

Minutes



Climate Emergency Working Group – Meeting 5

23 April 2020, 18:00-19:45

Zoom Meeting

Present: Working Group Chair

(TB) Tobin Byers, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment

Working Group Secretariat

(DoH) Dominique Hill, LBM Climate Change Projects Officer

(KH) Katie Halter, LBM Climate Change Officer

Working Group Members

Organisation or community group included when relevant

(AR) Alice Rayner

(DaH) Daniel Holden, Conservatives

(CC) Cecily Church

(FA) Franki Appleton, Friends of the Earth Merton

(JG) Jenifer Gould, Liberal Democrats

(KM) Katie Meech

(KG) Kelly Gunnell, Haydon's Road North Community Group

(LM) Lily Marcel

(MN) Mehmood Naqshbandi

(PM) Pippa Maslin

(RHJ) Richard Hackforth Jones

(TC) Toby Costin, Crew Energy

(YR) Rose, Young Resident

Guests

(CL) Chris Lee, LBM Director of Environment and Regeneration

Apologies received from:

Tom Walsh, Sustainable Merton

Item	Actions
<p>1. Short update from Director of Environment and Regeneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CL thanked the group for all their work on the action plan to date. - Introduction to the current COVID situation and how much has changed in the last 8 weeks since the carbon action plan workshop. 	
<p>2. Update on COVID-19 and potential impacts on the action plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TB discussed potential impacts on action plan timescales from COVID-19 lockdown. - Some council services are being redeployed so we haven't been able to agree as many details for the action plan with officers. - Council processes will change as well – testing first digital meetings next week. - Not clear what the pressure on those meetings will be and the priority will be COVID-19. No fixed meetings yet and the intention is to work towards the Cabinet meeting in June. - Finances – the council has to estimate its position in terms of the resource pressures from COVID-19 and reductions – approx. £25 million worse off as a result of COVID-19. Received £4.9 million from government but unclear how much future funding the Council will receive. Lots of uncertainty how this will affect the Council budget. When Cabinet look at this in June there might not be much certainty around funding. - Highlighted some of the potential environmental benefits of lockdown. 	
<p>3. Introduction to draft Climate Strategy & Action Plan and Delivery Plan, and update on Aether's outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KH provided an update on progress on the Climate Strategy and Action Plan – we have gone through the long list of actions, considered the extent to which we think they need to be in the action plan and done a first cut of what actions we think should be included. Excluded actions outside Merton's remit (e.g. decarbonisation of the electricity grid), actions which won't help achieve the targets and actions which aren't reasonable. - DoH provided an overview of the supporting 	

<p>documents which will sit behind the Climate Strategy and Action Plan including the Delivery Plan, the GHG inventory and decarbonisation pathways modelling developed by Aether, and the consultation responses received through the climate change consultation including the CEWG recommendations, the survey results and outputs from the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Delivery Plan will inform the implementation of the action plan. This detail is being developed and agreed with officers where possible but this has been limited by staff illness and redirection of resource in response to COVID-19. As a working document it will be updated regularly as actions are developed and implemented. - Aether is currently in the process of pulling together a report which will set out the methodology, assumptions and results for both the borough and council targets which will highlight the pace and scale of the challenge and how this links up to the action plan. 	
<p>4. Discussion: Opportunity for group members to feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RHJ – questioned the timing of the publication of the plan and sensitivity to lockdown. Expressed interest in being involved in developing the detail for some of the actions in the delivery plan. - MN – thought it was an excellent document, enjoyed reading it, appreciated that it needs to be high-level and digestible. Thought that the pre-amble was perhaps a little long compared to the meat of the document. Suggested re-structuring that to emphasize the actions, and put the caveats and barriers in a more discreet position. Thought that the transport section didn't highlight the role of public transport enough. Suggested that more detail or a link to the detail is included so that people can see it if they want to. - PM – agreed that the upfront section is quite long but doesn't think that it could change. Questioned wording regarding zero carbon development. - DoH explained the difference between current national Building Regulations standards, current London Plan policies and changes required to meet our national and local carbon reduction targets which are being considered in the new 	

Local Plan policies.

- **TC** – Highlighted the potential co-benefits for health, clean air and finances. How much analysis has been done on this?
- **KH** response – trying to quantify the co-benefits as much as possible – e.g. for the replacement of Council buses.
- **TC** - Recommended enforcing MEES sooner and suggested that there wasn't enough on community groups.
- **KM** – thought the document was very well-articulated and visually appealing.
- Green spaces – nothing on developers and the importance of planning to hold developers to account.
- **KH** response – there is an action on reviewing the Local Plan which covers this.
- **KM** – suggested strengthening engagement proposals to build on community engagement being developed to respond to COVID-19.
- **FA** – thought it was well pitched, inspirational and achievable. Liked that a few measures are quite soon (2020, 2021) so taking action quite quickly. Suggested adding a section on what individuals and organisations can do in every section.
- **KH** - Want to improve on that and might look for input from CEWG.
- **FA** – suggested including a note on how the action plan should be interpreted in the context of COVID.
- **YR** – suggested creating a shorter version for young residents to circulate in schools and put on Youth Parliament website to highlight a few things that young residents can do.
- **JG** – liked the document and the progress we have made. Wanted to see more on biodiversity but understood that there isn't necessarily a direct link to climate action. Need to ensure that council services continue to run normally. Need to highlight the potential for community action more.
- **LM** – Green economy – some actions are perhaps a bit cautious. This is often where it's subject to another business case.
- **KH** thanked the group for their comments and noted that it was good to hear that the plan had been positively received.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KH discussed what we need to do for sign-off. Costs - The intention is to include the cost of the measures (e.g. how much would it cost to decarbonise a home). This is the cost to society and not the council. It's not possible to estimate the cost to the council without developing all the detail yet. Developing the costs will be our focus over the next few weeks. - Will need to get the papers ready for CMT in the next 3 weeks to get it to Cabinet in June. Looking to get any comments from CEWG by Wednesday 29th April. Looking to have a second draft by the end of that week. - KH asked if the group want a more detailed discussion on what the actions mean and where we've got to. The group's input on the delivery plan would also be welcome. 	<p>Members to provide any additional comments and confirm if they want a more detailed discussion on actions by Wednesday 29th April.</p>
<p>5. Plan to develop a Communications Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KH circulated a high-level plan on how to develop a communications strategy. Need to think about what messages we want to convey and establish a framework from which we can develop communications materials. Will want to try and get other organisations on board with the same communications strategy to resonate the messages much further. - JG - Green Spaces – already have volunteers on board. Could engage community groups and circulate comms materials on that one. - AR – Highlighted the social psychology behind behaviour change. Suggested adding something about this in the purpose of engagement section – making it easy, attractive, fun, what people want to do. Using other mechanisms beyond just informing but also incentivising. - KM – noted that there are lots of frameworks which we can use for community involvement and there are going to be more networks as a result of the response to COVID-19. It is currently being discussed how we can link all these groups up and have regular meetings with the Council. - Suggested having more advertising for tree planting that happens every winter and other similar events. - KH – we have included an action on forming an implementation group in the action plan. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PM – noted that the engagement of the community is mammoth, no one can picture what it looks like. Doesn't think that we should pre-empt too much, and in order to give people a sense of ownership, suggested letting community groups decide how they want to engage. Also raised concerns about public frustration regarding the pace of action by the council. The Council needs to lead by example. - FA – noted that there is an appetite for community groups to form a coalition. Agrees to share the Council's comms plan with other groups – people like to have easy engagement options. This should have a behaviour nudge section and consider COVID-19 limitations. - TC – highlighted the potential to maximise on grant funding – the coalition could lead on this if the council can offer space for this. 	
<p>6. Discussion: Discuss the Working Group's role moving forward with regards to the Climate Strategy & Action Plan and the Communications Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group briefly discussed the potential role for a climate coalition/ implementation group. A means of harvesting community energy on tackling climate change, needs to find its own shape as a mechanism to bring the community together. - Need a good framework to hang comms on for the implementation of the action plan - PM - Where does the council comms team sit with regards to this? - KH - We would develop the framework and content and the comms team would share this content on the Council's networks. 	
<p>7. Discussion: Agree agenda and date for next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TBC if the group wants another meeting to discuss the detailed actions week commencing 27th April. - Next meeting to discuss the comms strategy and implementation/ delivery in more detail. 	<p>Group members to confirm if they want to have a separate call to discuss the detailed actions.</p>
<p>8. Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KG – Member of the Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Forum – wondering how these different groups could link up. - FA – Merton Friends of the Earth – Martha and 	

<p>Franki have stepped down and passed the bat to Laura and Marianna – happy to make e-introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- CC – Trying to collate the full list of recommendations from CEWG and will circulate to the working group to make sure they are happy with the recommendations.	<p>CC to circulate collated recommendations to the CEWG.</p>
<p>END</p>	