

## CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2024 at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber,  
Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

**Present:** Councillor Rob Yates (Chair); Councillors Bright, Davis, D Green,  
Huxley, Matterface and Pressland

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barlow.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Yates proposed, Councillor Davis seconded, and Councillors agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Cabinet Advisory Group on 17 June 2024 be approved.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. CYCLING FUNDING & EVENTS

Natasha Brown, Coastal Wellbeing Coordinator, gave a presentation on the cycling and funding events, making the following key points:

- Match funding from the Margate Town Deal programme had meant that approximately £7,000 in funding had been received from Cycling UK.
- The focus of the funding would be placed around the areas of Walpole Bay.
- Over summer 2024, Thanet District Council had run 29 events, with 6 more scheduled in for September 2024.
- Through the funding application, 39 bikes had been fixed for free since June 2024.
- During the summer months there had been Cycle Del Mar rides with Col's Kent Bike Tours arranged. This had attracted up to 50 people per ride, from all age groups. The cycle also included a Rickshaw Sound System, and was a ride from the Turner Contemporary in Margate to Westgate.
- Col's Kent Bike Tours have arranged rehabilitation rides, which was a positive activity for people in recovery.
- Sunday rides had also been arranged, which included older adults, retiree's and families joining to ride. The youngest individual was 8 years old, the older individual being 85 years old.
- The Council was using Walpole Bay shelter in new ways. There had been bike meetup's and free bike fixes.
- The Bike Shed Kent ran three Learn to Fix Workshops at Margate Train Station.
- The Council had worked with Kent Refugee Action Network and Col's Kent Bike Tours to run an event teaching 18 young refugees how to fix and ride bikes.
- Young refugees within the area have received 25 donated bikes, helmets and locks over the summer months.

Councillors commented and asked the following questions:

- Congratulations were given to the team and the work put in by Natasha.
- Questioning was raised about the events being extended into other towns.
- The programme, funding needed, and officer effort was considered highly impressive.

Natasha Brown responded that whilst this was an initiative focussed on Cliftonville, it was open to all towns to come and join.

## **5. TDC ESTATE DECARBONISATION & RAMSGATE SOLAR PV UPDATES**

Lindsay Reynolds, Climate Change Manager, introduced the agenda item Thanet District Council Estate Decarbonisation and Ramsgate Solar PV updates, making the following key points:

- An update on the proposed energy measures for Thanet District Council buildings to be included in a PSDS bid (Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Fund): Upgrading lighting to LED, replacing existing roof PV arrays, cavity wall insulations, air source heat pumps and window refurbishment.
- The PSDS Funding application date still has not been announced, however the Council was hopeful that this would be some time in October 2024, and if successful in receiving funding, the completion of installation, system commissioning and final commissioning would be done by March 2027.
- It had been decided that the Ramsgate Solar project would be a 400kWp system. The original bid was for a 359kWp system. Funding for this project, from the Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund, stood at approximately £630,000.
- Total savings for the Ramsgate Solar Project would be £2.26 million over 25 years, approximately saving £90,600 on electricity every year.
- The next steps regarding the estate decarbonisation and Ramsgate Solar Project was for the project to be put out to tender through the Laser Energy dynamic purchasing system (DPS) which is due to go live from today for four weeks.
- The building control application and the pre-planning application for the Ramsgate Solar PV had now been submitted.

Councillors commented and asked the following questions:

- When would the council know if they are able to get solar panels in the Ramsgate leisure center?
- Could the waste and recycling depots be considered for solar PV updates?
- How many solar panels were working in Cecil Street council building?

Lindsay Reynolds responded:

- Responses back from tenders were expected late in 2024. The deadline to install is by the end of February 2025 with commissioning to be complete by the end of March 2025.
- Waste and recycling depots were being considered within the net zero plan for solar panels and EV charging points.
- Around one third of the solar panels in the Cecil Street building were not working currently, however, part of the PSDS bid will be to replace the existing panels with a new system.
- It was agreed that this agenda item would be brought back to the Cabinet Advisory Group when the PSDS bid had been submitted, to update on the status.

## **6. TREE PLANTING UPDATE**

Daniel Gooch, Open Spaces Manager and Phoebe Cullingworth, Tree and Biodiversity Coordinator, gave a presentation on the tree planting update making the following key points:

- The councils tree policy had been agreed, and could be seen by the public and councillors via the councils website.
- Through the project “two for one trees,” 32 trees had felled in 2024, with a replacement of 54 trees being planted, with more due to be planted this winter.
- Within the trees being planted, there was a range of species in order to help improve resistance.
- Where it was possible, trees, branches and chippings were left on site for the biodiversity of the area.
- The council was looking at new ways of planting, through the Miyawaki method. The method has been used across other districts including Maidstone.
- The planting schedule for the council was as follows:
- Winter 2024: Memorial Recreation Ground; Garlinge recreation Ground; Dane Valley.
- Winter 2025: St Peters Recreation Ground; Tivoli Park; Northdown Park.
- Confirmed funding for the biodiversity and tree planting activities included: KCC funding (LATF 1) £7820, International Tree Fund £8800, Broadstairs Town Council £10000 and Miyawaki funding from KCC had confirmed full funds for two test sites.
- Pending funding largely stood with Forestry Commission’s Urban Tree Challenge Fund with £74,000 pending.
- In the coming months before winter 2024, the council would be finalising site specific planting schedules and plans, with the aim of securing remaining funding.
- Additionally, the council was scheduling community planting events, which would follow through with a detailed communications schedule.

Councillors commented and asked the following questions:

- Questioning around specific planting details in specific recreation grounds were raised.
- Does the Miyawaki method have to be a fenced off project?
- Congratulations were given to the tree planting and biodiversity team.

Officers responded with the following points:

- It had not been finalised where all planting was due to happen. The council had agreed that some of the planting was to happen by the original tree line and next to the back of the houses in recreational grounds. It made sense to talk to the local community whilst finalising the details.
- Whilst some Miyawaki projects have been fenced off, there was possibilities for it to be open, and to create a mini woodland.

## 7. **TDC BIODIVERSITY UPDATE**

Michael Lee was to be invited to a Councillor Briefing to give the presentation to all Councillors due to time constraints at the Cabinet Advisory Group.

## 8. **CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED EVENTS**

Lindsay Reynolds introduced the Climate Change related events item, making the following key points:

- The Home Energy Advice team had been shortlisted for the Kent Housing Group Excellence Award.
- There had been a staff meadow walk on 21st August 2024, with further walks being scheduled for Margate Pride, NBE fitness and council staff.
- Over the summer, water fountains with drinking water were installed on Ramsgate Main Sands, Viking Bay and Stone Bay.
- In October from 12:00-16:00 Sunken Gardens were hosting an Eco Fair.

**9. GENERAL UPDATE FROM OFFICERS**

Several upcoming events relevant to the Climate Cabinet Advisory Group included:

- Bison range experience at West Blean on the 18<sup>th</sup> September;
- Blue earth Summit in mid October in London.

Meeting concluded : 12.08 pm