



Council Meeting

**Thursday, 17th
February, 2022**

HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Hastings Borough Council to be held at the Council Chamber, Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3UY, on Thursday, 17th February, 2022 at 6.00 pm at which meeting the business specified below is proposed to be transacted.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Legal Officer

Muriel Matters House
Breeds Place
Hastings

10 February 2022

AGENDA

1. Reconvened meeting from 9 February 2022
Meeting to reconvene from item 7, Questions

Note: Nothing contained in this agenda or in the attached reports and minutes of committees constitutes an offer or acceptance of an offer or an undertaking or contract by the Borough Council

Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Councillor Carr</p>	<p>I and several other councillors raised concerns to Councillor Barnett during the sewage leak major incident at Bulverhythe this summer around how the public were informed that the water was dangerous and contaminated from Bulverhythe and all along the coast as far as Pelham Beach by The Stade. When we offered to help make signage etc we were told local news items and a post on the council's website were sufficient and that after the incident had concluded there would be a full investigation in to how it was handled, as well as an opportunity for all councillors to be involved in renewing and updating the council's emergency protocols. Later there was also mention of three electronic signage boards that could be used to warn the public during future incidents. I would like to know when this review of the incident is likely to take place, when the review of the protocols is scheduled for so we all can contribute and also more details on the purchase, specifications and proposed locations of the electronic notice boards.</p> <p>Also as we move away from the incident itself, will the council commit to regular meetings with Southern Water that include not just officers and cabinet members but also councillors from coastal wards and members of the local clean water action group in the interest of openness, transparency and community working and in line with the council's constitution.</p>	<p>Councillor Barnett:</p> <p>There are regular meetings already diarised with the Leadership and Southern Water. The last meeting was on 31st January, when disappointingly there were still a number of outstanding actions that Southern Water had not yet completed. The incident in our view is therefore still not closed until these actions are closed. These meetings are also focusing on the long term actions needed to improve water quality across the town, including improving the communication about incidents to the public who use our beaches.</p> <p>In addition the Bathing Water Quality Group is meeting with SW and the Environment Agency. The most recent meeting was on 31st January, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Environment.</p> <p>There are two electronic signs which already exist and operate to tell swimmers whether it is safe to swim on our bathing beaches (Pelham and Marina where the lifeguards are based). Additional signs, both electronic and manual, will be considered as resources allow.</p> <p>There was no commitment to including councillors in the review of the incident. The incident itself was handled well from an internal perspective – officers were on-site and working all hours to ensure SW fulfilled their duties and were updating the public via social media and the website regularly. Leadership gave several TV interviews to inform the widest community. Foreshore colleagues and SW also posted numerous warning signs physically at the site.</p>

<p>Councillor Hilton</p>	<p>What is your response to the Council Climate Scorecards release last week? Hastings comes in just below average and 11th out of the 36 councils in the most deprived areas, scoring lower than many other deprived areas in the south east. See the Council Climate Plan Scorecards Climate Emergency UK (councilclimatescorecards.uk) Please can you tell us how the Council will urgently improve action particularly on the following sections;</p> <p>Mitigation and adaption, Education, Skills and Training Diversity and Social Inclusion.</p> <p>Will the council be using the useful Climate Plan Action Plan checklist created by Ashden and used as part of the assessment process to update and improve the rigour of the Hastings Council climate Action plan?</p>	<p>Councillor Evans:</p> <p>The Council Climate Scorecards were based on our 2020-2022 Strategy and Action Plan. This plan was designed to get us started on our journey to net zero but was only ever an interim plan with the main plan for 2022-2030 to be presented in October.</p> <p>Prior to the Climate Scorecards being published, the Council has had the opportunity as part of the 'right to reply' process to run through the strategy and action plan and benchmarked it against the Action Plan checklist. This identified the areas that will need addressing as part of the 2022 refreshed plan, these areas include Adaptation, education, and inclusion.</p> <p>Officers will be using a wide range of tools to inform the development of the next iteration of the strategy and action plan alongside the checklist. These may include the 'Net Zero Navigator One Planet Tool' created by One Planet and Catapult and ' the Climate Adaptation Tool developed on behalf of the LGA by Local Partnerships; this will help to inform our strategy in addressing the key areas cited above.</p> <p>As part of this review we will be looking to highlight and work on areas of co- benefits, although many of the projects we are involved with already achieve these e.g. addressing fuel poverty .</p> <p>The 2022-2030 Climate Action Plan will be a living document and be regularly updated and refreshed as new technology, policy drivers and opportunities arise that can help our ambition to work towards being net zero by 2030.</p> <p>In addition since the plan was developed in 2019 and subsequently published in 2020 there has been many new programmes and projects that have started to be developed that are not cited in the strategy and action plan – these will be included in the next iteration where appropriate.</p>
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Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Tony Collins</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 5</p>	<p>The Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme, Phase 2 (LAD2), is designed to enable local authorities to deliver energy efficiency improvements to low-income households in low energy performance homes, which will also reduce carbon emissions and lower bills. Many said the fund was flawed in design, as covered by Inside Housing in May last year. The fund closes at the end of March 2022. Of the £300m in the fund, the South East was allocated £79.6m.</p> <p>How much of this fund was allocated to this local authority area? How many households successfully applied for grant funding under the scheme? How many household projects i) have been started; ii) have been completed; iii) are expected to successfully access funds?</p> <p>If there is likely to be a significant underspend compared to the allocation and if so what factors do you consider account for this?</p>	<p>Councillor Batsford:</p> <p>The Green Home Grant was split into LAD1A, LAD1B and LAD2. (Local Authority Delivery). The subsequent Sustainable Warmth Fund comprises LAD3 and HUG (Home Upgrade Grant) 1.</p> <p>Hastings Borough Council has led successful East Sussex Consortium bids on LAD 1A, 1B, LAD3 and HUG1, totalling approximately £4.2 million. These rounds all used the same funding model of a direct grant to Hastings Borough Council, who then transferred the funding between East Sussex Warm Home Check Service and Optivo. This funding is due to have supported nearly 500 homes across East Sussex to access energy efficiency measures when delivery of LAD3 and HUG1 is complete.</p> <p>LAD 2 was modelled differently from the other rounds of funding with the East Sussex area funded up to £2 million with approximately £300K for Hastings Borough Council. This money was given to the Greater South East Energy Hub to administer. The Managing Agent initially appointed by them was Happy Energy. Hastings Borough Council officers working across fuel poverty and minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) met with Happy Energy to identify, identification and referral pathways, particularly landlords and the private rented sector in the town. However, Happy Energy were not able to deliver within the constraints of LAD2 and withdrew as managing agent for East Sussex and beyond. This was mirrored in other areas, with E'ON also withdrawing as the managing agent from West Sussex.</p> <p>Recently, Warmworks were appointed as the replacement managing agent for LAD2, and finally, an extension was granted by BEIS with the delivery timescale of December 2021 moved to 31st March 2022. There are some concerns that Warmworks may also struggle to deliver the LAD2 project.</p> <p>East Sussex Consortium partners, particularly the Hastings</p>

Borough Council resource, has focused on successfully delivering LAD1A, LAD1B, LAD3 and HUG 1.

Local Authorities who did issue communications on behalf of Happy Energy have since received some complaints from residents that did not receive the promised work. Hastings Borough Council made the decision not to issue any communications for Happy Energy in relation to LAD2. We did agree that we would do a direct identification and referral to Happy Energy via the MEES project for any eligible households. However after our initial meeting with them we never heard from them again and later they withdrew as the managing agent.

It was felt by Hastings Borough Council and other East Sussex Local Authorities that the simultaneous communications for both the delivery of the East Sussex Consortium programme and the contradictory model for LAD2 had potential to confuse residents and reduce clarity and faith in the primary East Sussex model resulting in the contracted delivery targets of the Consortium Programme not being met. Concerns were also raised for the long-term impact on resident clarity and faith in energy efficiency schemes – an identified barrier to successful retrofit programmes.

Throughout the LAD2 process, significant officer resource has been dedicated to finding a way for Hastings Borough Council residents to benefit from the LAD2 funding in such a way as to support them and compliment the delivery models we had already committed to.

As far as we are aware no works have been carried out in the Hastings Borough area under LAD2, and we have received no complaints of promised but undelivered works. Therefore, it is anticipated that a potential £300K has not been spent under LAD2; however, due to the factors explained above it is not thought that the funding will be successfully delivered.