

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP** held at the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **WEDNESDAY 16TH OCTOBER, 2019** at **6.30PM**

PRESENT Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs U Mann, Mrs G Parker, P Williamson (ex officio)

Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Ward Member)

IN ATTENDANCE Town Clerk

207. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Nominations were invited for the election of Chairman of the Working Group for the remainder of the Civic Year.

A nomination was received in respect of Councillor Ms L Crawford.

RESOLVED THAT Councillor Ms L Crawford be appointed Chairman of the Working Group for the remainder of the Civic Year.

208. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Nominations were invited for the election of Vice-Chairman of the Working Group for the remainder of the Civic Year.

A nomination was received in respect of Councillor Mrs G Parker.

RESOLVED THAT Councillor Mrs G Parker be appointed Vice - Chairman of the Working Group for the remainder of the Civic Year.

209. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor A Hutton

210. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in connection with items listed on the Agenda.

211. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Working Group noted the Terms of Reference as established by Council. Particular attention being paid to:-

- a. The sequential/staged process for the programming of the activities of the Working Group – commencing with a review to identify and evaluate best practice as regards to the potential for Town/Parish Councils to promote sustainable and environmental initiatives including with regard to climate change; and
- b. That any matters which related to the built environment would be led by and fell under the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group once constituted.

212. NEXT STEPS

A wide ranging discussion followed including with regard to:-

- Areas upon which the Working Group might wish to focus. In relation to Minute No 211(a) above one Member undertook to undertake the necessary work with regard to recycling and waste, another in connection with built environment and the Council's estate, another in connection with the operation of the Tree Warden Scheme;
- Reference to various initiatives which might follow on from the Best Practice Review once the necessary work had been undertaken;
- The importance attached to community engagement/involvement at the appropriate time;
- The list of "20 actions parish and town Councils can take on the climate and nature emergency" prepared by Friends of the Earth;
- The approach adopted by other Town and Parish Councils;
- The importance attached to working within the framework being developed by Devon County Council and West Devon Borough Council together with the strong desire for a standardised "tool kit" to be made available to towns and parishes to enable them to compare progress on a like for like basis;
- The range of existing stakeholders and interest groups within the community, and potential role as facilitator;
- The upcoming Tavistock Energy Fair – the consensus was that if one or two Members wished to take "soundings" this would not be inappropriate, provided that (given the matter had not been through Council) they did not present themselves as either representing the views of the Town Council, nor

committing to any action on behalf of the Town Council or associating the Council with any party, grouping or viewpoint;

- The challenges posed in communicating with isolated and/or hard to reach groups and associated discussion around demographic and economic issues;
- The value of an inclusive partner based approach including with regard to lobbying;
- In view of severe constraints on Officer resources the importance attached to Member involvement in the arena (other than future essential due diligence associated with spending decisions);
- Prospective next steps;
- An offer from a Member, should Council consider it appropriate, to arrange an "information session" whereby local stakeholder organisations and interest groups could attend to give a 5-minute briefing on the activities they were undertaking in this field.

RECOMMENDED THAT the Sustainability & Environment Working Group recommend to the Budget and Policy Committee and Tavistock Town Council:-

- a. Agreement for a Member to arrange a "information session" at which stakeholder and other interest groups for sustainability and the environment operating within the Town, might attend to give a 5-minute presentation on the work they were undertaking;
- b. In the event that West Devon Borough Council sought representatives to attend at its climate change meetings the Chairman of the Working Group be appointed, the Vice Chairman to act as Deputy.

The Meeting closed at 7.56pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....

CHAIRMAN

