

Tonbridge And Malling Borough Council

Climate Change Forum

Minutes

June 14, 2021

The inaugural Climate Change Forum meeting was held on Microsoft Teams at 7:30 PM on Monday, June 14, 2020.

Present (21)

Cllr Robin Betts, Chair (Conservative)

Gill Fox, Policy, Scrutiny & Communities Manager- TMBC

James Read, Graduate Economic Development Officer - TMBC

Kim Tanner, Cllr (Conservative)

Wendy Palmer, Cllr (Independent Alliance)

Georgina Thomas, Cllr (Conservative)

Mark Hood, Cllr (Green)

Michael Base, Cllr (Conservative)

Anita Oakley, Cllr (Lib Dem)

Jim Mawby, Principal West Kent College – representing Education Sector

Tom Shelley, Aylesford Parish Council – representing Parish Councils

Mario Caccamo, NIAB EMR

Guy Neville, Birling Estate – representing local landowners

Anthony Bales, Friends of the Earth

Karena Harmer, TMBC

Gemma Record, TMBC

Reverend David Green, St Marys Church, West Malling – representing Faith Sector

Isabelle Cheetham, student and member of Tonbridge and Malling Youth Forum

Izzy Costello-Cortez, student and member of Tonbridge and Malling Youth Forum

Lizzie Lowrey, Involve – representing Voluntary Sector

Lucy Breeze, Kent County Council

Absent (3)

Elizabeth Milne, Kent Local Nature Partnerships, KCC

Dereck Whitehead, Medway Valley Countryside Partnership

Paul Hickmott, Cllr (Labour)

Item 1 – Welcome and Introduction

Cllr Betts introduced himself and the Forum and he and Gill Fox welcomed attendees to introduce themselves and their interest in the Forum.

Cllr Betts highlighted that the Forum should make decisions, esp. over when it met. Cllr Betts suggested 3 or 4 times a year to co-ordinate with reporting back to Street Scene Environment Advisory Board meetings.

- Cllr Hood, Cllr Palmer and Cllr Base agreed.
- No one opposed

Anthony Bales (Friends of the Earth) and Cllr Hood suggested that the Forum invite a wider representation including:

- Tonbridge Bicycle User Group
- Environment Agency
- Clarion
- Reps from Transport Sector

Cllr Betts said the groups would be considered, however there is a need to ensure a wide representation from across the Borough. He also stressed that groups could be invited to the meeting to discuss specific topics or liaise with local representatives on the work of the Forum.

Cllr Hood queried whether the meeting was being minuted and recorded. Cllr Betts and Gill Fox confirmed that the meeting would be minuted but not recorded. A discussion took place regarding the necessity of recording and the consent required for this. It was agreed that recordings were not deemed necessary and could potentially deter people from taking part. The minutes from the Climate Change Forum would be made available on the Council Website.

Item 2 – TMBC update

Gill Fox provided an update on what the Council was doing to help address the Climate Emergency. This included:

- An adopted Climate Change Strategy and annual Action Plan
- Audit of carbon footprint of TMBC estate by Laser

- EV Charge-point installation
- Biodiversity initiatives and upcoming Tree Charter
- Solar Together PV purchasing scheme
- £330k Green Homes Grant secured plus working with Clarion and Fenland District Council, having successfully obtained £2.25m Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator funding.

GF to circulate the Year 1 Action Plan progress update and the Year 2 Action Plan targets.

James Read provided an update on the upcoming TMBC Green Business Grant. The Grant comprises:

- A grant contribution for green businesses (LCEGS) to undertake business development activities
- A grant contribution for local business to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint of their commercial premises

Lucy Breeze (KCC) provided a further update on the work KCC were doing alongside the Borough Council. This included:

- Solar Together Programme
- Fuel Poverty Grants
- Ground Source Heat Pump installation

Cllr Palmer asked that we speak to Clarion to get them involved in the work of the Forum and that we speak to the Parishes to increase the uptake on the Solar Together Programme. Tom Shelley supported the second point.

Cllr Hood was pleased that the work carried out by Laser had been undertaken and was keen for that to move forward. He also suggested that more might be done in relation to the energy and water potential of the Medway and Leybourne Lakes. Cllr Betts highlighted the positive work being undertaken at the Leybourne Lakes visitor facility and hoped that more would follow.

Anthony (FotE) stressed the need for clear and wider communication. The possibility of a public meeting was suggested. Cllr Betts agreed that this could be a topic for discussion/agenda item at the next meeting of the Climate Change Forum.

Cllr Base queried the delegation of responsibilities between KCC and TMBC. This was answered by Gill Fox.

Item 4 – Updates from Partners

It was agreed that this had been covered through the introductions and that people were free to raise any updates.

Item 5 – Future Work Programme for Climate Change Forum

Cllr Betts advocated setting up a set of templates for individuals, schools, and businesses to promote low carbon/ green initiatives. Several attendees put themselves forward to help create the templates:

- Cllr Hood
- Cllr Thomas
- Izzy Costello-Cortez
- Cllr Tanner

It was agreed that the templates would be progressed via a sub-group with drafts brought back to the next Climate Change Forum Meeting.

Cllr Betts mentioned that Tom Shelley had written a 12-point plan. Cllr's Palmer and Oakley asked to see the Plan, Mr Shelley provided a link to it. Cllr Betts agreed that these ideas could be discussed at the next meeting and consideration could be given to setting up a subgroup for planning/local plan ideas.

Cllr Hood asked whether the Forum would follow the Council's Climate Change Action Plan or if it was free to create its own. Cllr Betts confirmed the Forum would create its own Action Plan and Agenda.

Item 6 – AOB

No other business was raised.

END OF MEETING