



# Battle Town Council



## Minutes of the CLIMATE & ECOLOGY SUB-COMMITTEE held Monday 25 March 2024 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 12pm

**Present:** Cllrs A Austen, S Burton (Chairman), Dale Wheeler and A Kerr (Wild About Battle)

**In attendance:** B Rieu (Deputy Town Clerk)

- 1. Apologies for absence** – Cllrs A Barton and D Silk, and D Wilson and L Bolton
- 2. Disclosure of Interest** – none.
- 3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 13 December 2023** – were agreed with the addition to item 9: **‘Members also discussed the Climate and Ecology Sub-Committee item on the F&GP Action Plan which reads ‘to decrease the Carbon Footprint of the Town Council and to encourage community participation’.** With this addition the minutes were duly signed by Cllr S Burton.
- 4. Report from Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)**
  - Carbon Literacy Training took place on 29 January 2024
  - The “Statement on Climate Change” has been adopted by Council as of February 2024
  - **The outcome of the Dark Skies meetings will be reported at the next meeting**
  - **The outcome of the Pavilion Fundraising Task and Finish Group (T&FG) meeting will be reported at the next meeting**
- 5. Committee Membership** – Cllr A Austen and D Wilson have formally joined the S-C. It was clarified that Wild About Battle have one vote, although both members of Wild About Battle are welcome to attend meetings.
- 6. Council’s Carbon Emissions** as calculated using the Local Government Associations’ Carbon Emissions Calculation Tool, from April 2022 to March 2023 was received.  
**The DTC presented the draft results which stand at 18.08 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (Scope 2) for the year 2022-23.** This unit represents metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, providing a standardised measure for comparing greenhouse gas emissions. Insights into the methodology used to derive the figure were provided, acknowledging factors such as building refurbishments and data gaps necessitating estimations. Members highlighted the complexity of understanding carbon emissions data and stressed the importance of providing contextual background information for comprehension. Discussions covered the scope of emissions considered, **potential inclusion of Scope 3 emissions in future reports**, and challenges in comparing data with other organisations due to infrastructure variations.

The DTC **will share results with RDC for feedback and will prepare an explanatory note on methodology and any further understanding to the results.** Cllrs A Austen and S Burton will prepare a **report for the next meeting focusing on comparisons with similar authorities and clarify the footprint when electricity is from a renewable source.** This report should also include a recommendation for the way forward and consideration given to including some Scope 3 emissions, with a view to providing a comprehensive understanding of the Council's carbon footprint.



# Battle Town Council



The discussion concluded with appreciation for the officers' efforts and a commitment to further analyse the data's implications.

7. **Rother District Council updates on Biodiversity Audits, Micro Woods (Battle) and Rural Grants for Enhancements** were received. It was noted that Coronation Gardens, one of the proposed sites for a micro wood, is not on the Council's estate. **The DTC will enquire about the rural grant enhancement opportunities.** Cllr A Austen will review **the suitability of the Carbon and Co-benefits Decision Support Tool for use by the Council.** This committee will consider recommendation to Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) to support the LEAD project via promotion to the local area, pending further information on dates and details.
8. **The Council's Statement on Climate Change** – was noted. It was highlighted that at the previous meeting, a proposal on this statement was agreed upon but rejected by F&GP due to concerns regarding financial implications. Subsequently, Cllr A Barton made minor edits to the document, which were presented at Full Council and approved. These edits were deemed to be more of an emphasis rather than substantial changes. **The revised document is now the official statement for the Council. The focus will now shift towards operationalising the new statement into an action plan for the entire Council,** complete with indicators and milestones for monitoring and review. This action plan will span a three-year period from May onwards.
9. **Progress on 2023-27 Action Plan** – was noted. Members discussed the need to develop an action plan based on the Council's statement on climate change including indicators and milestones for monitoring and review. **It was agreed that an initial plan will be drafted by Cllrs of this Sub-Committee for circulation to all Sub-Committee members in order to produce a well-defined action plan within the timeframe of three months.**
10. **Progress on Hedge Audit and next steps agreed** – Cllr D Wheeler volunteered **to take this item forward** and will trial Parish Online as a method for measuring the hedges on the Council's estate. Clarification was provided that the focus would be on measuring isolated hedges, not woodland areas.
11. **Labelling for dual-use re-cycling bins for recommendation to the Estates Committee** – Cllr S Burton volunteered **to take this item forward.**
12. **Publicity of remit and progress made by Climate & Ecology Sub-Committee** - members proposed several measures **to enhance publicity of the Sub-Committee actions. These included introducing a standing agenda item at meetings to discuss publicity strategies including developing a social media schedule to promote the Sub-Committee's work and encouraging members to share information regarding community events related to climate and ecology. Members also agreed to incorporate publicity efforts into their action plan** and to explore the balance between promoting community actions and highlighting the committee's achievements.
13. **Consideration to Climate & Ecology Sub-Committee progress in its first year and recommendations to Finance and General Purposes Committee** - The committee reflected on the progress made over the past year and discussed various achievements and challenges. The evolution of the C&E T&FG to the formation of a formalised Sub-Committee (including the involvement of community members with diverse expertise) was highlighted as being particularly noteworthy, alongside the Council's adoption of a tree felling



# Battle Town Council



policy, the encouragement of the appointment of a tree warden and Council participating in and hosting a well-attended Climate Literacy training day. Challenges included coordinating work across different committees and integrating community engagement into meetings effectively. **Members expressed a desire for more community-focused discussions during meetings. Including a regular agenda item for community updates and events was proposed.**

#### **14. Matters for information / future agenda items**

- Publicity & Review of upcoming events and activities (Council and Community): Climate Battle Community Eco Action group events, Climate Day 18 May
- Amenity Field Audit recommendations: funding and habitat enhancements
- Further learning, training and engagement opportunities
- Report on “Unleashing the Power of Local Councils to Tackle the Climate Emergency” training.

#### **15. Time and date of next meeting – Thursday 2 May, 12pm.**

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 1:36pm.

Cllr S Burton  
Chairman