

## **FALMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Environmental Action Committee held at the Atherton Suite, The Old Post Office, The Moor, Falmouth on 3rd February 2022 at 6pm.

Present: Councillors K Edwards (Chair), D V Evans BEM, J C Robinson, A Rowe, J M Spargo and Z Young

In attendance: A M Williams (Town Clerk)  
S Walker (Strategic Environmental Projects Officer)  
R Maxwell (Tremap) (Where mentioned)

### EA1 **CHAIR**

The Town Clerk requested nominations for Chair. One valid nomination was received.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor Rowe and

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Edwards Chairs the Committee.

### EA2 **VICE-CHAIR**

It was proposed by Councillor Edwards, seconded by Councillor Robinson and

**RESOLVED** that Councillor D V Evans be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee.

### EA3 **APOLOGIES**

An apology was received and approved from Councillor Seiler (work).

### EA4 **INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

None received.

### EA5 **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Town Clerk advised that the Council's Committee Review would see the Committee identified as a standing committee and the Committee should consider its terms of reference and scheduling as well as an appropriate name.

It was proposed by Councillor Edwards, seconded by Councillor D V Evans and

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) The Committee be named the Environmental Action Committee.
- (ii) It is scheduled to meet bi-monthly (every two months) in the municipal year.
- (iii) Terms of reference include consideration of both the internal organisational improvements that the council can make in terms of environmental sustainability as well as external measures in regard to engagement with community partners and others. Priorities would be Consumption; Biodiversity; Behaviour; and Circularity. Initial draft objectives would be a force for good; demonstrate leadership; and embed climate change in decision making.

The Strategic Environmental Project Officer to attend the Council's Senior Officer Team to update on the organisational priorities and objectives.

EA6 **FALMOUTH AND PENRYN CLIMATE GROUP**

The Chair advised that cutbacks at Cornwall Council would see support for the Falmouth and Penryn Climate Group reduced and a local lead would need to be developed. It was felt that the group was important and that it should be sustained.

It was proposed by Councillor Edwards seconded by Councillor Young and

**RESOLVED** that the Council continues to support the Falmouth and Penryn Climate Action Group and assist it to develop a local management structure.

EA7 **TREE MAPPING**

Richard Maxwell of Tremap presented the developing Tree Mapping application, which could become a citizen's tree reporting tool. Councillor Rowe felt that this would be beneficial in the Council's tree championing and warden volunteer development initiative.

It was proposed by Councillor Rowe, seconded by Councillor Edwards and

**RESOLVED** that the Council work with Tremap as a development partner for the app.

EA8 **REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS OFFICER**

The SEPO presented her report that is attached as part of these minutes which was duly noted, and the Committee agreed the short-, medium- and long-term goals.

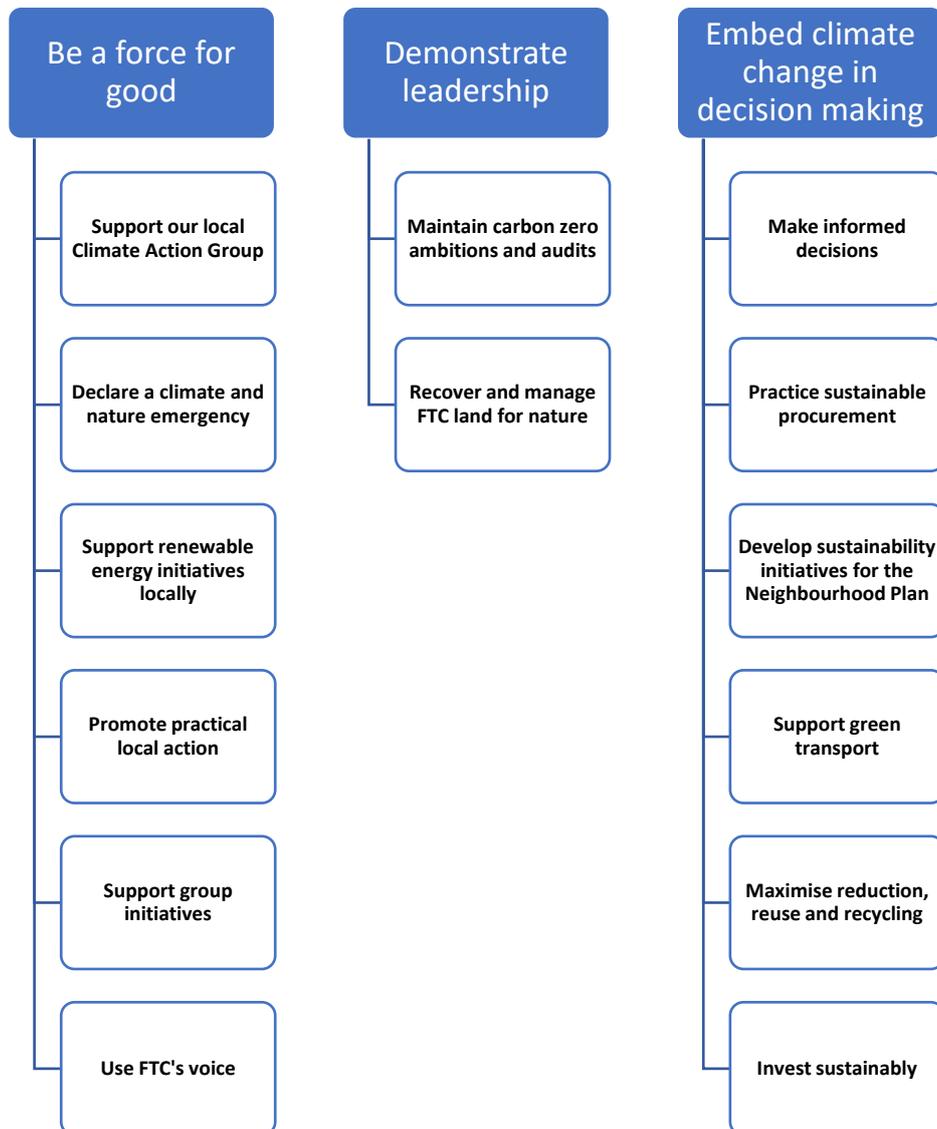
Additionally, the SEPO to consider the preparation of community emergency and flooding plans and that the Environment Agency be requested to attend a future meeting of the Council.

There being no further business to transact the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.40 pm

Signed: ..... Date: .....

# DRAFT Objectives for FTC's Sustainability Committee

## Jan 2022



## Goal 1:

# Be a force for good

- **Support our local Climate Action Group**

*Non-party political climate action groups are forming across the country in response to the heightened concern on climate change and nature loss. Many will push for political action, others will encourage local businesses to do their bit, and others still will want to carry out collective practical action (e.g. community energy, transport, or food projects).*

*Our Town Council can encourage and support the Falmouth & Penryn Network Area Climate Change Working Group.*

- **Emergency Declarations**

*Declare a climate and nature emergency – with a commitment to act.*

- **Support renewable energy initiatives locally**

*Actively support small and large planning applications for new renewable energy in the area – the planning decisions will be made by the local planning authority and they need to hear from those that support the applications. The UK needs to increase the amount of renewable energy it generate by around eight-fold (Source- Friends of the Earth).*

- **Promote practical local action**

*People can often be at a loss at what they can practically do to reduce their own carbon footprint or support nature. Guidance that provides information on accredited local businesses can be invaluable and helps keep money in the local economy. This guidance (either digital or in print) could include information on local accredited energy assessors and renewable energy installers for solar panels and heat pumps, eco-friendly retailers, green builders and landscape companies, etc. It can also encourage sustainable transport options.*

*FTC is well positioned to support practical action via the Princess Pavilion, which already operates with an environmental and community mindset, hosting groups such as the Falmouth Repair Café and Falmouth Food Coop.*

*Additionally, FTC has the ability to host and create web and print resources to share this guidance.*

- **Support group initiatives (e.g. bulk purchasing, lift-sharing)**

*For example, the costs of installing solar PV or other renewable technologies such as heat pumps should be much lower if done in bulk, street by street or area by area. The town or parish council can bring local homeowners and businesses to develop such a scheme. It is a model used widely in the Netherlands and places such as Suffolk in the UK (Source- Friends of the Earth).*

*Additionally, by convening local businesses and car-sharing schemes such as the social enterprise Liftshare it is possible to help local people reduce the carbon pollution for car-use, save money and foster new friendships. An analysis by Liftshare suggested that 92% of people commuting to work in*

over 200 locations lived close enough to be able to share a car to work. Lift-sharing may often be a solution for people when public transport, cycling or walking to work isn't.

- **Use FTC's voice (e.g. strategy consultation feedback)**

Decisions on infrastructure projects are largely made at a local authority level, by Local Economic Partnerships or by national government. Still far too many of these decisions will increase carbon emissions and / or destroy nature. FTC committee members can use their voice when possible to oppose high-carbon developments and instead to promote sustainable alternatives

## Goal 2:

# Demonstrate leadership

- **Carbon Zero ambitions and audits**

Review audits to evaluate consumption trends and progress towards 2030 carbon neutrality targets.

Auditing can also encourage FTC to:

Save energy – ensuring any council buildings are as energy efficient as possible. Loans for projects in England that have a payback of less than five years are available through Salix funding (Source- Friends of the Earth). Projects with longer-term paybacks should still be carried out.

Produce green energy - Install renewable energy generation at council buildings, for example heat-pumps and solar PV.

Heat pumps benefit from a government grant that will partially cover the cost. Energy company Octopus has a smart export tariff which pays for any electricity generated that is not used by the building, including enabling top prices if the solar PV is used in conjunction with a battery.

Funds can also be raised through Salix loans or through crowd-funding. Buildings using renewable energy should also be used as a showcase to help local people see these technologies first-hand, particularly less familiar technologies such as heat pumps.

- **Recover and manage FTC land for nature**

Parish, town and community councils can have responsibility for allotments, bridleways, burial grounds, commons and open spaces, and village greens. All of these can be managed to increase nature.

Friends of the Earth and BugLife have produced a guide to help develop and action plan for helping pollinators such as bees. Buglife's B-line project also aims to support the development of a network of wildlife friendly corridors. Friends of the Earth is piloting a crowd-funded postcode gardener project to help people green the streets where they live. (Source- Friends of the Earth)

Increase tree cover – organisations are campaigning for the UK to double tree-cover by 2045 (Source- Friends of the Earth). The Forestry Commission and others have suggested that even urban areas should aim for a minimum of 20% tree cover. Parish, town and community councils should aim to double tree cover in this area and if necessary, go beyond this to reach to 20% minimum target. The Tree Charter, developed by the Woodland Trust, provides excellent guidance on how to increase

cover. The National Association of Local Councils website provides case studies where it has been used.

*Reduce pesticide use and other harmful activities – from using peat-free compost to shunning pesticides and ensuring light pollution is controlled, it is possible to reduce current harmful activities. These alone are not enough to protect and restore nature but they are an important first step.*

### Goal 3:

## Embed climate change in decision making

- **Sustainable procurement**

*Buy green – buying local can support the local economy and buying green can help protect the planet and reward those businesses committed to a better future. Buying green electricity also helps develop new renewable energy and helps ensure the council isn't financially supporting dirty energy.*

*Research has identified Ecotricity and Good Energy as the greenest energy companies, with Octopus the next best bet (Source- Friends of the Earth).*

*Buying green can also extend to any food provided at events, through providing only plant-based food or offering predominately plant-based food with less but better meat.*

*The development of a sustainable procurement policy can enable a culture of green purchasing, and influence suppliers to adopt sustainable policies and practices.*

- **Develop sustainability initiatives for Neighbourhood Plan**

*Identify sites within the Neighbourhood Plan for trees, renewable energy and nature restoration – the development of 90% of Neighbourhood Plans are in practice led by town and parish councils working with their communities (Source- Friends of the Earth). Although the Neighbourhood Planning process is far from perfect and is very time consuming it does offer the community to demonstrate that it means business on protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations.*

*Use the Neighbourhood Plan to require new homes to incorporate renewable energy, be energy efficient and nature-friendly – given the climate and emergency the government should require all new homes to be as sustainable as possible, but unfortunately, they don't. Neighbourhood Plans identify sites for future housing and should also push for these to be zero-carbon (e.g. Passivhaus standard) and nature-friendly, although it is possible the local planning authority may seek to override this.*

- **Green transport**

*Use green transport – employees and councillors should be encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport. The council can provide cycling options for staff to use as they carry out any work-related trips. There are also options to provide zero-interest loans for the purchase of these. Where a car or van is needed EVs should be considered.*

*Use differential car-parking charges to support low carbon vehicles – any carparks run by the council (now or in the future) can offer low or free car-parking to electric vehicles and dedicated spaces for them with electric charging points.*

*Develop safe walking and cycle routes - identify safe walking and cycling routes and where necessary work in partnership with Cornwall Council to deliver these. The Propensity to Cycle Tool identifies the huge potential for increasing cycling in all areas of the country, particularly with quality infrastructure such as segregated cycleways and cycle-parking, and with the use of E-bikes.*

<https://www.pct.bike/>

- **Waste and recycling**

*Encourage and support the waste hierarchy of reduce, re-use, recycle, recover. Reduction in purchasing is at the forefront of this hierarchy, with community initiatives such as the Falmouth Repair Café working to re-use goods and maintain a circular economy.*

*Maximise recycling – in FTC operations ensure all waste is recycled or composted, but also set-up community recycling facilities for hard to recycle items when the local authority hasn't done so, for example in partnership with Terracycle.*

- **Sustainable investment**

*Ensure money is invested wisely – across the UK local authorities are investing tens of millions each into fossil fuel companies, despite having declared an environmental emergency. Ensure any council funds are invested safely in sustainably managed funds.*

- **Make informed decisions**

*Ensure FTC staff and councillors know the climate change or nature implications of decisions before they are made – it isn't credible to accept the need for rapid action on climate change and nature and then make decisions without knowing whether they will be harmful or helpful. Requiring every decision to be well-informed is common-sense as well as good practice.*

# DRAFT FTC Sustainability Committee Priority Areas

## Consumption

Carbon auditing

Enacting recommendations

## Biodiversity

Planting

Protecting

Planning

## Behaviour

Staff and Councillors

Community

Emergencies

## Circularity

FTC Waste

Business waste

Community waste

## Consumption

- **Carbon Auditing**  
including:
  - electricity
  - water
  - gas
  - fuel
- **Enacting Recommendations**
  - renewable electricity generation
  - water reduction strategies
  - building improvements
  - Fleet electrification

## Biodiversity

- **Planting**
  - Trees
  - Pollinators
  - Habitats
- **Protecting**
  - Trees
  - Habitats
  - Pollutants
- **Planning**
  - Neighbourhood Development Plan
  - Green Corridor Group
  - Strategy consultation feedback

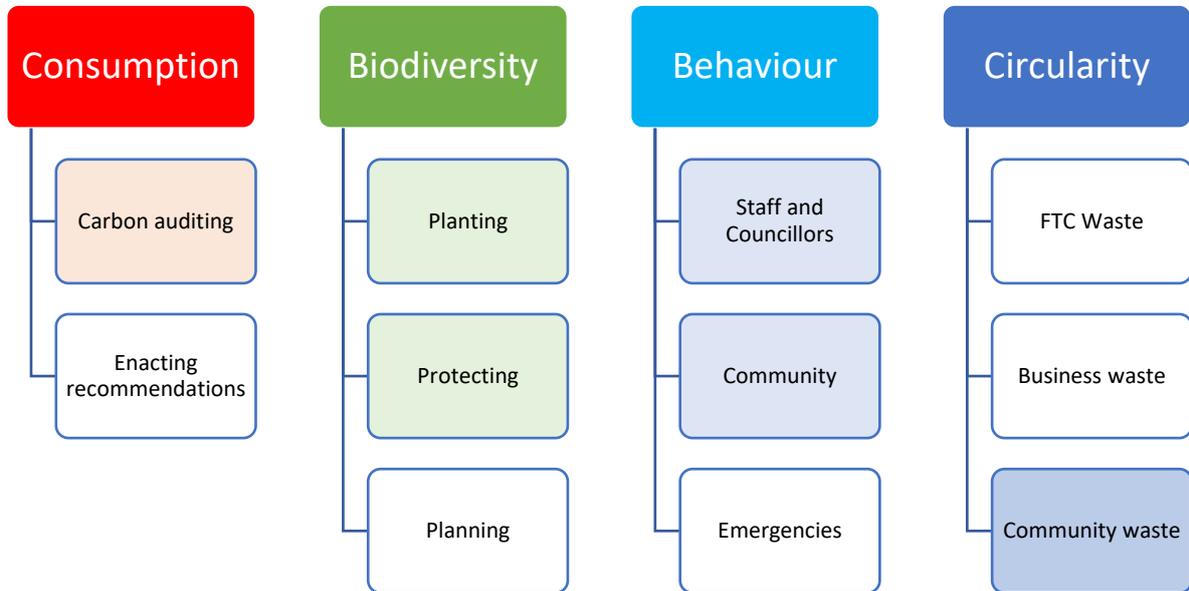
## Behaviour

- **Staff and Councillors**
  - Be informed
  - Reduce consumption
  - Create advocates
- **Community**
  - Share information
  - Promote initiatives
  - Facilitate change
- **Businesses**
  - Share information

## Circularity

- **FTC Waste**
  - Procurement policy
  - Reduce purchasing
  - Reuse materials
  - Recycle
- **Business Waste**
  - Promote and facilitate circularity
- **Community Waste**
  - Encourage best practice
  - Lobby for community solutions
  - Provide solutions

# FTC Climate Action Progress Report Jan 2022



*Priority areas by progress. Areas of progress to date in colour.*

For consideration:

- What are the priorities for the next 6 months/ 1 year?
- Should we audit annually, or bi-annually?
- When should meetings be scheduled?
- Who should attend and in what capacity/frequency?

Complete or in progress (colour coded by priority area above)

- Falmouth/Penryn and surrounding Climate Action Group- FTC representatives attend
- Green Corridor- FTC representatives attend and chair
- Community engagement- ongoing engagement with groups such as Plastic Free Falmouth
- Carbon audit 2018-2020 complete
- Budget setting- 4 year budget setting has factored in audit recommendations
- Councillor toolkit in development to inform of climate change
- Declare ecological emergency
- Support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill
- Motion for the Ocean
- Circular Falmouth- FTC councillors are driving this initiative
- Tree Championing- FTC councillors are driving this initiative
- Forest for Cornwall/ planning for tree planting- FTC officers are engaging with Forest for Cornwall
- FTC climate committee- group formed, meetings initiated.
- Staff across teams are being contacted to enact audit recommendations, including Facilities Manager
- Carbon reduction objectives have fed into FTC website tendering
- FTC staff and councillors contribute to NDP discussions

DRAFT 6 month objectives

- **CONSUMPTION (FACILITIES)**
- Confirm plan for re-auditing
- Create sustainable procurement policy
- Research e-vehicles
- Research car charging, including funding and sites
- Acquire quote for solar installation at Pavillions
- Switch to green energy suppliers
- Update/review EPC/DEC for council buildings
- Conservation/building expert to survey Municipal Building & Pavillion
- **BEHAVIOUR**
- Conduct staff and councillor travel survey
- Falmouth/Penryn & surrounding community climate booklet
- Review climate-friendly practices with Town Management team ahead of festival season
- Update FTC's sustainability commitments and advice pages online (FTC/BID sites)
- Confirm/enact action points reference FTC's climate emergency declaration
- Confirm/enact action points reference Motion for the Ocean
- **GROUNDNS (BIODIVERSITY)**
- Drive forward tree planting
- Purchase e-machinery for grounds team
- Drive forward pollinator friendly planting

DRAFT 1 year objectives

- **GENERAL**
- Re-audit carbon emissions (if annual reporting cycle is agreed)
- Enact sustainable procurement policy
- Action FTC's climate emergency declaration
- Action Motion for the Ocean
- **FACILITIES**
- Purchasing of e-vehicles
- Enact solar installation at Pavillions
- Explore waste reduction initiatives across facilities
- **BEHAVIOUR CHANGE**
- Review sustainable staff travel solutions based on survey
- Review and consider actions for emergency flood planning
- Review of FTC staff and councillor behaviours to inform carbon saving procedures and practices
- **GROUNDNS**
- Enact planting initiatives
- Green roofs on bus stops & other FTC site planting
- Composting improvements in KP
- Water expert to look at toilets for efficiency
- Research public recycling provision on FTC land