

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

6th June 2023

- Present:** Councillor Karen Lewing in the Chair
Councillors Allcott, Cleary, Cookson (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Cross, Roberts, Round, Sadiq, Smith and Udall
- Officers:** Lloyd Griffiths, Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities
David Sutton, Deputy Director – Corporate Policy and Strategy
Sandra Green, Head of City Services
Ruth Corral, Sustainability Team Leader
- Apologies:** Councillors Bisset and Jagger

1 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor Allcott for Councillor Jagger and Councillor Round for Councillor Bisset.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Public Participation

Paul Snookes spoke on behalf of the Worcester Environmental Group regarding the management of the grass verges and grasslands.

He first thanked the Committee for the financial assistance for creating the Wild About Worcester Way, the 12 mile wildflower corridor around the city which has been very successful.

Committee Members were informed that wildflower meadows and traditional orchards in Warndon Villages were now being restored, the first being Aconbury Orchard, which has been overgrown for some time. Mr Snookes had produced a video of the meadow and this was shown to Committee Members.

The Chair thanked Mr Snookes for his presentation and encouraged Members of the Committee to take a walk around the new route in the city.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matter arising:

Minute No. 48 – Meco Memorial Nature Park

Councillor Udall acknowledged that significant work was taking place for the nature park and asked officers for a progress report. The Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities confirmed that the additional request for capital investment had been approved and he would update Councillor Udall accordingly.

5 Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

The Committee considered the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy 2023-2025 attached as Appendix 1 to the cover report.

The City Council's Policy and Resources Committee agreed on 8th February 2022 to make an allowance within the capital programme of £200k to install more electric vehicle points in the Council's car parks.

On 14th March 2023 this committee approved the business case to install electric vehicle charge points at Tallow Hill and King Street, with £58k of grant funding having been secured to support this project from the Government's On-Street Residential Charging Scheme.

The Deputy Director – Corporate Policy and Strategy outlined the scope of the strategy as set out in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the report and the expected transition to electric vehicles and required infrastructure as set out in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2. The report also covered the approach to future charging infrastructure investments and consultation and feedback.

Committee Members thanked officers for a thorough report which was welcomed. However, some Members felt that more support was required from the County Council in taking some initiatives forward and it was agreed that those City Councillors who were County Councillors would continue to lobby the County Council as the lead transport authority. It was noted that officers do currently work closely with the County Council to identify further opportunities.

The Deputy Director – Corporate Policy and Strategy and the Sustainability Team Leader responded to comments and questions from Committee Members related to the EV charging.

It was confirmed that the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and the Active Travel Action Plan were included in the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan approved by the Committee in November 2022. Committee Members were informed that a briefing on Environmental Sustainability was to be held on 3rd July 2023 and hoped that Members could attend.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approves the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy (Appendix 1).

6 Annual and Quarter 4 Performance Report 2023/24

The Committee received a report on the Council's Annual and Quarter 4 performance for the Environment Committee for 2022/23.

The Scorecard has been refreshed for 2022/23 with projects completed in the last financial year and replaced with new projects as previously agreed by the Committee.

The Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities in presenting the report drew the Committee’s attention to the waste and collection review project. In agreement with the Chair and Vice Chair the deadline for this has been extended March 2024 to allow for a report to be brought back to Committee outlining timescales for change.

In referring to the performance indicator, currently a red rag rating, on the satisfaction with street cleansing, it was asked that geographical links be included in the Annual Survey. This would identify those particular areas where there were issues, as not all areas in the city have problems with street cleansing. The Corporate Director agreed to look at this request.

The Chair informed Committee Members that the narrative for the performance indicator related to poor grass maintenance, was to be amended to take into account grass being cut/not cut.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the Council’s Quarter 4 and Annual Performance for 2022/23.

7 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. to 7.52p.m.

Chair at the meeting on
18th July 2023