

Cabinet – 12 March 2020

Written question from Christopher Wakely to the Leader, Isle of Wight Council

I was informed that the Council Zero Carbon Plan 2030 was to be launched at Cabinet on 12 March, but I cannot see it in the Agenda. Have I missed it or has it been delayed please? The Council passed a resolution on 24 July 2019 for this plan to be produced within six months which expired on 24 January 2020 and so it is approaching two months late already.

Response

The Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration considered a report on this at its meeting on 6 February 2020.

The minute of that meeting is as follows:

Reduction in the Island's Net Carbon Emissions

Since the council had declared a climate emergency much work had been done, resulting in the production of a draft strategy and achievable action plan.

The document was seen as a good starting point although members felt that there may be opportunities to be more ambitious, for example, a move towards 100% electric cars on the Island and more use of solar energy.

A feasibility study had recently been commissioned in respect of electric vehicles, as the date for all new vehicles to be electric powered had been brought forward to 2035. An appropriate number of charging points, and their possible positioning around the Island, would be considered and built into the strategy.

The Committee noted that the council offered free parking permits for new electric vehicles. It was recognised however that to incentivise people to purchase second hand or hybrid electric vehicles, consideration would need to be given to including them in the permit scheme, and this would be investigated.

An international conference had been held on the Island in 2014 on climate change. Following this, a long-term plan had been developed, which included flooding action plans.

Members were concerned that private developers were using green land for housing. Further studies and discussions were needed into how this would affect the environment/climate change/biosphere.

The Council would be working closely with AONB regarding the dark skies policy and how it related to the street lights on the Island. There was a compromise between the policy and the need for safety.

The Green Impact Initiative was now about to launch its second year. A partnership between the Council, Chamber of Commerce and businesses, it had won an award in September 2019 for the Island programme. There were 65 businesses already taking part and more would be encouraged to sign up.

Members were impressed at the large number of activities contained in the strategy and were encouraged that many small actions would achieve larger gains over time. Members looked forward to receiving progress reports at later meetings.

The strategy would be reviewed as the action plan progressed. The aim was for it to be populated with costings, estimates and required resources by the end of April 2020. The final draft would be completed by the end of May 2020 ready for approval by Cabinet. The task and finish group would be used to ratify the actions and timescales and would work closely with the Environment & Sustainability Forum to test the action plan.

Members felt that it may be useful to hold a conference or seminar for the community, including schools, to enable them to find out what actions were being taken.

The Committee requested a report on an annual basis, with a shorter update every six months.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the progress report, strategy and action plans be noted,
- b) The Cabinet Member for Procurement, Waste Management, Special Projects and Forward Planning be requested to consider facilitating a conference/seminar for any interested groups, organisations and schools on the development of the climate and environment strategy.
- c) A further report on the strategy and action plans, including a full costing for a pathway to net zero carbon, be submitted to the Committee at its meeting on 30 April 2020.
- d) The workplan for the committee to include a yearly review of the actions being taken on the delivery of the strategy.