



Policy and Finance Committee

Date: 14th November 2022

Title: Responding to the Energy Crisis

Purpose of the Report:

To provide Members with an update of work carried out thus far in terms of addressing the environmental agenda and in particular, its response to the energy crisis.

Contact Officer:

Mark Saccoccio, Town Clerk

Corporate Objective/s	LLTC Five Year Plan – To ensure value for money and operational efficiency and a structure which will underpin current and future service delivery by the Town Council. This work will be primarily within the remit of the Policy and Finance Committee.	
Implications:		
Financial	Yes	Within available earmarked reserve funds as set out in the report.
Human Resources	No	
Operational/Service delivery	Yes	To ensure the council can operate effectively.
Procedural/Legal	No	
Risk/Health and Safety	Yes	To ensure town council assets are maintained at an acceptable standard that is fit for purpose.
Environmental Aims	Yes	That town council environmental objectives are met when undertaking facility improvements.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Should the Committee be minded, the proposals are:

1.1 To note the report

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting held 26th September 2022, a motion submitted by Councillor Harvey was given careful consideration by the Policy and Finance Committee. From this, the following resolutions were made:

- i) **That this Council will lead by example in its own buildings and activities by using a range of energy saving measures.**
- ii) **To include information on the cost of living and energy crises on the Town Council website as soon as practicable.**
- iii) **To bring a report to a future committee meeting regarding the energy crisis.**

2.2 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the work thus far undertaken in respects of the wider environmental agenda. Energy saving forms part of a wider environmental consideration and cannot be considered in isolation given that all activities will have consequences (positive and negative) in energy terms.

- i) **That this Council will lead by example in its own buildings and activities by using a range of energy saving measures.**

2.3 At its meeting held 25th July 2022, this committee resolved that up to £8,000 from the facilities improvements earmarked reserve be used for the purposes of creating a planned maintenance schedule. Since the resolution, a Chartered Surveyor was appointed and has created a property maintenance analysis and proposal report. As an overriding conclusion, the surveyor is of the opinion that the town council buildings the subject of the inspections are in a favourable condition. That aside, a number of recommendations have been made that include consideration being given to the potential of including solar arrays where practicable as well as upgrading thermal insulation where considered necessary and appropriate.

2.4 A follow-up meeting was held on 4th November 2022 where it was agreed that quotations would be sought for potential solar installations as well as thermal insulation upgrades. A feasibility report together with anticipated costs will be presented to this committee at a future meeting.

- ii) **To include information on the cost of living and energy crises on the Town Council website as soon as practicable.**

2.5 The Council has now created a web page which is highlighted on the homepage as well as on a banner which appears near the top of every page. The web page signposts to a number of sources of information and advice including the local authority's two very comprehensive web pages on cost of living and energy saving.

- 2.6 The web page is featured in the Nov/Dec edition of About Town and will also be promoted on social media.
- 2.7 Officers are due to attend a webinar provided by the SLCC regarding energy advice and fuel poverty awareness for the cost-of-living crisis in late November and will update the web page with additional relevant information thereafter.
- iii) To bring a report to a future committee meeting regarding the energy crisis.**
- 2.8 Work is continuing to be undertaken on the themes outlined above and beyond, including progressing the 2021 climate emergency declaration and work streams arising from this.
- 2.9 On 9 November officers undertook some initial training in respect of identifying a baseline carbon footprint for the Town Council. This work will continue throughout November/December and it is hoped that a report will be available for committee by March/April 2023.
- 2.10 From September 2022 energy for some of the Council's sites will be provided by a new supplier from 100% renewable sources, with zero CO2 or radioactive waste emissions.
- 2.11 In October 2022, the Council agreed to ringfence £10,000 for additional grant funding for local groups, charities or organisations providing emergency support over the winter months which will directly benefit residents of the parish, given the cost of living and energy crisis . Examples of initiatives which might be eligible include provision of food, warm spaces, advice or practical support.
- 2.12 The first grant has now been approved, to All Saints Church for their "warm week" from 19-24 December 2022. This will see the church being open and heated to provide a welcoming space, with volunteers also providing hot drinks and soup.
- 2.13 Contact has been made with a range of other local groups and organisations and it is hoped that additional grant applications can be approved soon.

End.