

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT**

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment held on Thursday, 24 November 2022 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Kimberly Barrett (in the Chair)  
Charlotte Gerada  
Russell Simpson

#### **10. Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence had been received.

#### **11. Declarations of Members' Interests.**

No interests were declared.

#### **12. Warmer Homes Project Update**

Andrew Waggott, Head of Energy presented the report and in response to questions, explained that:

The council had £486 left of the £14.18m Local Authority Delivery (LAD) funding.

The results of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) phase 2 funding bid should be known in January. The bid for £41.5m which will cover April 2025 to October 2027 was submitted on 18 November.

There is very little to be gained in terms of cost-saving by removing a combi gas boiler and replacing it with an air source heat pump. However, when the council moves into the HUG stage, which focuses entirely on homes heated by gas, it will become easier to obtain funding because old storage heaters and direct electric heaters will be removed.

The High Heat Retention Storage Heaters are purely for on-gas properties and will be carried out under the HUG programme. This report is mainly about LAD work.

A heat pump is three times more efficient than a direct electric heater or any other electric heating system. However, it is not always possible to find a suitable position for the pump outside, particularly for houses in conservation areas or flats. In these cases, a high retention storage heater would be the next best option.

Although solar panel batteries are not included in this scheme, in Summer next year the SAP 10 software will be introduced and will include other measures including batteries and solar diverters. The measures mix that the council may do is referenced in the HUG 2 bid application. Placing a battery next to the solar panels will increase the benefit to the resident by 50% compared to a straightforward PV system.

The qualifying eligibility criteria for households are:

Any property with a EPC rating of D or lower

AND

Has a £31,000 total household income OR £20,000 after housing costs.

OR

Is in receipt of means-tested benefits.

The team has been working with the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy to try to show more flexibility with their criteria.

The councillors all thanked Andrew for his amazing work and wished him well in his new job.

**The Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment noted the report.**

### **13. Woodland Accelerator Fund**

Zoe White, Green and Healthy Streets presented the report and in response to questions, explained that working with the community will have a huge impact and many more trees will be planted thanks to street planting and garden planting.

Councillor Barrett congratulated the team for winning the bid and added that:

- The city is highly concreted and quite compacted in some areas.
- Residents have asked for older trees to be planted rather than whips.
- New planting sites will be identified across the city from Paulsgrove to the seafront.

**The Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment noted the report.**

### **14. PCC Climate Events during CoP 27**

Katrina Downey, Principal Strategy Adviser for Carbon Management presented the report.

Councillor Barrett noted that Portsmouth City Council was the first in the UK to hold an event like the educational engagement one on 16 November. She thanked Councillors Gerada and Simpson for attending the green partnership event and asked that more details be brought to a future event.

**The Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment noted the report.**

### **15. Big Portsmouth Survey**

Katrina Downey, Principal Strategy Adviser, Carbon Management presented the report and the appendix and in response to questions, explained that:

- As there was only space for six questions, they had to be as specific as possible.
- She hopes that this is the first of many more direct climate change engagement mechanisms.
- Although there may not be the opportunity to have questions on climate change in next year's survey, she is hoping to run a separate one. The questions in the residents' survey may not be suitable to be used as a baseline due to the low number of respondents and therefore the questions may change after more targeted communications have been carried out.
- It is essential that the information is gathered so that work can be focussed.

Andrew Waggott added that some funding had been used for market research in the Summer to understand the barriers for people accessing Switched On Portsmouth which included people not thinking they were eligible, prohibitive upfront costs and lack of trust and understanding of the products and technology.

In response to a question, he added that the smallest measure that the team is doing is solar panels and the savings to most homes is approximately £500 and 750kg of carbon dioxide in the first few years.

The team responded by adding more information on the website with tailored messages, more engagement in the community and teaching front-line council and external companies' staff all about the scheme so that they can signpost service users. Referrals to companies are tracked.

Councillor Barrett noted that:

- The findings can be used to show what is needed and to tailor engagement. It is good that many people are being reached.
- The new communications officer will focus on green issues so more can be done.
- She would love to see more people being asked about climate and environmental issues as it is something that they are talking about and it links up with cost-of-living crisis and health problems.
- New questions as well as the ones in this survey could be included in the next survey, whether the Big Portsmouth one or a specific one on climate change.
- Although the council cannot force businesses to take greening measures, the Green Charter event is an important mechanism to enable the council to work with them.
- The council is also working with small and medium sized enterprises.

**The Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment noted the report.**

The meeting concluded at 11am.

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Councillor Kimberly Barrett  
Chair