

STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE CLIMATE ACTION WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JULY 2021 AT 6PM AT 'VIRTUAL' LOCATIONS USING VIDEO AND AUDIO LINK

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Amanda Wheeler, Councillor Shaun Ford, Councillor Dave Dorson, Patricia Stuart-Mogg (Town Clerk)

ALSO PRESENT Serena Brown (SKDC – Sustainability and Climate Change Officer), Val Harvey, Simon Batty (Resident), Jim Irvine (Zero Emission Vehicles), Deanne Donovan (Sustainable Stamford), Kayleigh Nicolaou (Extinction Rebellion), Aled Pattinson (Plastic Free Stamford), John Polkinhorne (Sustainable Stamford), Jane Bateman (Sustainable Stamford), Steve Bond (Station Adopters) and Mike Temple.

1. WELCOME

Councillor Amanda Wheeler welcomed all to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Gloria Johnson (Mayor), Councillor Joanne Winterbourne, Hannah Gold and Michelle Martell had submitted their apologies. These were noted and accepted.

3. TO CONFIRM THE NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 June 2021, had been circulated and reviewed. There were no matters raised and the content was confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, PRESENTATION BY SERENA BROWN –

It is already evident that temperatures will increase around 1° degree (compared to historical average) in UK. It is therefore important to understand the current and future risks. Long term investment with potential changes in policy decisions is critical. Winter rainfall has already increased by 30%, compared to the historical average; extreme weather conditions such as flooding, heatwaves are all becoming evident.

Of notable concern for residents of the UK is the increased risk of the Asian tiger mosquito, which can carry the Chikungunya virus, dengue fever, and Zika virus. Flooding and lightning strikes can both have serious impacts on the local distribution of electricity supplies. Disruption of electricity supply will have an impact on railway services and on households.

Local authorities have a particular role in shaping what can happen through infrastructure, behaviour changes and policy. Three-quarters of UK local authorities have now formally declared a climate emergency: recognising the increasing speed of climate change and taking steps to address it.

Many houses which are currently built are not resilient to the apparent risks. Introducing green infrastructure in new developments help in providing street trees, well-designed garden spaces and soakaways. Natural climate solutions include the provision of green spaces in built up areas, integration of urban drainage and nature-based solutions and restoration of habitats and prevention of floods.

It is critical for local authorities to understand the local risks to their area, using local knowledge to better understand at risk areas:

- Areas and residents vulnerable to flooding
- Places where fires might begin during a heatwave
- Key transport routes that may be affected
- Engagement through the Planning process to discuss climate adaptation measures
- Engagement with local residents to better understand climate risk
- Sign up to free flood warnings
- Promote green space over grey concrete

The Chairman Councillor Wheeler thanked Serena for a very informative presentation.

It was noted that residents had been circulated with the consultation document regarding the proposed Monarch Park development. Members considered that this development is to be built on a nature haven which is devastating. In addition, on the feedback form provided, no space had been allocated for environmental and sustainability issues. There was a real fear that as the development progressed all the promises would be dismissed if no one emphasises the importance of these issues. So how can developers be held to account and not just destroy a precious biodiversity site for the sake of profit? It was noted that an intrinsic part of the Planning process is the Environmental Sustainability reporting measures. Government policy also needs to make sure climate adaptation measures are secured within the building process.

It is recognised that there are several Plans being processed such as the Sustainability Statements, Transport Plan, Neighbourhood Plan but are these plans scrutinised to deliver climate adaptation measures? Serena confirmed that the District Council has a process in place and where there is an opportunity, she will examine the documents. The Chairman Councillor Amanda Wheeler considered that the Town Council should consider an environmental impact report on any project progressed by the Council.

It was observed that Sustainable Stamford is progressing improvements of a cycle paths to connect Stamford with neighbouring towns and villages. It was noted that the District Council Leader has offered to meet with Sustainable Stamford and examine the proposals.

5. **UPDATES:**

- a. *Wildflower Project* – The Chairman Councillor Amanda Wheeler informed the group that the wildflower sites which have been planted are flowering and have received extensive positive comment. A survey document is being drafted by Councillor D Dorson to ascertain the views of Stamford residents on the wildflower verges. It cannot be stressed more the benefits of these types of locations for biodiversity, carbon sequestration and lowering temperature. There was a suggestion that to develop this project to the next stage is to map the planting and log how insects and pollinators are moving through neighbourhoods. The Chairman confirmed that there are areas of community involvement and Deanna Donovan and Dave Dorson offered to assist progress this further. **Action: AW/DD/ DD**
- b. *Water-refill Station Project* – Councillor Wheeler informed the meeting that unfortunately the cost for this project has spiralled and to keep it on track Team Stamford has offered to look at the project and see whether they can bring it back on budget. Councillor Wheeler did declare a conflict of interest as she is a Director of Team Stamford and therefore cannot now lead the project. Councillor Shaun Ford agreed to take on the lead. It was hoped to have the details confirmed on this project in time for the next Skells meeting in August. **Action: SF**

6. **ADDITIONAL ITEM**

- *Stamford Station Adopters* – Steve Bond advised that the Stamford Station Adopters are enhancing the station environment in conjunction with East Midland Railways. It was hoped that a meeting could be convened to identify how to inform people about this project.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, 11 August 2021 at 6pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.20pm.