

STRATFORD- UPON- AVON TOWN COUNCIL
CLIMATE CHANGE TASK & FINISH GROUP MEETING

11 November, 2019

Notes pages 1 – 3

Present:

Councillors:

J Fradgley	Warren Howles
Curtis	
Dyer	

Mr Peter Wharton, Director, Wharton Natural Infrastructure Consultancy

Clerk: J Mayes

Apologies: Councillor Coles and Councillor Cleeve.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Fradgley, who will be acting at Chair of the Committee for foreseeable future. Councillor Warren Howles will be acting as Vice Chair.

1. Approval of Notes from Meeting held on 14 October 2019

Noted.

2. Information Gathering: Presentation from Wharton Natural Infrastructure

Cllr Fradgley welcomed Mr Peter Wharton, Director of Wharton Natural Infrastructure Consultancy to the meeting. Mr Wharton gave a compelling presentation on the impact development can have on climate change and the importance of green space. Wharton Consultants are environmental consultants who work on landscape architecture, look at feasibility of development and also work on risk management of trees in the Stratford upon Avon district. When looking at the feasibility of development consideration should be given to balancing commerciality and the environment; what will the development look like and how will it benefit the next generation? Risk management of trees involves considering the potential of a tree to cause harm and if a hazard is identified the likelihood of it causing harm. It is vital that development is delivered in a planned and systematic approach that provides sustained benefits to those who use it and helps to combat climate change

Mr Wharton highlighted the extensive benefits of green space, including its economic benefit on property value, productivity and retail spending. A Councillor asked if there is any hard data available on the economic benefits of trees. Mr Wharton explained that there is computer software called Tree Plotter available that allows a capital evaluation of a tree. Councillors agreed that being able to demonstrate a clear cash value to keep trees has the potential to be a powerful tool. Mr Wharton highlighted how should consider what green infrastructure in a town is. In the case of Stratford upon Avon, how do you get people from the recreation ground to the shopping area and keep them in green space? Councillors agreed that as a tourist area green space is important to Stratford upon Avon.

Mr Wharton showed Councillors an info graphic published by Tree Economics that shows the benefits of trees. He expressed concern that tree officers in the Stratford upon Avon District are not always consulted on the impact of proposed development by planners. In order to get developers to take incorporating green space into their plans seriously the Developers need to know that their plans will be rigorously scrutinised. Aftercare of trees in any development is also important, otherwise the trees that are planted do not survive and the benefits of green space are lost.

Mr Wharton showed Councillors examples of a development in Alconbury Weald, Huntingshire where 5000 trees were planted as part of the development and a development in Ettington Park, Wellesbourne where 50 trees were planted and 35 trees have died. A councillor asked if this was as a result of vandalism and Mr Wharton confirmed that it was not, the trees died as result of lack of aftercare. It is important to enforce the aftercare of green space in development and the District Council should be monitoring this. Councillors agreed that there is an opportunity to bring pressure to encourage this to happen.

Mr Wharton highlighted the many benefits of more trees and showed Councillors a graph of the urban heat island, where the temperature in cities increases and how trees can help to combat this.

Cllr Curtis requested an opportunity to meet with Mr Wharton to discuss in more details issues raised around planning.

The Chair thanked Mr Wharton for his presentation.

Mr Wharton left the meeting.

4 Items deferred from other Stratford upon Avon Town Council Committees to Climate Change Task and Finish Group.

Councillors agreed that these items should be considered by the Climate Change Emergency Action Group in January once the strategic proposals have been approved by the Town Council.

5 Review and Agree Next Steps to be taken

The Chair circulated a draft document outlining a list of proposals that could be used as a strategic framework for the Town Council to adapt its operations to mitigate their impact on climate change.

A Councillor highlighted that there is limited reference to climate change in the Core Strategy and Neighbourhood plan, which were written before the increase in awareness about the issue of climate change and suggested that this should be reviewed so that all formal decisions made by the Town Council include an environmental impact statement.

The Chair proposed that the draft strategic proposals should be submitted to the Town Council meeting a month early and if agreed the Committee should meet as an Action Group to consider each aspect of the proposals in detail. The Chair also proposed that the membership of the committee and time of meeting should be reviewed and suggested that Cllr Lee and Cllr Fotjik be approached to join the group.

Councillors agreed that any decisions made that involve public money need to demonstrate that have considered whether appropriate and the extent of the benefits in combating climate change.

The Chair reported that she had requested that £10,000 be allocated in the budget for climate change adaptation pilot schemes.

Councillors agreed that they should review the draft proposals and agree supporting information by circulating emails. All comments on the document should be circulated by Friday 15 November so that the document can be finalised on Monday 18 November, to be submitted to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the Town Council meeting papers for the meeting on 26 November 2019.

Date, Time and Venue of the Next Meeting.

Dates for the Action Group Meetings in January will be circulated when the proposals have been approved by the Town Council.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.05pm.