



## **NOTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-GROUP HELD ON TUESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 6.00PM IN THE PARISH OFFICE**

### **1. PRESENT:**

MPC: Cllrs Matt Besant, Anne Boswell, Ian Newton & Andy Turner

MBC: James Wilderspin, Biodiversity & Climate Change Manager; Gemma Bailey, Biodiversity & Climate Change Officer

James Wilderspin ran through the MBC Sustainability presentation.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

### **3. DECARBONISATION OF MBC BUILDINGS**

Cllr Turner asked if there were any initiatives to help residents e.g. double glazing, roof insulation, heat pumps etc. James Wilderspin explained there is grant provision from the Government.

### **4. BOILER UPGRADE SCHEME**

This supports decarbonisation in buildings – see info on Green Grants

### **5. ECO4**

This helps support those with fuel poverty – see info on Green Grants

### **6. EV CHARGEPOINT GRANT**

This grant is for tenants and flat owner occupiers and replaces the Electric Vehicle Home Charge Scheme and though largely similar in operation, is only open to homeowners who live in flats and people in rented accommodation – see info on Green Grants

### **7. MBC FLEET**

68 new electric vehicles planned. They have installed software to try to cut down on staff mileage, petrol usage etc.

### **8. MBC TREE STRATEGY – FREE TREES FOR COMMUNITIES**

An ambitious project with a target to raise tree canopy by 2% over 20 years. 70% of the tree budget goes towards the cost of the saplings and 30% towards maintenance. MBC is exploring pieces of land where trees can be planted and investigating purchasing land to rewild. The KCC Free Tree Scheme has now closed. There has been little uptake from farmers, businesses etc.

Link: <https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/other-services/campaigns-and-projects/tier-2-primary-areas/call-for-tree-planting>

MBC is looking to work with Parish Councils on how to engage with the public on tree planting and carbon literacy. Cllr Boswell explained that MPC held a Tree Charter Day last November where c400 saplings were planted on the new village developments. However, a lot of them have died so we have not applied for free trees from MBC. Cllr Besant suggested maybe some of the businesses in Pattenden Lane applying for trees on their open spaces. MPC is going to be planting a few mature trees at Marden Playing Field and Rookery Path where there are gaps to help create

a rewilding corridor including a large oak which has been donated by a local business to commemorate HM The Queen.

James Wilderspin explained the Kent Wildlife Trust has a scheme to sell units/credits – couldn't see anything on their website: <https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/top-projects>

## **9. CARBON CALCULATORS**

James Wilderspin explained there are a lot of different carbon calculators around and recommended the LGA Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool:

<https://localpartnerships.org.uk/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool/>

## **10. CARBON NEUTRALITY**

James Wilderspin explained how MBC is looking at a Timeline for the next 5 years to try to become carbon neutral and how to cut down emissions.

## **11. OFFSETTING EVENTS EMISSIONS**

Cllrs Besant and Turner asked about how MPC could go about calculating village events and how it could be more carbon neutral e.g. Marden at Christmas and being able to buy carbon credits to offset events. James Wilderspin is currently looking at big events that are held in Mote Park and GB has recommended the following calculator:

[https://co2.myclimate.org/en/event\\_calculators/new](https://co2.myclimate.org/en/event_calculators/new)

## **12. NET ZERO GOALS TEMPLATE/CARBON ACTION PLAN**

MBC will work out a plan/template for Parish Councils and other resources to assist with net zero goals.

## **13. CARBON LITERACY TRAINING PROJECT**

Gemma Bailey has undertaken this training and will roll it out as a free Day of Learning to Parish Councils possibly every two months.

## **14. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS**

James Wilderspin explained that central Government are aiming to have 300k electric vehicle charging points across the country by 2030, with 80 charging points for Maidstone Borough (think that was the figure) which needs to be completed. Cllr Boswell explained that the Parish Council had a meeting with the MBC parking officers who explained that 18 charging points have been installed in Maidstone so far and are closely monitoring the growth of electric vehicles but are a long way off the level for demand particularly in rural areas and thought it unlikely that a rural location like Marden is currently feasible. James Wilderspin advised that MBC are bound to install more charging points to meet the Government target. Cllr Boswell was going to place an article in the Autumn Parish Newsletter but will amend the wording.

## **15. ANTI-IDLING SIGNS**

James Wilderspin suggested MPC could place some Anti-Idling Signs on lamp posts in the village – 'Please don't idle, switch off your engine' which would need Kent Highways authority. It was suggested they could be placed at the junction of Pattenden Lane/Church Green near the double yellow lines and in the High Street by the shops/double-yellow lines and the school.

## **16. MBC SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER**

Cllr Turner asked if they were considering putting out a regular newsletter across the borough on sustainability and it was thought a separate newsletter from the Borough-wide Newsletter would be preferable. Since the meeting Cllr Boswell has received a newsletter from MBC on Climate Change & Biodiversity which includes What's Your Carbon Footprint, Free Water Saving Devices, Make Smarter Travel Choices with Kent Connect.

**17. MPC CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

Cllr Turner asked James Wilderspin if he would recommend that MPC should declare a Climate Emergency. James Wilderspin mentioned about the Carbon Trust and we should think about having a medium to long-term plan.

**18. MBC DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY PLAN, SUSTAINABILITY POLICY AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

It was explained that MPC initially looking at realistic manageable ways in which we can operate such as recycling, utility companies, how to mitigate climate impact and the functions of employees and external contractors. Also looking to draft a specific Open Space Biodiversity Policy (Cllr Besant to draft) and the Clerk to draft an Estate Management Plan e.g. looking at the work of the ground staff (mowing, planting, purchasing of equipment, recycling etc) and ways of working within the office.

**19. MBC LARGE ITEM HOUSE COLLECTIONS**

Cllr Newton asked if MBC are looking at a more sustainable way of collecting household items e.g. fridges. James Wilderspin explained they are looking at their Waste Services Team statistics and how many times and from where in the borough people are using the tips etc. and how they can reduce fly-tipping around the Borough.

**20. NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 in the Parish Office