

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

Report Reference EN-21-19
Meeting Date 15th November 2021
Agenda Item 9
Prepared by Town Clerk



1.0 BACKGROUND

In September, Full Council declared a Climate Emergency and tasked the committee with overseeing the implementation of the resolution, which includes to develop a Knutsford Climate Emergency Strategy.

At the September committee meeting, the principle of establishing a Climate Emergency working group was agreed and it was agreed to consider the detail of it at this meeting alongside a proposed terms of reference.

2.0 SUGGESTED WORKING GROUP

A terms of reference for the suggested working group is provided in Annex A. It suggests a membership of three councillors plus one Cheshire East Councillor as it is recognised there will be areas where engaging with Cheshire East Council will be vital.

It is suggested that up to six non-councillor members are appointed from the local community, with at least one of which being a local shop business. This would ensure meetings of the working group are manageable as too many members may reduce the productivity of meetings. The working group would be able to coordinate topic focused meetings/engagement exercises to engage a larger range of people, for example a meeting of local businesses, engagement with the schools and housing associations etc. The terms of reference allow for one of the community representatives to potentially chair the working group.

The working group's key objective would be to develop a Knutsford Climate Emergency Strategy for approval by the committee and Full Council. As part of this it would engage with the wider community and develop ideas for initiatives which the town as a whole could take to tackle the Climate Emergency.

Subject to the committee's approval, the creation of the working group would be publicised and volunteers sought to join it. The council would advertise the opportunity via the usual channels and the working group would appoint non-councillor members to fill the space.

3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should consider the creation of the working group as outlined and appoint the councillor members.

ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.0 The Working Group shall comprise:
- a. Three councillors, determined by the Environment and General Purposes Committee
 - b. One Cheshire East councillor (who may also be a town councillor)
 - c. The Town Clerk (or appointed officer) in an advisory capacity
 - d. Up to six representatives of the local community of which at least one should represent a local shop business

The councillor membership shall be reconfirmed/changed by the Environment and General Purposes Committee at its first meeting at the start of a new Mayoral year and the working group shall appoint non-councillor members for vacancies.

- 2.0 At its first meeting (or first in a new Mayoral year) the working group members shall:
- a. Review these terms of reference
 - b. Appoint an elected member as Lead Member to speak on behalf of the working group to council
 - c. Appoint a chairman (who need not be a councillor) who should lead in organising meetings and activities and ensure that all working group's members are kept informed, and suitably involved with progress
- 3.0 In line with the task set by the committee, the purpose and remit of the working group is to:
- a. Oversee the production of a draft Knutsford Climate Emergency Strategy for approval by the committee and Full Council
- 4.0 The working group does not have delegated powers to make decisions or commitments on behalf of the Town Council nor should exceed its purpose and remit (above) without the Environment and General Purposes Committee's sanction to a change to this Terms of Reference
- 5.0 The group reports to the Environment and General Purposes Committee.
- 6.0 The group shall provide timely reports to the parent body in the following manner:
- a. A verbal update report to each Environment and General Purposes Committee meeting.
 - b. Written reports as necessary
 - c. A draft Knutsford Climate Emergency Strategy when prepared
- 7.0 Meetings of the working group may be public meetings.