

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT UTILITIES ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee held in the Medway Room - Sessions House on Monday, 1 April 2019.

PRESENT: Mr M A C Balfour (Chairman), Mr A M Ridgers (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth, Mr D L Brazier, Mr I S Chittenden and Mr H Rayner

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Baggs (Energy Manager), Ms C McKenzie (Sustainability and Climate Change Manager), Ms S Platts (Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Manager) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

33. Declaration of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting

(Item 1)

There were no interests declared.

34. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 1a)

Apologies had been received from Mr Farrell, Mr Whiting and Mr Wright.

35. Minutes from the meeting held on 15 February 2019

(Item 2)

RESOLVED that, subject to the addition of Mr Booth's apologies being recorded, the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2019 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

36. Ebbsfleet case study

(Item 3)

Mrs Julia Gregory (EDC, Director of Projects) was in attendance for this item.

(1) The Chairman welcomed Mrs Gregory, who delivered a presentation about 'Planning, delivering and living in the UK's Garden City'. The presentation is available [online here](#) or via this link:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/b20258/Presentation%20-%20Ebbsfleet%20Garden%20City%2001st-Apr-2019%2014.00%20Kent%20Utilities%20Engagement%20Sub-Committee.pdf?T=9>

(2) Mrs Gregory explained that one of the challenges of the Ebbsfleet Garden City site was that there was little or no infrastructure in place which meant that the costs of these were high which made many of the development sites unviable.

- (3) Since 2016 1,400 homes had been built and other sites were being developed quickly.
- (4) A Member referred to properties paying separate invoices for fresh water and waste water, and whether these could be combined as they were for South East Water consumers. Mrs Gregory agreed to take this comment away for further consideration by the Water Companies.
- (5) In response to a question Mrs Gregory confirmed that the Garden City contained a mixed development including affordable housing, and currently all the properties were selling off plan. In response to comments about the density of the site Mrs Gregory explained that it was a challenging site with existing planning permission, which dictated how development was currently coming forward. EDC was working on ensuring landscaping schemes, for example, were easily maintained to a high standard in the future.
- (6) Referring to electricity Mrs Gregory explained that there was only enough capacity for 1700 homes, there was a need to upgrade the infrastructure at a cost of £30million. EDC worked closely with UKPN and EDC were able to create an innovative funding mechanism effectively forward funding this. When a development connected to the electricity grid developers only paid for the electricity they needed for their developments.
- (7) Members discussed the issues around water and odour from the Northfleet Waste Water Treatment Plant. Mrs Gregory referred Members to the Peacehaven concealed sewage plant. A Member asked if a system of sustainable drainage had been considered and Mrs Gregory explained that Ebbsfleet Garden City had a complex geology and EDC was looking at opportunities to reuse grey water. A key issue for all areas was water efficiency and she referred to Southern Water's demand reduction scheme 'Target 100', to reduce per capita water consumption to 100 litres per person per day.
- (8) Mrs Gregory confirmed that centralised heating systems were not currently being looked at by developers.
- (9) In response to a question about the long-term projection of the Garden City for the site Mrs Gregory explained that EDC were preparing the next 5 year Business Case to Government.
- (10) A Member asked about the potential for developers to utilise the river for large scale development, Mrs Gregory explained that both the Thames and the Wharfs were extremely useful and were regularly used to transport raw materials. Developers had schemes for a local labour force, EDC used frameworks with KPIs and local procurement and employment.
- (11) In response to a question about consideration being given to creating microgrids with renewables for the electricity project, Mrs Gregory explained that this had not happened, rather it was provision of new grid sites and primary substations, it was accepted that this was not ideal, but this was not a greenfield site.

(12) A Member asked if there was a danger of flooding to the development if the water table rose? Mrs Gregory explained that the site known as Eastern Quarry, was pumping water away and flood risk was considered in every development.

(13) In response to a question Mrs Gregory explained that the EDC had provided confidence to the development market and there had not been a problem with utilities holding back development at Ebbsfleet, there had been no break in development and builders were still building at pace.

(14) Members expressed their wish to visit Ebbsfleet Garden City and officers would liaise with Mrs Gregory to set up this visit.

RESOLVED that Members thank Mrs Gregory for attending the meeting, for her valuable presentation and welcomed a visit to Ebbsfleet Garden City.

37. Smart Heat Network Opportunities

(Item 4)

Mr Steve Baggs (Energy Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. The Chairman welcomed Mr Baggs, who delivered a presentation about 'The Future of Heating in New Developments'. The presentation is available [online here](#) or via this link:

2. <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/b20259/Presentation%20-%20The%20Future%20of%20Heating%20in%20New%20Developments%2001st-Apr-2019%2014.00%20Kent%20Utilities%20Engage.pdf?T=9>

3. Members discussed ways of making Hydrogen, particularly through renewable sources such as wind farms.

4. Members also discussed the possibility of income generation. There were a number of complexities around this and there were multiple organisations involved in energy systems nationally.

5. Mr Baggs had been offering energy advice for the Otterpool Park development in Kent. It was hoped that this could be made an exemplar for Kent in terms of energy functions.

6. Members discussed visiting a solar farm and it was recommended that someone from West Sussex County Council be invited to visit the Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee to explain how their solar farm was funded and to discuss any associated issues.

7. There was a suggestion that Members visit the Trosley Solar Farm en route to their visit to Ebbsfleet Garden City.

RESOLVED that Members thank Mr Baggs for his presentation and invite a representative from West Sussex County Council to a future meeting to explain to Members how their solar farm was funded and any associated issues.

38. Draft Action Plan and Workshop

(Item 5)

1. Mrs McKenzie delivered a presentation setting out the Sub-Committee's Draft Action Plan. The presentation is available [online here](#) or via this link:

2. <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/b20260/Presentation%20-%20Draft%20Action%20Plan%2001st-Apr-2019%2014.00%20Kent%20Utilities%20Engagement%20Sub-Committee.pdf?T=9>

3. The presentation included a recap on issues, opportunities, possible focus areas for the Action Plan and the next steps of the Sub-Committee.

4. Members confirmed their wish to undertake a site visit to Ebbsfleet in May and the need to identify a good builder to talk to on site.

5. Members considered that a workshop in Autumn would be useful and that this should involved developers and planners.

6. There would be one further meeting of the Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee in September and the annual report from the Sub-Committee would be submitted to Scrutiny Committee in October 2019.

RESOLVED that Members undertake a site visit to Ebbsfleet in May and host a workshop in the Autumn involving developers and planners.

39. Date of next meeting

(Item 6)

NOTED that the next meeting of the Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee would be held on 18 September 2019, 2pm in the Medway Room, Sessions House.