do with the existing buildings regarding their medium to long term use including and a cost benefit analysis of repurposing buildings or providing a new build, and the climate change considerations were part of the mix.
- In response to a question by the Chair regarding the food offer in the leisure facilities, Cllr Henry confirmed that they would be looking for a healthy range with consideration to lower carbon too, and will seek to negotiate this into new contracts.
- In response to a question by the Chair regarding making future Stevenage Day's a more environmentally friendly day, Cllr Henry stated that they would be including an eco-audit of Stevenage day next year and would promote other climate change initiatives there, including a Green zone in the future.
- In response to a question regarding providing water fountains and more shading in parks Cllr Henry agreed that these were the sort of issues that would need to be considered as part of the ongoing impact of climate change
- officers who had been focused on the leisure contract will shift their focus onto areas like events in the park which will support climate change themes, building on initiatives such as the Bike Hub in Fairlands Valley Park.

Executive Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Equalities, Health and Older People, Cllr Jackie Hollywell.

The Committee had received a written response from the Executive Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Equalities, Health and Older People, Cllr Jackie Hollywell, to questions that the Chair had set in advance of the interview session.

The Chair asked Cllr Hollywell to expand on the issues that had been provided in writing.

Councillor Jackie Hollywell made the following comments:

- Health inequalities had come to the fore during Covid and were now present in the cost-of-living crisis and climate change is an interlinked part of this. The Council is talking to people about these issues as they try to navigate the mental health challenges that it is bringing up.
- The Council is working in partnership with the County Council and with the voluntary sector regarding addressing public health issues as these link to climate change.
- Regarding equalities – Although people from a lower socio-economic group are not officially one of the 9 protected characteristic groups of the Equalities Act, the Council considers people in poverty as a vulnerable group and who are most affected by climate change.
- The NHS has particular challenges regarding climate change, such as patients not returning medical equipment such as walking frames and crutches because of infection control, which is very wasteful and bad for the environment, as is the huge quantities of single use PPE and other medical

- dressings.
- How different equalities groups are affected is an important issue and is something we need to really consider. In the future eco audits will be really important.
 - A Member suggested that there was not a great difference between younger and older people regarding the levels of engagement on climate change; they both had people engaged and cynical about the issues. By and large older people were more likely to reuse and recycle as this was often embedded in their thought processes.
 - The extreme heat and cold really affects older people, so the Council would need to look out for vulnerable residents in this regard.

Executive Portfolio Holder for Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council, Cllr Sandra Barr

The Committee had received a written response from the Executive Portfolio Holder for Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council, Cllr Sandra Barr, to questions that the Chair had set in advance of the interview session.

The Chair asked Cllr Barr to expand on the issues that had been provided in writing.

Councillor Sandra Barr made the following comments:

- Councillor Barr is working with the Portfolio Holders Richard Henry and Simon Speller on healthier living options. Councillor Barr said that she is hearing young families say they can't afford to be eco-friendly.
- There will be a £15,000 grant per cooperative neighbourhood area to encourage individuals or groups to do environmental projects. St Nicks Pick a Muslim Women's Group who are divided North & South across the town were providing food teach skills to local people to cook tasty and wholesome meals for very small amounts of money. This skill was needed as many young parents have not picked up these skills from food tech at school or from their families.
- Councillor Barr is working with Community Officers and talking to them about a scheme where the public can claim food at wholesale value. Areas in town need a cultural shift to see they can recycle and can take steps to be environmentally minded in their behaviours. Councillor Barr would be looking at what she can do to get the positive messages out to people.
- Regarding whether climate change has the priority it needs across Council, Councillor Barr stated that each Portfolio Holder is looking at it relevant to their remits, so working together is very important. Outlying areas of the Town could benefit from more satellite bike repairs. There may be economic choices e.g., eat or pay for bike repair, with decisions around the former.
- Councillor Barr affirmed that Cllr Speller had previously explained the concept of the "Dragons Den" style bids for small environmental projects. This provides small pots of money to help.

It was **RESOLVED** that the interviews with the three Executive Members were noted,

4 **TREE CANOPY COVER**

The Chair welcomed the Environmental Policy and Development Manager, Julia Hill and the Arboriculture and Conservation Manager, Cristian Pinta to the meeting. The Chair asked if the cost £250 for the planting of a sapling tree was accurate?

Cristian Pinta stated that now the costs were up to £350 a tree as prices have increased due to high inflation and the rise in demand for trees, as the interest in tree planting has gone up so have the costs gone up.

Julia Hill informed Members that all Schools in Stevenage had been offered the opportunity to plant trees. All tree planting required supervision and ongoing management so that trees have a chance to become established.

In response to a question the Chair had regarding requests for tree planting for memorials, Julia Hill said that the Council tries to facilitate this where it is appropriate to plant trees, but this would be helped in the long term with a tree and woodland strategy. It's important to plant the right trees in the right place. Tree planting will be easier to promote once we have a strategy.

The Chair asked officers what is the right type of tree? Cristian Pinta stated that the honest answer is that at this moment we don't know because of the impact climate change is having, we are planting trees now that may not survive longer term. Some experts are saying plant trees that are traditionally flourishing in the climate of the South of France. However, biodiversity impacts are complicated and it's important to have a diversity of species in the local tree stock. There are various diseases to contend with such as Ash dieback, with only 20% being resistant.

Julia Hill informed Members that HCC has launched a 4-year-tree planting initiative "Your Tree, Our Future" (information on this had been sent to all ward Councillors on 28 September 2022). Over the four years 100,000 trees will be made available to residents and community groups to plant on their own land. In 2022/23 the County Council has allocated all 10 districts with 1,000 trees for distribution with residents. HCC ran the application process and in Stevenage all 1,000 trees had been taken up quickly. Distribution of the trees to those successful residents, will be from Fairlands Valley Park in December. The trees will all be 2-3-foot tall whips and all will be native species.

Julia Hill said that when the public collect their tree they will be provided with instructions re how to plant and look after it. In these circumstances it is down to residents to take the care of the tree and it was hoped that as the residents had shown the interest to request the tree that they will look after it.

A Member asked what schools had been involved in the community woodland at Fairlands Valley Park? Julia Hill stated that a number of schools had expressed an interest, but it was not easy for all of them to get to FVP for a tree planting session. 8 schools have expressed an interest to date, 1 secondary school and the rest were

primary schools. There would be a further date in January for the community to come to and plant a tree.

A Member stated that trees that provide shade in parks and open spaces will be very important as a climate mitigation, and it was not just the number of trees that was important but how large each tree species was when mature that was important. Trees can have some unintended consequences; some had been planted in Broadhall Way and had been planted in between the streetlights and the cycleways, and the foliage obscured the lights. In the report a figure of 300,000 trees had been mentioned. This seems to be more theoretical rather than practical. Trees were important but were part of a wide package of measures to tackle climate change.

A Member asked if it possible to plant the wrong trees? Cristian Pinta agreed, for instances Poplar trees grow very large and are prone to drop limbs so can be dangerous in the wrong locations. Some tree species have thorns and some trees are very large so if they are planted in the wrong area they can cause problems to urban infrastructure.

Julia Hill stated that as part of planning gain from Section 106 and CIL, the Town was receiving some biodiversity net gain funding from larger development. In the future it may be a struggle to deliver all the gain on the Council's land, but officers would seek to ensure that it was delivered within Stevenage.

A Member asked if the Council was meeting its target of planting 250 trees a year? Cristian Pinta said that currently the Council was only planting around 160 trees a year. However, these were 2 to 3 metre trees not small whips, so there is a desire to plant at the rate of the target but, at the moment, the focus is on quality tree planting over quantity. Trees need nurturing or they will fail to establish and if not looked after they will die off.

A Member asked why trees had not been planted on the A1M next to a new development rather than the very tall sound barrier? Cristian Pinta stated this was a Planning matter, but trees are good and often used in a way to screen visually and for sound but to have the same effect as the sound barrier fence there would be a need for many layers to block sound and this may not have been possible at this location.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report on the Tree Canopy Cover was noted.

5 **FOCUS ON IMPROVED RECYCLING**

Colin Littlechild, Acting Assistant Operations Manager, Stevenage Direct Services introduced the report to Members. Colin said that Officers were looking at various measures to improve recycling rates in Stevenage. A major problem with moving forward on any new recycling options, including co-mingling of recycling, is that the Council is still waiting for the Government to finalise the Resources and Waste Strategy. The Council needs to understand the outcome to determine what requirements the Government will place on local authorities.

Whatever steps the Council takes to encourage recycling it should be viewed in the

'Waste Hierarchy' terms, with 'use less' and 'reuse' being the priorities above recycling.

Julia Hill stated that the Council promotes recycling in various ways such as at Stevenage Day and going into schools to promote it. As part of waste management, the environmental team are working with the communications team on a comms plan.

Flats and recycling

Julia Hill informed Members that recycling in flat blocks is a challenge for all local authorities. There would be a pilot in 6 areas of Stevenage during 2022/23. Residents in those flats are currently being consulted to find out why they don't currently recycle and/or how we can help them recycle more. The results of this consultation will inform how we deliver improvements for these sites, for some it might be signage needed and some targeted leaflets could be produced. Part of the approach will be to invite residents to be recycling champions. Officers would support them to take on this role.

Some Members stated that they did not accept that residents in flats should not be expected to recycle and suggested that there should be an expectation on all residents to recycle. Julia Hill agreed with this; there is an expectation that all residents should recycle, but there is also recognition that those living in flats might find it more difficult.

Separation or co-mingling of recycling

A Member suggested that the separation of waste was a barrier to recycling and queried whether Stevenage was the only council in Hertfordshire that requires residents to do this? The Members asked if there had been a financial comparison done to show what the cost is per head and whether there was a net cost benefit of our approach vs other authorities in the County's approach? It was stated by a Member that Basildon has one bag for all dry recycling and that they state that there are additional costs to separate it. Who is right and who is wrong? In response Officers said they would need to see the specific details of each offer side by side to be able to adequately comment on this.

A Member asked if there had been any specific engagement with Ward Councillors in the pilot flat block? Julia Hill said that officers hadn't engaged with the specific ward Councillors so far but was open to doing so as they could help get the message out to residents in the flats who are taking part in the survey. Members asked for ward by ward % please of the outcome of the survey and pilots. Officers agreed to provide this when it was available.

A Councillor suggested that they would support less bins and was concerned that the focus should be on using less and reusing above recycling which was no 3 in the Government's hierarchy for waste. The Member suggested that flats actually use less waste compared to large properties and households. If larger household, who generate more waste recycle more, they are still creating more waste. When the Herts Waste Partnership publish their figures, they should put the amount of waste

produced per district first as the top figure then followed by the percentage of that waste that is recycled in the area.

A Member asked about data on residents' re-use of items. Julia Hill stated that measuring reuse is very difficult as it isn't data that is readily available. The Council can measure recycling as it collects and weighs it. The Council will look to promote reuse as it's a positive aspect of the waste hierarchy.

A Member asked what type of flat blocks were included in the pilot and survey? Is there a height restriction for the flat blocks included in it? Is it SBC tenants only or will it include private dwellings or Housing Associations?

A Member said that fair comparisons from one district to another was difficult as socio economic factors also have a part to play. Unfortunately, recycling, and other climate change, and other environmental considerations become a less significant issue for people to focus on if they are preoccupied with concerns about rent and food costs in low wage high inflation economy.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report on improved recycling was noted.

6 UPDATED MAPPING EXERCISE DOCUMENT FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY REVIEW

The Scrutiny Officer presented Members with an updated Mapping Exercise Document for the Climate Change Emergency Review.

The Chair reminded Members that there would be an informal meeting between Committee Members and representatives of the local Friends of the Earth organisation on Monday 24 October and the next committee meeting would focus on interviews with the Hertfordshire County Council Executive Portfolio Holder for the Environment and the Chair of the Hertfordshire Sustainability Partnership on 17 November.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Mapping Exercise Document be noted.

7 URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None.

8 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Not required.

9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR

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Questions from the SBC Environment & Economy Select Committee Climate Emergency Scrutiny
Review for a joint session with:
HCC Executive Members for Environment, Cllr Eric Buckmaster
HCC Executive Member for Transport, Cllr Phil Bibby/Deputy Cllr Graham McAndrew
Chair of Hertfordshire Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership, Cllr Graham McAndrew, East
Herts District Council

1. We are all aware of the financial pressures placed on local government by the present economic situation brought on by Covid, the War in Ukraine and the related cost of living crisis. Where can local authorities turn to for financial assistance, to assist the transition to net zero and is there a real risk that actions that are required now will be delayed because of other priorities?
2. Can you please share what plans there are in Hertfordshire regarding upskilling and training opportunities for a green economy in the County? As an example, there is currently huge interest from consumers for PV solar panels but anecdotally it appears that there are shortages of trained personnel and materials to meet the demand.
3. How are you reaching out to influence partners, residents and businesses in Hertfordshire towards our shared climate change ambitions? Please provide details of the work of the Hertfordshire Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) are involved in, working towards reaching shared climate change goals and is this leading in any way towards influencing central government? Have you found Stevenage Borough Council's to be an active member in the HCCSP?
4. SBC Scrutiny Members have established that 2/3 (64%) of the overall CO2 emissions for the area of Stevenage are caused by domestic dwellings/heating emissions (28%) and transport (34%). SBC Council has some direct influence over the domestic heating of its housing stock of 8,000 properties and has some indirect influences over the remainder of residents. What actions would you highlight as the most significant towards Hertfordshire Councils achieving their Net Zero ambitions, specifically regarding (i) domestic housing and (ii) transport? An example that Scrutiny Members are aware of regarding transport and showing excellent collaboration is the plans for the 27 electric buses as part of the Zero Emissions Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) electric bus scheme to be run by Arriva in Stevenage, replacing their old diesel fleet.
5. What mitigations and adaptations over the current decade and beyond do you see might be necessary if the global target of keeping temperature increases to 1.5 degrees centigrade this century is not achieved? We are seeing the effects of Climate Change already happening in Hertfordshire with extreme weather events such as storm Eunice in February 2022 and the extreme heat between June to August 2022. Hertfordshire is one of the driest Counties in England, and there were devastating fires in July which affected the neighbouring County of Essex. Members are particularly thinking about the impact on adult social care services and excess deaths from heat events for older and vulnerable citizens.
6. From what you know about Stevenage Borough Council's efforts to move the area to net zero, how would you describe the Council's strategies and progress so far to move towards Net Zero? What areas should SBC be looking to improve upon?
7. Across Hertfordshire do you think climate change yet has the priority it needs?
8. What level of public engagement do you think is required over the next decade?

Depending on your responses (in writing or verbally at the meeting) E&E Select Committee Members may have further supplementary questions for you at the meeting.

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Mapping exercise for E&E Select Committee – Climate Change Emergency Scrutiny Review

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date:	Meeting scheduled for date:	Action & date required
<p>Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration</p> <p>May 2022 – New Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Climate Change</p>		<p>Cllr John Gardner, Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration.</p> <p>Cllr Simon Speller Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment Climate Change</p>	<p>Presentation of Portfolio area strategy and actions towards climate change.</p>	<p>21 October 2021 – Received presentation from the Cllr John Gardner & Officers</p> <p>See link - Supplementary Agenda - Presentation on Environment & Regeneration Portfolio area</p> <p>E&E Select Committee 20 09 22</p>	<p>Formal Committee meeting session completed - 21 Oct 2022.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Cllr Speller attended E&E Select Committee on 20 Sep providing a presentation on priorities for CC and answered questions</p> <p>✓</p>

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<p>Critique of the SBC Climate Change Action Plan from external critical friends – (ii) HEART</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>(ii) HEART (Hertfordshire for Enabling and Adapting for Resilience Together)</p>	<p>(ii) HEART have provided a critique of SBC's Climate Change Strategy</p>	<p>18 November 2021 – Interview with HEART HEART critique of SBC's Climate Action Plan</p>	<p>Formal Committee meeting session completed Thursday 18 Nov 2021</p>	<p>(i) Scrutiny Officer to invite Kim Hare HEART ✓ Kim has agreed that HEART can attend ✓ (ii) Scrutiny Officer to circulate background of the review with HEART ahead of the Committee meeting on 18 Nov. ✓</p> <p><u>Outstanding Action</u> – develop the offer from HEART to work with a wider group of Members – June 2022 Update: Informal meetings</p>

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Page 16						with HEART have been ongoing – Exec Portfolio for Env. & Climate Change is now leading
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport		Cllr Lloyd Briscoe, Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport	Presentation of Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.	18 November 2021 – interviewed Cllr Lloyd Briscoe who answered Members written questions - E&E Select Committee 18 11 21 item 3	Formal Committee meeting session completed Thursday 18 Nov 2021	Zayd Al-Jawed has confirmed that Cllr Lloyd Briscoe will attend on 18 Nov. ✓ Scrutiny Officer to circulate written questions for the Exec Portfolio ahead of 18 Nov meeting. ✓ Scrutiny Officer circulated Cllr Briscoe's written

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Page 16						response to the committee's questions. ✓
Critique of the SBC Climate Change Action Plan from external critical friends – (i) University of Hertfordshire/	N/A	(i) University of Hertfordshire - Professor Lubo Jankovic – Prof. of Advanced Building Design/Director of Zero Carbon Lab (School of Creative Arts)	Professor Jankovic to provide a critique of SBC Climate Change Strategy	Agenda for Environment & Economy Select Committee on Monday, 10 January 2022, 6.00pm – see item 3	Formal Committee meeting session completed Monday 10 January 2022	Scrutiny Officer to invite Professor Jankovic to Committee meeting ✓ Scrutiny Officer arranged a daytime pre-meeting informal zoom meeting & ahead of the Committee on 6 December ✓ and a further meeting 5 Jan at 2pm ✓

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Page 17						Update - offer from Professor Lubo Jankovic to attend a follow up meeting of the E&E when the Uni of Herts project is near completion (March 2022). June 2022 Update – Uni. of Herts Zero Carbon Lab report complete and considered by the Committee. ✓
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People		Cllr Jeannette Thomas, Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People (as was	Presentation of Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change	Agenda for Environment & Economy Select Committee on Wednesday, 23	Informal E&E Select Committee meeting completed on 03 03 22	Scrutiny Officer arrange meeting and co-ordinate officer support for Exec Member response to

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Page 18		the designation at the time)	Strategy & Q&A session.	March 2022, 6.00pm – see item 2 Notes of informal meeting 3 March 2022		E&E Members questions. ✓
How will we know if we are on target to meet Net Zero for SBC and for the town by 2030?		Assistant Director – Planning Regulatory to advise on agreed mechanism for ongoing monitoring.	Establishing a base line for the Council to see how far it is along its journey to net zero. An ambition of the work with the University of Hertfordshire is that this will help the Council establish a baseline for the authority and if possible for the town as a whole (with land	Zayd Al-Jawed has assisted the review through all formal and informal meetings as well as sessions with the Uni of Herts. Zero Carbon Lab to help establish a refined baseline so this strand has been achieved.	University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab's work/report on Stevenage Borough Council's Net Zero target for 2030 for the whole of Stevenage area should be ready by mid-April 2022.	Monitor progress through the meetings with the University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab. – These meetings are ongoing. David Thorogood has provided data to the University Research fellow Rebecca Onafuye, including data on Stevenage Area CO2 emissions.

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Page 19			mark milestones per sector such as Transport/Domestic/ Industry/Commercial /Public Sector			Update June 2022: Report Complete ✓ Uni. of Herts. Zero Carbon Lab keen to continue collaboration – via Herts Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership. - Ongoing
Interview with David Thorogood, EHDC/SBC Environmental Campaigns Officer		David Thorogood is employed by SBC on a temporary six month contract and is assisting the Council towards its Climate Change ambitions,		Whilst David is in contract has agreed to attend the E&E Select Committee meeting meetings when it is considering the	Ongoing attendance at meetings.	✓

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Page 20		linked to this David is helping the review and liaising with the University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab.		Climate Emergency Review. Agenda for Environment & Economy Select Committee on Monday, 10 January 2022, 6.00pm		
Interview with Jonathan Sayers, SBC Interim Communications Campaigns Manager		Jonathan Sayers has been employed on a temporary basis to undertake a communications campaign for the Council's Climate Emergency.		Whilst Jonathan is in contract he has agreed to attend the E&E Select Committee meeting meetings when it is considering the Climate Emergency Review.	Ongoing attendance at meetings.	✓
Plans for large industry based in Stevenage?		Mena Caldbeck, SBC Business Relationship Manager	Provide some information regarding their	Minutes 18 November 2021 - Business	Mena Caldbeck met E&E Members	Members to indicate if they would like to interview the officer

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Plans for SME's in Stevenage?		Mena Caldbeck, SBC Business Relationship Manager	businesses plans to work towards low carbon/net zero	Relationship Manager.pdf	on 18 November 2021	at a later date to update the verbal information provided?
Interview with the Leader		The Leader	Provide some information regarding their businesses plans to work towards low carbon/net zero	Minutes 18 November 2021 - Business Relationship Manager.pdf	Update June 2022 - Agreed interview date 13 July 2022 . Chair and Vice-Chair suggested it be important to receive an overarching view of the Council's plans regarding the	Members to indicate if they would like to interview the officer at a later date to update the verbal information provided?
			Overarching view of the Council's leadership and targets to get to Net Zero for 2030			Scrutiny Officer to circulate questions for the Leader ✓ Interview completed 13 July 2022 ✓

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Page 22					Climate Emergency from the Leader (to be interviewed with the Resources Portfolio Holder to see the scale of the financial challenge and what plans are in place from the Resources Portfolio to address this.	
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Resources		Cllr Mrs Joan Lloyd, Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources & IT	Presentation of Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.		Update June 2022 - Agreed interview date 13 July 2022 (As above) To interview the Executive Resources Portfolio	Agreed date 13 July 2022. Scrutiny Officer to circulate questions for the Executive

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Page 23					Holder to see the scale of the financial challenge and what plans are in place from the Resources Portfolio Holder to address this.	Resources Portfolio Holder ✓ Interview completed 13 July 2022 ✓
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Communities, Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Council		Cllr Sandra Barr, Executive Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Council	Presentation of Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.	E&E Select Committee 20 10 22 - item 3	20 October 2022	UPDATE – 17 Nov 2022 – Interview complete
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure,		Cllr Richard Henry, Executive Portfolio Holder for Culture,	Presentation of Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to	E&E Select Committee 20 10 22 - item 3	20 October 2022	UPDATE – 17 Nov 2022 – Interview complete

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Children & Young People.		Leisure, Children & Young People.	Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.			
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Equalities, Health & Older People.		Cllr Jackie Hollywell, Executive Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Equalities, Health & Older People.	Presentation of Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.	E&E Select Committee 20 10 22 - item 3	20 October 2022	UPDATE – 17 Nov 2022 – Interview complete
Chair of Youth Council & Youth Mayor	Young People	Chair of Youth Council & Youth Mayor – Consult with the Youth Council	Attend witness session and answer questions/provide challenge re young people's view/aspirations		UPDATE 20 10 22 Informal sub-group of the Chair, Cllr Rob Broom, and Clare Parris confirmed attending. Invite to Cllrs Stephen	Scrutiny Officer to circulate questions for the Youth Council ✓ Scrutiny Officer to discuss with Ryan Ansell Community Development Officer

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Page 25					Booth & Adam Mitchell.	re a date for E&ESC Members to attend Youth Council meeting. UPDATE 20 Oct 2022 a small sub- group are attending a Young People Climate Change Group meeting on 16 Nov 2022
Critique of the SBC Climate Change Action Plan from external critical friends – (iii) Friends of the Earth	N/A	(iii) Friends of the Earth	(ii) Friends of the Earth to provide a critique of SBC's Climate Change Strategy	Notes of the informal meeting with Stevenage and North Herts Friends of the Earth are provided at Appendix A	To be arranged.	Scrutiny Officer to invite Friends of the Earth (Andy Holthams and Peter Foord)

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Page 20						UPDATE 17 November 2022 – 24 Oct informal meeting took place
HCC Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment		Cllr Eric Buckmaster, HCC Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment	Presentation of HCC Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.		Confirmed 17 November 2022.	Chair & VC have advised they would like this to be an interview with the Committee. Possibly same meeting as with Phil Bibby – 17 November 2022. Scrutiny Officer to draft the questions and invite to interview – deadline for action end of July 2022.

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Page 27						UPDATE 20 Oct 2022 – Scrutiny Officer & Chair meeting with Zayd & Veronica Chan to agree wording of questions – Wed 12 Oct
HCC Executive Portfolio Holder for Transport		Cllr Phil Bibby, HCC Executive Portfolio Holder for Transport	Presentation of HCC Executive Portfolio area including action plan linked to Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.		17 November 2022.	UPDATE 20 Sep 2022 – Cllr Bibby is unable to attend the session on 17 November but can respond in writing and Cllr Graham McAndrew will be in

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Page 28						attendance and is Cllr Bibby's deputy. UPDATE 20 Oct 2022 – Scrutiny Officer & Chair meeting with Zayd & Veronica Chan to agree wording of questions – Wed 12 Oct
Herts Sustainability Panel Chair – Cllr Graham McAndrew East Herts District Council		Cllr Graham McAndrew East Herts District Council – Chair of Herts Sustainability Panel	Presentation of Herts Sustainability Panel including their action plans and Climate Change Strategy & Q&A session.		17 November 2022.	UPDATE – 20 Sep 2022: Scrutiny Officer has invited Cllr McAndrew, who has confirmed that he is able to attend the

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Page 29						<p>meeting on 17 November. ✓</p> <p>Chair & VC have indicated that this session should be an in-person interview now.</p> <p>UPDATE 20 Oct 2022 – Scrutiny Officer & Chair meeting with Zayd & Veronica Chan to agree wording of questions – Wed 12 Oct</p>

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
<p>Page 30</p> <p>Representative Lister Hospital</p>		<p>Invite the East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust CE</p>	<p>What plans and actions are they taking re the expansion of the Hospital Estate and the ongoing use of resources at Lister Hospital to address Climate Change?</p>		<p>To be arranged.</p>	<p>Chair & VC have advised this should be via a written submission of evidence.</p> <p>UPDATE 20 Sep 2022 – Scrutiny Officer to draft an email for the Chair to approach Lister Hospital CE, Adam Sewell-Jones.</p> <p>UPDATE 17 Nov 2022 – Scrutiny Officer still to action this.</p>

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
A representative of Stevenage tenants & leaseholders 131	All SBC tenants and leaseholder	To be advised by Assistant Director Communities & Neighbourhoods	Attend witness session and answer questions/provide challenge re pace of Environmental changes to SBC housing stock		UPDATE from Rob Gregory – 20 Sep 2022: Due to the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper the need for more dynamic engagement with tenants and leaseholders will be required. This is currently shaping through the Co-operative Neighbourhoods Programme but will provide an opportunity to engage with different	Scrutiny Officer to Liaise with Rob Gregory/Jane Konopka re how the review might engage with tenants & leaseholders via new forum? UPDATE 20 Sep 2022 – Scrutiny Officer has sought guidance from the Director, Rob Gregory – see column to left.

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Page 32					tenants and leaseholders in different ways. The community development team can build this requirement into planned engagement, including digital, with tenants and leaseholders.	
Link to primary and secondary Schools and NH College	Young People	A representative of each tier?	Find out what young people's views are and what actions they are taking?		To be arranged.	Chair has said its important to interview representatives of the Youth Council at Committee and re Schools a written response from Terry

Issue	Who's effected? (where relevant)	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Meeting interview/ evidence received date: Link to Committee meeting where evidence/interview was undertaken:	Meeting scheduled for date: How the info will be gathered? (i.e. formal meetings, informal sub-groups meetings, written representations)	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Page 33						Douris at HCC re what actions schools are taking in Hertfordshire.

Suggested options for phase II of the review from the Strategic Director, Tom Pike which would provide assistance corporately to the Council's response to the Climate Emergency which would suit a Member sub-group of the main E&E Select Committee:

- Case study visit:** Given the committee are seeking to ensure the Council's work on climate change has the fullest impact, it may be appropriate for a small group to conduct a case study visit to another Council to share best practice. – The Scrutiny Officer has undertaken some desk top research into Bristol City Council who have been a leading exemplar for local authorities in its journey towards net zero. Bristol had established its carbon footprint from 2005. In 1999 they set a target to reduce their carbon emissions by 10% by 2010. Between 2005 and 2021, they reduced their carbon emissions by 87%. Clearly they are far ahead of most local authorities. Officers and Members should reach out to their counterparts to see how they undertook their journey.
- Community projects:** Perhaps some desk research into other community projects which are live and could support local action? Officers can provide information to support this.

- **Cost estimates:** One or two authorities (Manchester, for example) have started to quantify the types of investment made thus far. A potential option for the Committee would be to seek some information on how they have approached this task.

This work could be supported by some informal evidence gathering, potentially seeking external examples of best practice based related to one or two most impactful of the 8 themes of the Stevenage Climate Action Plan (e.g. transport, homes, comms.). Given the breadth of the review it is suggested that the committee perhaps highlight a couple of themes to look at in greater depth.

DRAFT NOTES - Informal meeting with Friends of the Earth – Monday 24 Oct 2022 6pm on Zoom

Background to Local and National set up for Friends of the Earth

Peter Foord shared a PowerPoint Presentation with E&E Select Committee Members. Peter provided Members with a description of the local and national structures of Friends of The Earth. Friends of the Earth is the UK's largest grassroots environmental network, which is part of international community which started in US in 1060s and was established in the UK in 1971.

Peter provided a critique of SBC's response to the Climate Emergency, which provided their view of what that Council has done so far and what the Council needs to focus on.

Friends of the Earth is involved in lobbying Government and policy makers on issue covering pollution, waste, recycling, and biodiversity.

Friends of the Earth had been instrumental in helping lead a coalition of climate change groups to get the 2008 Climate Change Act into legislation, which was the first national legislation of its kind in the world and has since been copied elsewhere. Friends of the Earth are keen to support both People and Planet. Developing counties and working people deserve a just transition away from Fossil Fuels.

The North Herts and Stevenage Friends of the Earth group are a local group that is licenced by national body. The local body can call on national professional staff but the local team are all volunteers. The local body in North Herts & Stevenage has 60 paid up members and approximately 300 on a mailing list. They hold regular meetings online and in-person.

The local group is involved in outreach at local events includes events such as Stevenage Day and the Hitchin Apple event with a publicity desk at each event.

The Groups Membership is different to national level. Local groups are autonomous. Local campaigns have been focused on protest to any Luton Airport expansion and against a waste incinerator in Hatfield. The local group keeps contact with the three Councils in its area including SBC, NH & HCC. Peter suggested it's hard to keep up to pace with all three authorities, but they do their best.

Policy context

- Where we are today. Current pledges and targets for Co2 reduction, looks like will inevitably go above 1.5oC – heading for 2.0oC.
- COP26 – Friends of the Earth were critical of National Strategy. The High Court says the current report does not meet the standard – Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (green energy and EV good but failing on all of the rest of the measures)
- a tonne of CO2 is equivalent to driving an average sized a car for 9 months; heating an average sized home for 5.5 months; fly one person economy to Cyprus; and 9 months of eating meat

Andy Holtham provided a critique of what SBC is doing:

Accept there are a lot of limitations on what the local Council can do. Lots of demarcation between what one Council does and another e.g. Transport, fleets. SBC alone is producing a lot of stuff on this

- SBC is doing a lot of good thing – declared an emergency 2019 – commend setting an ambitious target for the town – suitably to match the emergency we are in. HCC has no target.
- On Biodiversity, Stevenage has had a plan for several years. Herts Wildlife Trust have said Stevenage is a model for other council to adopt.
- The Council has a focus on Housing and insulation EPC rating by 2030 – and make new build net zero by 2030. Friends of the Earth agrees with SBC's target re home insulation
- On governance there is a question mark. The work that the E&E has done is good, and the work that the new Climate Change Executive Portfolio Holder, Cllr Speller has started with the Climate Change Progress Group shows promise, but it will need time to get established to see what impact there is. Welcome that climate change is getting imbedded in other work the Council is doing, for instance around procurement and corporately on its decision making there is a paragraph on the impact on climate change. It appears to Friends of the Earth that there is good senior buy in from the Strategic Leadership Team.

What can the Council do better?

1. **Improve its Public Engagement** – Annual report work with residents – doesn't feel like there has been a lot of engagement with residents. Wait to see Cllr Speller's approach. Citizen's Panel good but not followed up properly so lost momentum.
2. **Behaviour change needed** (According to a House of Lords report 40% of climate change can be influenced by behaviour change). This has been an area that is really weak from UK national government strategy. This is an area local government can challenge, its cost neutral to change behaviour. For individuals there is a huge up-front cost to mitigations like solar panels, Electric Vehicles and air source heat pumps but no up-front investment needed to change behaviours. Councils could do more here to promote eating less meat, flying less, and cycling and walking more.
3. **Travel and Cars** – Within the Council's existing strategy there are good initiatives to decarbonise taxis and buses which are good, but the policy is weak on trying to get people to take up electric vehicles and to use public transport and other modes of zero carbon travel active travel such as cycling and walking.
4. **Pathway to 2030** – No clear targets or pathway to see how Stevenage gets from where it is now to 2030. There is a need for interim targets or ways to measure carbon savings so carbon budgets could be needed.
5. **Community Energy Projects** – some Council's have gone a lot further than SBC has so far so Stevenage could look at developing community energy projects such as heat and power projects.
6. **Pitfalls and worries** – Things that could go wrong with the Councils strategy. It's good that the Council looks to address at its own estate emissions and its own carbon footprint. A lot of these measures should be as a given, that SBC will be an exemplar to other companies. Reducing the whole town's emissions is the big target and should be the main focus, our own estate is easier to do.
7. **Avoid an over focus on other green issues such as tree planting/ recycling and litter** – these can be a distraction – if the climate strategy just focused on this it would miss the target. Tree planting good public initiative in terms of adaptation to provide shade, but it won't get us to carbon neutral. We can't do 30,000 trees a year, Stevenage doesn't have the space even if we wanted to.

8. **Pace** – This is a worry. Friends of the Earth recognise that it is hard for Council's to move quickly, but the 2008 Climate Change Act was made legislation 14 years ago. Most of those years have been a missed opportunity and could be called lost years up to 2019 when the Council declared a climate emergency. Is it really an emergency? We need to ramp up the pace to get to net zero for the town by 2030.

Questions from Members

Community Energy Projects

The Chair asked for clarification and some examples from Friends of the Earth regarding community energy projects? Friends of the Earth said that they would share examples, but this could include heat and power projects. For new build projects including ground source heat pumps ensuring there is space in new developments to incorporate these. Another suggestion was for the Council to consider setting up its own clean energy company with solar, wind or ground source heat pumps to help supply the town or public buildings.

Responsibility to take action

A Member suggested that money is tight for residents who would not be able to cover the big cost of change. Friends of the Earth suggested that this has to be led by central government. Peter Foord said that there were some grants available for residents, but these were too small scale. The Council bids to funds for decarbonisation of its Housing Stock but this is very limited too small. Friends of the Earth have a campaign for improved insulation called United for Warm Homes Campaign. Which is looking for a massive insulation campaign to address some of the most energy inefficient homes in Europe.

Andy Holtham said improved insulation would reduce the cost of heating and reduce CO2. Chair said he was concerned about the capacity issue for this type of work. Andy Holtham said regarding air source heat pumps not many companies were doing this. On this count he agreed with the Chair regarding current capacity issues but said that in the future there would be a market opportunity around this moving towards a green economy. Insulation would likely be the easiest mitigation to focus on.

Mechanism to record carbon reductions in the town and impact on CO2 reduction from tree planting

The Vice-Chair asked about (i) the weakness for the Council without having an obvious mechanism or flight path to check progress as we move along, any suggestions regarding what a successful plan to monitor this might look like? And (ii) can't just get there by just plant trees and recycling. The Council understands that there isn't enough money and space to make this work, are Friends of the Earth recommending moving to other priorities that could help the Council reach its climate change ambition? Andy Holtham said that regarding (i) a mechanism to measure how the Council was doing regarding reaching net zero the Council has a number in the strategy allocated by the government office Business Enterprise and Industrial Strategy, which is made up of different components such as cars, homes, businesses, some gas some electricity etc. Different areas can be tackled at different timescales and different paces. All the measures put together should show the Council if the area is on the right path. The Council can't have binding targets for each year, but it should help the Council see if it is on track. Friends of the Earth think it is probably unlikely that Stevenage will be net zero by 2030 unless the national government steps up to make it happen. Regarding (ii) Friends of the Earth are not saying the Council shouldn't have a priority to plant trees or reduce waste, use less in the

first place. There is always going to be important things to grapple with at the same time. Yes, do what you are doing or tree planting and be more ambitious on recycling and using less but don't rest on laurels – tree planting is good, but it won't get us there. Andy – the amount of tree planting that the Council is talking about isn't going to be reducing that much carbon or get you there quicker. The review had already established the 64% of the emissions comes from domestic heating and transport, these should be the main area of focus.

Issues with EV as the best environmental measure

A Member stated that, barring an extremely cold winter, because of the high cost of energy this year due to the war in Ukraine and other global issues the energy consumption will be down this year. The promotion of Electric Vehicles as a solution for the transport element of carbon saving was a problem as the mining of Lithium to manufacture the batteries is terrible for the environment, as well as unethical mining practises, so this is replacing one environmental problem with another. The best solution is better public transport and the promotion of carbon neutral modes of transport such as cycling and walking. Regarding Electric buses there is a need for a reliable service or people won't use it regardless of the energy it uses. Regarding Electric Vehicle charging points there are a lot of private ones, but it's very difficult for SBC to provide these in any great number, especially with the layout design of Stevenage's housing stock. All new houses at Tabor Close has EV and it is encouraging that new developments will have these as standard but that doesn't provide a town wide solution.

Insulation is an issue, but this should include dealing with badly sealed doors and windows not just loft and wall insulation.

20's plenty speed reduction initiative and links to reduced CO2

In response to a question regarding the Friends of the Earth's views on Hertfordshire's County Council 20s Plenty scheme to reduce speed limits they were not convinced it would help enough with reducing CO2, reducing speed had some limited value, but if a combined measure it helps to promote a modal shift to active travel then that could help. Pedestrian and Cyclist accidents at the lower speeds are far less serious.

Behaviour change

The Chair asked about behavioural change and how the Council might encourage modal shift and encouraging people to consider reduce meat consumption? Does Friends of the Earth have any examples from elsewhere to encourage people to think of it?

Peter Foord said this was all about education. The Council could help by presenting alternatives. It was now more common to see vegan food on menus, this issue is beginning to become mainstream, 20 years ago this would have been very rare and seen as a novelty. Understand the reality of climate change and impact of behaviours is important. There is also a public policy role in terms of market signals, as energy prices are up so much, people follow this and change behaviour. Andy Holtham added that the Government have a nudge until behaviour change, was going to be published at same time as the Governments Net Zero Report in October 2021 and this withdrawn but it was accidentally published and it's therefore out in the public domain. This report concedes that it will be very tough to get people to change behaviour. Hertfordshire County Council now have someone to advise on this. The Hertfordshire Climate Change Sustainability Partnership has now a renewed focus on behaviour change and adaptations, and it will be looking at this at its next meeting on 9 November.

A Member asked about the focus on implementation change. In New Zealand 56% of homes have heat pumps this is because they have space for them around their properties. The lack of space around homes in UK doesn't help.

In response to a question from a Member, Andy Holtham stated that the positivity around the growth of Elec cars was not from Friends of the Earth but from the Government, as they saw this as meeting their target.

A Member stated that the critique of regarding the public involvement was firm but fair. The Council was doing all we can to involve people, but Friends of the Earth are correct, as only people who are involved in climate change in a group etc. would know about it. Do you have any practical solutions for engaging with people who are not at all interested in climate change and examples of other local authorities who are exemplars in this area? Friends of the Earth agreed to share this information.

Conclusion re engagement

Peter Foord said SBC had started well with the Citizens Panel and then this work had stalled. People on the group would have been keen to be actively engaged to help the Council. The ideas around the new Panel's sound promising but they are yet to see any details on this. Friends of the Earth had seen some attempts to use social media to engage people, but by the nature of social media this leaves the Council open to receive hostile responses.

The Chair thanked Peter Foord and Andy Holtham for their time and contribution and said he would like to talk to them again in the future.

The meeting ended at 7.20pm

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