

## **STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **NOTES OF THE CLIMATE ACTION WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 09 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 6PM AT 'VIRTUAL' LOCATIONS USING VIDEO AND AUDIO LINK**

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor Amanda Wheeler (Chair), Councillor Shaun Ford (Vice-Chair), Councillor Joanne Winterbourne and Councillor Lisa Brewin, Patricia Stuart-Mogg (Town Clerk)

**ALSO PRESENT** Serena Brown (SKDC Sustainability and Climate Change Officer), Deanna Donovan (Sustainable Stamford), Jenny Hall (Resident), Jim Irvine (Resident), John Polkinghorne (Sustainable Stamford), Simon Batty (Resident), Michael Temple (Sustainable Stamford), Paddy Jelen (Civic Society) and Jane Bateman (Sustainable Stamford)

#### **537. WELCOME**

Councillor Amanda Wheeler welcomed all to the meeting.

#### **538. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Gloria Johnson (Town Mayor), Councillor Dave Dorson, Val Harvey (Sustainable Stamford), Hannah Gold (Resident), Jane Rutherford (Resident), Kayleigh Nicolaou (Extinction Rebellion), Lauren Bennett (Langdyke Trust), Rachel Butler (Rivers Trust) had submitted their apologies. These were noted and accepted.

#### **539. TO CONFIRM THE NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 08 December 2021, had been circulated and reviewed. From LCC there were no matters raised and the content was confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

#### **540. UPDATE ON CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY FROM SKDC SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER, SERENA BROWN**

The District Council published its second Annual Climate Change Report. Within this document the District Council is committing itself to a number of projects, stringent targets and ambitions on carbon reduction to be completed by September 2022. This is the anniversary of SKDC's declaration of a Climate Emergency. Tree planting has been the current focus, planting 140 semi-mature trees, funded through partnership grant funding schemes and District funds. The selected specimens planted were considered potentially effective in their carbon sequestration and sustainability. The planted stock will be monitored to inform the procurement of more trees for their resilience and carbon extraction. The energy efficiency of the District's property stock and vehicle fleet has also been a focal point to lower the Council's carbon footprint; particularly in respect of the waste collection vehicles as they are energy demanding. Operating a smaller van fleet and the move to electrical vehicles are being explored. With the significant increase in energy prices, there is a serious campaign to encourage improved home insulation, heating systems with the introduction of energy efficient technologies. The district is responsible for 4,000 streetlights which are being converted to LEDs which are more efficient, cut costs and reduce the district's carbon footprint. The introduction of public water fountains is another initiative which is being considered for each of the town centres in the District. The latter programme will reduce plastic waste and improve public amenity provisions. Discussion ensued.

There was question as to whether it would be possible to work collaboratively to introduce LED units to the streetlights under the ownership of the Town Council? Whether an article for the Town Council's Newsletter of the District's progress on the energy efficiencies would be possible? And whether collaborative working to deliver a more effective and efficient

waste/recycling systems for Stamford could be explored? Serena was happy to take these points forward with the relevant departments to see how they can be best delivered.

It was noted that in some areas of Stamford the streetlights are now on all night rather than only periodically. It was thought that this may be due to a change in the LCC Street lighting Policy. In respect of the roll out of the LED scheme, this is a large programme which will run a couple of years. It was recognised that SKDC has a leadership role and is improving areas in which it has a direct involvement. It is appreciated that the domestic emissions are only 2% with business and transport sector secretions representing 70%+. The SKDC is examining a more coherent engagement plan and examining support packages which are outlined in the Climate Matter Report, available for viewing on the SKDC website. With extensive housing development being approved in Stamford, it is important that SKDC as the Planning Authority should be more stringent in supporting the Government's eco-sustainability demands by ensuring homes are built with better insulation and solar panels as a matter of course to address the Climate Emergency declared by the Government and SKDC. It is appreciated that Town and Parish Council's have little influence in respect of such matters, but Stamford would really like to collaborate with SKDC to devise methods of how to achieve this to the utmost of our capabilities. It is recognised that this matter is being discussed by SKDC's Climate Action Group in March. As an element of work on Climate Adaptation around the County, a Risk Assessment is in the pipeline which is being reviewed within the district in September when a decision will be taken as to how best to engage with the public.

On-street electric charging points are being explored and where the funding can be identified to deliver this with the support of County. One of the constraints is that the trickle rather than rapid charging units are only possible due to the Grid capacity. It was understood that the County Council is also considering nature, rewilding, and regeneration schemes to increase biodiversity.

It was considered that it is important that pressure is exerted on the joint developers of Monarch Park to design more positive eco- sustainability within the plan. It was believed that a letter from the Town Council's Planning Committee should be sent in respect of this point.

**541. UPDATE ON DRAFT TOWN CLIMATE PLAN:**

It was noted that this is being progressed. Councillor Wheeler stated that it suggested that the letter head of the Town Council should carry a strap line stating that the Town Council is working to reduce its carbon footprint. A simple and true statement which the Town Council can embrace with a possible logo to demonstrate that the Town Council is positively leading the way.

The Town Clerk believed that this could be adopted as the Town Council has already sent letters out to all the retail units in the Town requesting them to engage in the Council's reduction in plastic waste. The Council's illumination at the Town Hall is being changed to LEDs, it has changed its energy supplier to a more sustainable provider, it is rolling out a water reduction scheme at all Allotment sites and, as mentioned earlier, is always willing to explore collaborative avenues to develop sustainability further.

Following discussion, it was considered that the Council approved introducing an item on each Committee agenda to examine what impact decisions taken have on the Council's carbon emissions. Additional steps could be taken to commence consultation with the electorate. A hub to commence the consultation at a local site could be identified. Grants could be identified to support this process. It was understood that funding streams could be available from LCC and SKDC.

**542. ACTION POINTS:**

- i. *Wildflowers* – Councillor Wheeler confirmed that there were a number of Sunday mornings being arranged to sow the wildflower seeds, when permission has been acquired.

- ii. *Tree Planting* – The Town Clerk reported that this matter is in progress. The types of trees are being identified so that they are the best species for the right place in respect of sustainability and carbon absorption. Serena Brown is assisting with this initiative. Councillor Ford advised that the Town Council has a standard statement in respect of replacing any trees for which applications for removal are received. Following debate, it was agreed important to consider the entire tree planting initiative to support climate adaptation and biodiversity.

**543. STAMFORD MERCURY MONTHLY COLUMN**

The following schedule was reviewed for the Stamford Mercury monthly column on Climate issues:

**March:** Rachel Butler– Water Security

**April:** Kayleigh Nicolaou – Changing to a plant base diet

**May:** Cycling – Matthew Cleathero

**June:** Accessing the Countryside – Landyke Trust

**July:** Sustainable Stamford – John Polkinghorne

It was suggested that articles could also appear in Stamford Living, as these articles are a channel to inform residents and raise awareness. The focus should be on “Refuse – Reduce - Redesign – Recycle – Reuse – Recover” so the articles promote eco-sustainability, tackling waste and pollution. It is also important to introduce consultation towards the Climate Crisis Plan.

**544. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 09 March 2022 at 6pm**

There was a suggestion that the next meeting might congregate at the new eco-store Blondbeet in the Green Quarter. This will be explored, and details circulated accordingly.

The Chairman - Closed the meeting at 7.30pm.