

Environment Select Committee

A meeting of Environment Select Committee was held on Monday, 13th July, 2009.

Present: Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg (Chairman), Cllr John Gardner, Cllr B Noble (Vice Cllr Cains), Cllr Roy Rix, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead

Officers: S Calvert, M Chicken, Mrs T Connor, S Roberts (DNS), M Gent (CESC), G Birtle and Mrs T Harrison (LD)

Also in attendance: No other person's were present.

Apologies: Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Andrew Larkin,

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2009

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2009.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2009 be approved and forwarded to Council for consideration.

3 Review of Carbon Management

Members were provided with information which detailed the Carbon Management Programme that Stockton Borough Council were following in conjunction with Central Government.

Stockton Council had a 5 year programme which aimed to achieve an impressive 25% reduction in the Council's carbon emissions by 2013.

The programme would also educate residents via roadshows and published information, helping them understand their impact on the environment and the saving of money by using resources responsibly.

Officers would be undertaking a rolling programme going into 10 schools at a time to educate children on carbon management.

Officers advised that 200 energy consumption information devices were available to the public from Stockton Central Library to enable households to clearly see what household items used the most energy. The devices showed the information in monetary results so the household could clearly see the impact of the items on their outgoings. It was observed that household's energy consumption had increased due to the number of gadgets people owned therefore the next step would be to look at ways of reducing energy consumption on gadgets.

Officers were submitting a bid to purchase more of the devices to be used in schools for the education of the students.

The Chair observed that the CO2 squared logo on the documentation provided to Members was incorrect and requested that it be changed.

Members queried if Stockton Council followed up where improvements had been made and were advised that follow up were undertaken through Viewpoint but would soon be monitored by a national indicator.

Discussion took place regarding travel awareness, however Officers observed that a programme to reduce personal travel had not been developed but was being considered.

Members were advised that school travel plans did not contribute to the Council's carbon use as the vehicles were predominantly parents of the children.

Members requested signs be placed in the High Street as a way of clear direction and advertisement for the Environment Centre.

Members observed that Stockton Council greatly subsidise bus companies yet the companies run old buses which could not be good for carbon management. Officers advised that the Council did not have much influence in encouraging the bus companies to change their buses to more environmentally friendly buses. A grant would become available that would help bus companies buy electric rather than diesel buses, however bus companies advised that they would not invest unless the Council improved the roads and access.

Members received a verbal presentation advising what Technical Services, Architects and Mechanical Engineers were doing to reduce carbon emissions.

Minimum Standard - Design to Buildings Regulations Parts L2A and L2B with the following design considerations:-

- Heating and naturally ventilated buildings required a minimum of 23% carbon reduction, air conditioning and mechanical ventilation required a 28% carbon reduction.
- Orientation (position of building) to reduce overheating and glare
- Solar reduced glass.
- Thermal Efficiency, extra insulation kept buildings warm in winter and cool in summer.
- Ventilation and cooling (High level windows which open automatically when room reaches 21 degrees) or roof mounted wind catchers.
- Air Tightness (use of seals & membranes)
- Heating (ground source heat pumps were the most cost effective type of renewable energy)
- Natural Light (providing the maximum amount of daylight using large areas of glass and roof lights)

Members were advised that payback for the wind turbines and solar panels were not very good.

Discussion took place regarding the comparison and cost effectiveness of new energy efficient schools to old schools.

Members queried if data existed on the energy efficiency of all the homes in the Borough and were advised that data was held for 50,000 homes in the Borough but a large amount were terraced houses which were not energy efficient.

Members were advised that an environmental assessment method existed for buildings which set standards for best practice in sustainability design the method was 'Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method'(BREEAM).

Buildings were assessed by the allocation of credits which were awarded in 9 categories according to performance. The credits were added together to provide a single overall score of pass, good, very good, excellent and outstanding.

Members were advised that there will be a legal requirement that by 2016, all new schools would be carbon neutral.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. The Chair requested that the co2 squared logo be corrected in the Council's documentation.
3. Members requested that signs be placed in the High Street to provide clear direction and advertisement to the Environment Centre.

4 Work Programme

- To prepare questions for witnesses attending the next meeting**
- To review the project plan in respect of the current review**

Members were advised that the next meeting would be held on 3rd August and Information Technology representatives would attend to provide information relating to energy consumption of computers, servers and other I.T equipment and what was being done to reduce the energy consumption.

Members discussed methods of reducing energy consumption such as non email days and web conferencing.

The Chair requested that Members thought of questions to put to I.T officers and submit them to the Scrutiny Officer prior to the meeting.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The information be noted.
2. Members to submit questions to the Scrutiny Officer prior to the next meeting which will be put to I.T officers.

5 Chairs Update

The Chair advised that the crematorium feasibility study was about to go to

Corporate Management Team.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.