

East Herts Council

Council meeting 18 December 2019

Questions and Replies which were not dealt with within the 15 minute timeframe for Members' Questions

Question 6

Councillor Mione Goldspink asked Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:

Why is this Council still supplying plastic cups and bottled water at its offices?

Reply from Cllr McAndrew:

I am pleased to confirm that we have indeed withdrawn the provision of plastic cups throughout the authority and that this was from September 2018. We estimate that this is saving the use of some 30,000 virgin plastic cups per year.

The only exception to this is the Council Chamber/Reception area at Wallfields and Charringtons meeting rooms. These have been replaced with fully recyclable "plastic" cups. However, we are now looking at moving to the use of recycled paper cups.

Water outside of kitchen areas is provided by mains fed water dispensers wherever possible, although limited use of bottle dispensers continues where this has not been achievable (3 in total).

Jugs of tap water and glasses are provided at meetings at Wallfields.

The caterer is asked to provide glasses and crockery as part of her contract but I understand that unfortunately at a recent meeting at Charringtons this was not possible. However, I can assure Cllr Goldspink that the caterer has been reminded of the need to ensure the use of crockery.

Question 7

Cllr Ben Crystall asked Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:

According to the final report from the Climate Change Task and Finish Group, received by full council on 5th March 2019, East Herts District Council achieved

an 18.5% cut in emissions between 2009 and 2017, based on actions within its own estate. Can you provide an updated figure for the council's emissions reduction along with a list of specific actions proposed for the coming year and estimates for the emission cuts each will generate?

Reply from Cllr McAndrew:

One of the key actions within the emerging new East Herts Environmental Sustainability Action Plan is to monitor and report on progress towards our Climate Change Motion ambitions to achieve net zero for the Council's own estate by 2030. East Herts has been working actively on carbon emission reduction over a long period, in fact since 2009 when the Council established its first Climate Change Action Plan.

I expect to be in a position to publish the latest carbon reduction data in Spring 2020. However, we estimate that currently the Council has achieved a reduction of almost 21% since 2009 baseline year; however, this figure is yet to be finally confirmed.

Regarding carbon reduction estimates for specific actions an assessment of these will be included within the new Action Plan.

(For information: Carbon data reporting tends to lag 18 months or more behind as we await publication from BEIS of the various UK carbon emission conversion factors which are used for the carbon reduction estimates.)

Question 8

Cllr Ben Crystall asked Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:

The Council, as a trusted local information source, should continue in its role to promote information on energy reduction to local residents. Will the Council commit to publish updated figures for emissions reduction in a prominent position on the EHC website home page?

Reply from Cllr McAndrew:

I am pleased to confirm that the Council is intending to report on its Climate Change activity and progress on emission reduction through the "East Herts Environmental and Climate Forum" and information on the work of this Group

will be published on the Council's website. Specifically in relation to carbon emissions data I anticipate this will be reported via a link from the "About East Herts Section" of the website.

Members may also be interested to know that the first meeting of the "Forum" is on the 15th January at 1.30pm - 5pm, Fletcher's Lea, Ware Priory. This will take the form of a public workshop open to all, to discuss key climate change themes and how we can all work together to strive towards our Climate Motion ambitions. Further information will be circulated in this weeks' MIB.

(For information: The Web Team advise that presence of specific sections on the website home page are governed by their popularity. Thus the more external hits a section gets the more likely it is to appear directly on the Home Page. The "About East Herts Section" is a permanent feature of the home page.)