

Minutes: Climate Change Forum

12 November 2025

MS Teams

Attendees:

Cllr Robin Betts - Chair
Jennifer Bate (JB)
Cllr Steve Crisp (Cllr Crisp)
Gill Fox (GF)
Cllr Anita Oakley (Cllr Oakley)
Cllr Kim Tanner (Cllr Tanner)
Louise Stewart (LS)

Apologies:

Sarah Barker
Mario Caccamo (East Malling Research)
Cllr Paul Hickmott
Cllr Frani Hoskins
Fran Long
Helen Longley (Faith sector)
Chris Lydon (Education representative)
Guy Nevill
Tudor Price (Kent Chamber of Commerce)
Dr Tom Shelley
Cllr Mike Taylor
Katie Traylen (KCC) – no longer part of Climate Team, to confirm attendance
Tonbridge Bike Users Group
Derek Whitehead (Medway Valley Countryside Partnership)

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed Forum members and introduced LS as the new Climate Change Officer. Apologies were noted. The Chair observed several invitees neither attended nor sent apologies.
- 1.2. Action: LS to review the invite list and do more targeted chasing before the next meeting to encourage better attendance and to prompt contributions to the agenda.

2. Minutes and actions from previous meeting

- 2.1. The main action from the previous meeting was the letter to supermarkets regarding single-use plastics. The Chair confirmed this would be addressed under the supermarket item later in the agenda.

3. Presentation – Plastic Free July

- 3.1. Cllr Crisp gave an overview of the health and environmental impacts of plastics and presented his experience of taking part in "Plastic Free July". Cllr Crisp reported on the switches he made to avoid single use plastics during

the month noting the experience was generally positive and primarily involved planning and conscious effort. Cllr Crisp posted regular updates on social media during the month, highlighting specific issues and the alternative products he found.

- 3.2. Action: Cllr Crisp to share product list and to share material from social media posts to share for web and newsletter content.
- 3.3. Members discussed the need for coordinated communication with residents and community groups. The Chair proposed introducing a “topic of the month” within the Forum and be pushed through TMBC and partner channels (community groups, newsletters, social media). Later in the meeting (see item 5), the Forum agreed that food waste should be the first topic to align with current campaigns.
- 3.4. Action: LS to work with the Comms Team on “topic of the month”, including TMBC climate web pages and to coordinate cross-linking with community partners’ sites.

4. Supermarkets – seasonal eating, packaging

- 4.1. GF confirmed that the supermarket letter previously agreed by the Forum had been emailed to store managers for all relevant supermarkets in the borough. No responses were received. Members discussed alternative approaches including going directly to head offices.
- 4.2. Action: Chair/LS to send letters to head offices
- 4.3. Action: LS to explore promoting good practice via TMBC’s business newsletter.

5. Waste collections and communications

- 5.1. The Chair reported that arrangements were in progress for a site visit to local waste facilities for Parish Partnership Panel members. Cllr Tanner raised a concern over observing a decline in food waste set-outs. The Chair reiterated the benefits of food waste recycling. LS reported that TMBC’s recent food waste communications have had strong engagement and waste team are developing wider materials. The Forum agreed that the first “topic of the month” should be food waste. School engagement was also discussed.
- 5.2. Action: LS to investigate current processes with food waste from schools.

6. Round-table updates

- 6.1. JB (Climate Action Shipbourne & Plaxtol (CASP)) reported that CASP’s Community Energy Fund grant has been approved after a significant administration process. The project will conduct retrofit assessments on typical house types in the village to provide indicative retrofit packages and identify barriers to help CASP understand how best to support residents. A Green Homes Fair is planned for the spring. JB suggested closer links with sharing retrofit case studies and lessons learned.

7. Future agenda items

- 7.1. Members suggested several potential future items, including: the Local Plan in regards to solar panels requirements of new homes and retrofitting of existing housing stock; fast fashion; Christmas-related waste.

8. Action Summary

No.	Action	Lead
1	Review invite list and do more targeted chasing before the next meeting to encourage better attendance and agenda items.	LS
2	Share product list and to share material from Plastic Free July social media posts to share for web and newsletter content.	Cllr Crisp
3	Coordinate topic of the month: food waste with TMBC comms, including the website, app and social media, link with relevant resources.	LS
4	Escalate plastic letters to supermarket head offices.	Chair/LS
5	Explore promoting businesses showing good practice with Packaging via TMBC's business newsletter.	LS
6	Investigate what happens with food waste from schools.	LS

9. Meeting closed