

Eden District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Date: 2 September 2021 Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Penrith Time: 6.45 pm

Present:

Chairman:	Councillor J Raine	
Vice Chairman:	Councillor D Ryland	
Councillors:	M Hanley E Martin W Patterson	G Simpkins D Wicks
Standing Deputies:	Councillor M Eyles Councillor H Fearon	
Officers Present:	Lisa Tremble, Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services Amanda Yellowley, Assistant Director Customers and Performance Robert Docherty, Assistant Director Communities	
Democratic Services Officer:	Rod Ireland	

OS/12/09/21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nicolson, Banks and Holden. Councillor Fearon substituted for Councillor Nicolson, and Councillor Eyles substituted for Councillor Holden.

OS/13/09/21 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes OS/1/07/21 to OS/11/07/21 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of those proceedings.

OS/14/09/21 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

OS/15/09/21 Questions and Representations from Members of the Public

No questions were received from Members of the Public

OS/16/09/21 Questions and Representations from Members of the Council

No questions were received from Members of the Council.

OS/17/09/21 Question and Answer Session: Green Growth Portfolio Holder

Councillor Raine welcomed the 'Green Growth Portfolio Holder', Councillor Mark Rudhall, to the meeting for a question and answer session. Councillor Rudhall gave a verbal report on the work priorities within his portfolio. He described the challenges presented by having a newly created portfolio in conjunction with the draw on capacity brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Rudhall highlighted areas where he believed successes were being achieved, including Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points; Greening Eden Business Grant Scheme and the Greening Houses Scheme. The A66 dualling scheme was also discussed in respect of the goal to achieve a net gain in respect of biodiversity along the route upon completion.

Upon completion of the verbal report, Councillor Raine invited members of the committee to present questions for Councillor Rudhall.

Councillor Martin asked about the 'Zero Carbon Working Group' and wanted to know why no meetings had been held since April 2021.

Councillor Rudhall responded saying that resources in the sustainability team were stretched with staffing levels down from three members of staff to one. They were looking to fill vacancies upon completion of the 'One Eden Scheme'.

Councillor Martin said that she had completed 'Carbon Literacy Training' but had not yet received confirmation of the result, or a certificate.

Councillor Rudhall said he would look into this and respond.

Councillor Wicks asked about the 'Greening Eden Business Scheme' and what number of applications had been received.

Councillor Rudhall responded saying twelve applications had been received and two were ready to proceed during September 2021.

Councillor Smith asked why out of twelve applications, only two were ready to proceed and wanted to know why good quality applications were not being received and whether applicants were being supported during the process.

Councillor Rudhall said they had £400k available to businesses and were keen that they should be able to access the grant funding. He added that whilst officer resources were stretched they would go back to applicants to help support them through the process.

Councillor Wicks asked about the scheme to develop five 'passive houses' and questioned whether those being sold as 'affordable housing' would result in a shortfall that Eden DC would then need to make up.

Councillor Rudhall advised that a sum of £450k had been made available and Harraby Green Associates had outlined a proposal to purchase the land and design and build the properties within that figure. No discussions had been held with the executive about whether additional funds might be required, or a change in specification necessary. A full detailed proposal was due to be received from Harraby Green Associates in September 2021.

Councillor Raine asked about the number of EV charging points that Eden DC were installing.

Councillor Rudhall responded saying four were planned for Appleby, four at Eden DC Town Hall and an as yet unknown number at Mansion House in a pilot scheme. The original supplier had withdrawn and this was being opened up to other potential suppliers.

Councillor Hanley asked about plans for EV charging points in Alston.

Councillor Rudhall said that once the pilot scheme had been assessed, they could look at rolling out and providing EV charging points in other areas.

Councillor Smith asked about the A66 dualling project and the goal of a net biodiversity gain and specifically whether this gain would be within the Eden area, or whether it would be offset by activity in other locations.

Councillor Rudhall said the gains would be within Eden and they were working closely with the Highways agency to help achieve this.

Councillor Ryland asked about carbon reduction goals and why our printing paper was sourced from Brazil.

Councillor Rudhall said he would look into this and respond.

Councillor Ryland asked whether Eden DC's electricity supply was from a renewable energy provider.

Councillor Rudhall said the contract for the Town Hall has recently been switched to a renewable energy supplier.

Councillor Ryland asked who Eden DC was working in partnership with to advance biodiversity.

Councillor Rudhall said he would look into this and respond.

Councillor Ryland said that grants of up to £350 were available towards the installation of home EV charging points and asked whether this was being publicised.

Councillor Rudhall said he would look into this and respond.

Councillor Wicks asked why Corporate Plan key strategic objective 'D,3' was indicated as green on the dashboard when in the commentary described 'No progress to date'.

Councillor Rudhall said it was showing green as work had started on this and consultations were underway.

Councillor Ryland asked why the pine tree at Voreda House was planned to be felled.

Councillor Rudhall said the location of the tree posed a potential risk to the building.

Councillor Raine asked whether we were insisting that builders install 'swift boxes' in new build houses.

Councillor Rudhall said he would look into this and respond.

Councillor Raine asked what had happened to the wild flowers on the A66 verges close to the Llama café.

Councillor Rudhall said he would look into this and respond.

Councillor Martin asked about progress on the production of the 'Farming Toolkit'.

Councillor Rudhall responded saying that it had been a slow process developing this but it was hoped the toolkit would be available soon.

Councillor Patterson asked about Green homes and passive housing and whether the findings from these initiatives were being fed through into the planning team and planning policies.

The officer representing Community Services responded saying that findings and lessons learnt were embedded into the planning policies we control directly and fed into those we are consulted on.

OS/18/09/21 Performance Report - Quarter 1, 1 April - 30 June 2021

Members considered report F29/21 of the Interim Director of Corporate Services which provided a summary of progress against the revised corporate performance targets for the period 1 April 2021 – 30 June 2021. The report also informed the committee of any areas of concern or issues requiring attention and the remedial activity in place to deal with these.

OS/19/09/21 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme. Members asked that Councillor Derbyshire be invited to the October meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny meeting and Councillor Robinson be invited to attend in December.

OS/20/09/21 Local Health Scrutiny

Members considered two reports prepared by Councillor Henley from his attendance at The Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee on 21 July 2021 and The Health and Wellbeing Forums held on 20 May and 22 July 2021 (Councillor Hanley is the Eden DC member representative on these outside bodies). Members of the committee thanked Councillor Hanley for the reports and commended him for their informative format.

OS/21/09/21 Any Other Items which the Chairman decides are urgent

No other items were considered.

OS/22/09/21 Date of Next Scheduled Meeting

RESOLVED that the next scheduled meeting to be held on 14 October 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.06 pm

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