

Minutes of the Council

Wychavon District Council (Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth

Drive, Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 1PT)

Thursday, 11 January 2024, 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Kyle Daisley (Chairman), Cllr Salman Akbar, Cllr Mel Allcott, Cllr Martin Allen, Cllr Alan Amos (Vice Chairman), Cllr Marc Bayliss, Cllr Dan Boatright-Greene, Cllr Bob Brookes, Cllr David Chambers, Cllr Brandon Clayton, Cllr Andrew Cross, Cllr Lynn Denham, Cllr Nathan Desmond, Cllr Allah Ditta, Cllr Matt Dormer, Cllr Elizabeth Eyre, Cllr Andy Fry, Cllr Simon Geraghty, Cllr Laura Gretton, Cllr Karen Hanks, Cllr Ian Hardiman, Cllr Adrian Hardman, Cllr Paul Harrison, Cllr Marcus Hart, Cllr Bill Hopkins, Cllr Matt Jenkins, Cllr Adam Kent, Cllr Adrian Kriss, Cllr Aled Luckman, Cllr Steve Mackay, Cllr Luke Mallett, Cllr Emma Marshall, Cllr Karen May, Cllr Natalie McVey, Cllr Dan Morehead, Cllr Richard Morris, Cllr Tony Muir, Cllr Tracey Onslow, Cllr Scott Richardson Brown, Cllr Josh Robinson, Cllr Linda Robinson, Cllr Chris Rogers, Cllr David Ross, Cllr Mike Rouse, Cllr James Stanley, Cllr Emma Stokes, Cllr Kit Taylor, Cllr Richard Udall, Cllr Malcolm Victory, Cllr Shirley Webb and Cllr Tom Wells

Available papers

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. 7 questions submitted to the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance (previously circulated); and
- C. The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 (previously circulated).

Tributes to Cllr Peter Griffiths

A Minute's silence was held and tributes paid to Cllr Peter Griffiths as well as former councillors Ken Pollock and Margaret Wills who had sadly passed away.

2491 Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Agenda item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Alastair Adams, Tony Miller, Jo Monk, Beverley Nielsen and Craig Warhurst.

The following councillors declare an interest in Agenda item 6 as members of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority: Alan Amos, Dan Boatright-Greene, Bob Brookes, David Chambers, Brandon Clayton, Allah Ditta, Elizabeth Eyre, Adrian Hardman, Ian Hardiman, Marcus Hart, Emma Marshall, Natalie McVey, Dan Morehead, Richard Morris, Linda Robinson, Kit Taylor, Richard Udall and Tom Wells.

Cllr Marc Bayliss declared an interest in Agenda item 5 as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and did not take part in the debate.

Cllr Salman Akbar declared an interest in Agenda item 7 (b) Reports of Cabinet -Summary of Decisions Taken in relation to Fair Funding for Schools 2024/25 - National and Local Funding Arrangements for Schools as his wife is a trainee teacher.

2492 Public Participation (Agenda item 2)

Sam Ammar presented a petition about the repair and resurfacing of Grafton Crescent, Bromsgrove.

Jessie Jagers asked questions about the collapse of a footpath known as "the slip" on Northwick Marina in Claines.

The Chairman thanked Sam and Jessie for their contribution and said they would receive a written response from the relevant Cabinet Member.

2493 Minutes (Agenda item 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2494 Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 4)

The Chairman recognised the difficult times experienced by local residents during the latest flooding in the county and his thoughts were with them during this difficult time.

Noted.

2495 Visit of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (Agenda item 5)

The Chairman welcomed John Champion, the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, to the meeting. The Chairman also welcomed and introduced Alex Murray, the Temporary Chief Constable of West Mercia Police.

Both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Temporary Chief Constable gave a brief presentation of their respective roles, their vision for the future and the current state of policing in Worcestershire. The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Temporary Chief Constable then answered a wide range of questions posed by members.

The Chairman thanked Mr Campion and Mr Murray for their attendance.

2496 Fire and Rescue Authority (Agenda item 6)

The Chairman welcomed Jonathon Pryce, the Chief Fire Officer, to the meeting. The Chairman of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, Cllr Kit Taylor, presented his report to the Council and he and Mr Pryce answered a wide range of questions asked by members of the Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Taylor and Mr Pryce for their attendance.

2497 Reports of Cabinet - Matters requiring a decision by Council - Resources Report - Revenue Budget Monitoring - Month 6 (30 September) 2023/24 (Agenda item 7 (a))

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and commented that the capital programme needed updating to reflect the announcement of additional funding and contributions relating to schools funded by the Basic Needs Grant, High Needs Provision Capital and Section 106 contributions. The Council was seeing the impact of inflationary pressures on some capital schemes in the capital programme. The Council was re-evaluating the need for additional build or capacity to mitigate that pressure.

The Leader undertook to provide a written answer to a query about the original capital programme budget and variations in the revised budget for 2023/24 and future years.

It was queried whether the Council was using borrowing as a means to deliver the capital programme and what was the revenue impact of that borrowing. The Leader of the Council responded that a fully revised capital programme would form part of the budget proposals. These were minor adjustments to the capital programme as a result of additional income and contributions. There were some savings and offsets set out in paragraph 5 of the report. The capital programme would always be subject to change.

RESOLVED that the variations to the Capital Programme as detailed in paragraphs 4 – 6 of the report and the updated Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix 5 of the Cabinet Report be approved.

2498 Reports of Cabinet - Summary of Decisions Taken (Agenda item 7(b))

The Leader of the Council reported the following topics and questions were answered on them:

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Resources Report – Revenue Budget Monitoring – Month 6 (30 September) 2023/24
- The New Foxlydiate First School
- Expansion of Car Park at Worcestershire Parkway Rail Station
- Scrutiny Report: Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure
- Adults Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy
- Adult Social Care Strategy
- Fair Funding for Schools 2024/25 - National and Local Funding Arrangements for Schools, and
- Visit Worcestershire - Destination Management Plan.

2499 Constitutional Matters (Agenda item 8)

(a) Political Balance

The Leader introduced the report and commented that Cllr Bill Hopkins had left the Conservative Group to become an independent and in line with the rules of political balance was entitled to an allocation of two seats. It was proposed that Cllr Hopkins retained his seats on the Planning and Regulatory Committee and Waste Credit Governance Committee.

RESOLVED that the recalculation of political balance set out as an Appendix to the report be approved and the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance be required to give effect to it in accordance with the nominations from the respective Group leaders from time to time.

(b) Appointment to Independent Remuneration Panel

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and commented that following the recruitment process, Mr Stefanovic had been recommended for approval by Council to serve as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel for the period up to 30 November 2027. Further recruitment to the Panel would be necessary in the near future and he gave an assurance that every effort would be made to recruit a more diverse panel. It was considered that Mr Stefanovic had the necessary skills and expertise to undertake the role. It was important that the Panel was able to meet and produce a report in a relatively short period of time.

In the ensuing debate, it was commented that the lack of any female nominees or members on the Panel meant that not only was the Panel not representative of the population of Worcestershire but not of the membership of the Council. The Leader responded that Mr Stefanovic was the only application received for the position. He acknowledged that the next recruitment exercise needed to be as wide-ranging as possible to address the lack of diversity on the Panel.

RESOLVED that the appointment of Paul Stefanovic to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a term of office ending 30 November 2027 be approved.

2500 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 1 - Online recording of public meetings (Agenda item 9)

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Cllrs Lynn Denham, Mel Allcott, and Dan Boatright-Greene.

The motion was moved by Cllr Lynn Denham and seconded by Cllr Mel Allcott, who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

The following amendment was moved by Cllr Adam Kent and seconded by Cllr Mike Rouse:

“This Council believes that scrutiny is essential to democracy in the cabinet system of local or national government. We note that since the closure of the upper floors of County Hall due to risks from RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) in September 2023, there has been no webcast of either Cabinet or scrutiny committees available to the public.

Council therefore requests the Cabinet Member with responsibility brings a report to scrutiny to consider how we can provide access to online recordings of all public council meetings within our buildings.”

Those in favour of the amendment commented:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication commented that historically not all Council meetings had been recorded. Council and Cabinet meetings had been recorded for some time and then more recently overview and scrutiny meetings had been recorded. The Council was fully meeting its statutory duty to allow public access to public meetings although he acknowledged the need to provide access to the wider public. It was not possible to insist that other buildings outside the Council’s control provided equipment to enable the recording of meetings. The original motion would have resulted in spending that would not be subject to scrutiny and might not be technically possible as part of the logistical challenges of the rooms available. He was keen to find a satisfactory solution to provide recording of public meetings hence the proposed amendment which requested that a report be brought to a scrutiny meeting
- It was appropriate for scrutiny to look at the online recording of public meetings to ensure that the most appropriate solution was found
- The amendment recognised the potential cost implications of the recording meetings
- If members of the public and journalists were interested in the business at a particular meeting, they should attend that meeting in person
- In response to points made in the debate, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication added that there was no intention to cause delay, There were a number of variables

involved in recording meetings and the aim of the amendment was to be pragmatic and recognise the need for budget scrutiny. He had to be extremely cautious about committing to a course of action that could cost significant sums of money. A report would be brought to the next available Corporate and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Those against the amendment commented:

- The Council merely needed to acquire some basic technology to undertake the filming of meetings which could be achieved at relatively little cost. The amendment used the word “consider” but that just delayed the introduction of this technology. If the recording of meetings at County Hall was a problem then perhaps scrutiny meetings should be held in different venues around the county
- The amendment lost the urgency of the original motion. It was queried whether audio recordings would be a cheaper interim option if cost was an issue
- A clarification of the timescale for the publishing of the scrutiny report would be welcomed
- The original motion was not meant to refer to previous recordings being uploaded but related to future recordings being livestreamed
- It was possible to arrange the recording of smaller meetings in cooperation with district council colleagues relatively quickly without spending much money. The amendment merely created unnecessary delay
- The motion and the amendment failed to recognise the key issue which was the urgency with which the issues associated with RAAC would be addressed in order to enable all meetings to be held and recorded at County Hall and thereby avoiding the additional spend on temporary equipment.

On being put to a vote, the amendment was carried and put as the substantive motion.

In the ensuing debate, it was commented that Bromsgrove District Council did have the ability to broadcast meetings and it was queried why the recording of the November Council meeting was not available.

The mover of the original motion summed up the debate by commenting that there were a number of ways of achieving public access to meetings without spending large sums of money. It was important to have the recording of meetings publicly available.

On being put to the vote the substantive motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: “This Council believes that scrutiny is essential to democracy in the cabinet system of local or national government. We note that since the closure of the upper floors of County Hall due to risks from RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) in September 2023, there has been no webcast of either Cabinet or scrutiny committees available to the public.

Council therefore requests the Cabinet Member with responsibility brings a report to scrutiny to consider how we can provide access to online recordings of all public council meetings within our buildings.”

2501 Question Time (Agenda item 10)

Seven questions had been received by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance and had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The answers to six questions were provided at the meeting. There was insufficient time to ask Question 7. The answers to all the questions are attached in the Appendix.

2502 Reports of Committees - Audit and Governance Committee (Agenda item 11 (a))

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report and commented that the final Statement of Accounts had been signed off on 15 December 2023 with an unqualified opinion from the external auditor. This Council was the first County Council in the country to have their Accounts signed off. He thanked the Section 151 Officer, Phil Rook and his team for their excellent work and professionalism over the last 12 months. The recent track record of the Council in the signing off its Accounts in a timely fashion indicated that the Council had a first-class finance team and excellent audit processes and systems in place.

The Chairman added his thanks to the excellent achievement of Phil Rook and his finance team in signing off the Accounts in such a timely fashion.

The Council received the report of the Audit and Governance Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

2503 Reports of Committees - Pensions Committee (Agenda item 11 (b))

It was queried how much of the Pension Fund had invested directly into fossil fuel companies. In response, the Chairman of the Pensions Committee explained that the Fund did not directly invest in companies. The investment was via an investment manager or “fund of fund” investments. Indirectly therefore the Fund did have a small carbon footprint but its focus and requirements to all the fund managers was Responsible Investment, Environmental, Social and Governance issues, properly taken care of and better managed risk and sustainability long-term. The Fund had developed a Climate Risk Strategy, published an annual Climate Risk report together with a Climate Related Financial Disclosure. The direction of travel was to improve the Fund’s carbon footprint. The carbon footprint of all equities was 30.1% below benchmark. The majority of this reduction had been achieved between 2020 and 2022. In November 2021, the Fund transitioned out of a very carbon intensive passive equity fund and invested £200m in a climate multi-factor fund. The Fund was doing all it could but the Fund had a fiduciary responsibility to its members and to meet its liabilities.

The Council received the report of the Pensions Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

2504 Reports of Committees - Planning and Regulatory Committee (Agenda item 11 (c))

The Council received the report of the Planning and Regulatory Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

The meeting was adjourned from 12.30pm to 1.20pm ended at 2.30pm.

Chairman

COUNCIL 11 JANUARY 2024 - AGENDA ITEM 10 – QUESTION TIME

Questions and written responses provided below. There was insufficient time to answer Question 7 on the day.

QUESTION 1 – Cllr Martin Allen will ask Cllr Marcus Hart:

“Twelve months ago, this council unanimously voted through the motion to provide commencing in April 2024 that members of the armed forces and veterans who reside in Worcestershire free bus travel in line with the current pensioners bus pass.

Will the Cabinet Member with responsibilities for this matter please tell me, is the Council ready to provide these bus passes and how will the council be advertising this country leading first to the brave men and woman who have served their country?”

Answer

As part of that debate 12 months ago we agreed to bring forward proposals that would form part of the budget process. Cabinet met on 10 January to consider its initial budget and the consultation has been kick-started. I can assure you that I am working very closely with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport, whose budget this actually sits in, as we are work through the cost to the Council taxpayers of Worcestershire to provide such passes.

I have to say that the latest costings are substantial and not insignificant which is important when one considers the budget perspective overall as the Cabinet highlighted that we still had a £20m funding gap. Therefore, a final decision had not been made on our proposals. Cabinet will be bringing their final proposals to the meeting in a months' time. Council will get to debate that financial allocation at full Council in February.

Supplementary question

In response to a query, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities undertook in liaison with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport to examine whether free buses passes for members of the armed forces and veterans could be extended to Worcestershire on-demand buses.

QUESTION 2 – Cllr Mel Allcott will ask Cllr Marc Bayliss:

“What is the timetable for LTP5 from development of the draft document, commencement of the stakeholder consultation to final Cabinet sign-off of the plan?”

Answer

The Department for Transport were due to publish some guidance on the development of future Local Transport Plans which has been considerably delayed. Once this is published we will develop our timetable to reflect the requirements.

QUESTION 3 – Cllr Lynn Denham will ask Cllr Adrian Hardman:

“How many cases has Worcestershire County Council had referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in 22/23 and how many were upheld? How can local people access this information?”

Answer

Dear Cllr Denham,

Thank you for your question and for giving me the opportunity to provide a response. Whilst answering this question as CMR for Adult Social Care, complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) are made for the entirety of Worcestershire County Council functions.

In 2022/2023, a total of 24 complaints were made to LGSCO against WCC and 22 of those complaints were upheld.

Members of the public can access information on Worcestershire on the following link, which can be provided to you but is effectively the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's website where you can see all the complaints that have been made: [Worcestershire County Council - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Also the link to how someone can make a complaint via the County Council's complaint process is also included below for you.

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/council-and-democracy/compliments-comments-or-complaints/complaints>

Every week, you can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to send a list of solely social care decisions by email because currently they do not separate them out as a matter of course.

Supplementary question

It was queried why the letter sent to the Head of Paid Service by the Ombudsman had not been made available to Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel or on the Council's website. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care responded that the availability of the information to scrutiny was a matter to raise with the Chairman of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual letter was available on the web site and the link would be sent to Cllr Denham.

QUESTION 4 – Cllr Dan Boatright-Greene will ask Cllr Marc Bayliss:

"Is it time to start talking about the feasibility of a southern by-pass for Pershore?"

Answer

Proposals for significant new transport infrastructure will be considered as part of the development of future Local Transport Plans, and will have to be assessed against criteria from government including the environmental impact and the availability of funding.

The Department for Transport were due to publish some guidance on the development of future Local Transport Plans which has been considerably delayed. Once this is published we will develop our timetable to reflect the requirements.

Supplementary question

It was queried whether there was a possibility of a feasibility study being undertaken to look at ways to reduce the traffic flow through Pershore. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills responded that the Council had improved transport infrastructure around Pershore in recent years. The Council would continue to look at ways of improving traffic flows across the whole of the county.

QUESTION 5 – Cllr Dan Boatright-Greene will ask Cllr Mike Rouse:

“At the council meeting in January 2022 Cllr Hardman asked a question about the highways issues faced in Eckington with a developer repeatedly causing traffic congestion as they worked on the Highway. In the answer to the question the former cabinet member for Highways suggested the council was investigating the potential to charge companies for working on the Highway. After two years, can we get an update on whether this is feasible and when we might see some changes?”

Answer

Lane Rental is where an English Highways Authority charges for any registerable works carried out in the street for the time those works occupy the highway. Charges are focused on the very busiest streets at the busiest times. Charges apply to works promoted by both utility companies and highway authorities themselves. So our own schemes would fall for these charges as well.

The power for highways authorities to implement/operate a Lane Rental scheme is subject to approval by the Secretary of State who would need to see that the authority is running a well-run permit scheme, for example permit fees that are proportionate, discounts are offered for joint works, compliance with permitting regulations and guidance, schemes are fully supportive of the delivery of national infrastructure projects such as the A38 BREP improvements, broadband and full fibre toll out (which was controversial in some parts, particularly rural areas), and incentives for high quality performance (particularly the right first time reinstatements).

The charges are there for incentivising work outside peak hours but they are waived for any joint works. Caps are put in place for major works to install and replace apparatus so these works are not unfairly penalised and delayed. Schemes are trialled for a period of time before going live and then reviewed annually to ensure charges remain proportionate and are applied to the most congested roads. In the consultation and trial that they did in Kent, it was only 5% of the network, the busiest locations.

WCC have examined what is required to implement Lane Rental and we have been advised that an updated list of Traffic Sensitive Streets is one of the first requirements. Therefore, WCC are currently working on updating its list of Traffic Sensitive Streets. It is likely that the top 5% for sensitivity of these roads would be where lane rental charges would apply and these would exclusively be in the City of Worcester because that is where the congestion existed. The policy of Lane Rental would not be of benefit to you unless you lived in Worcester. Therefore the B4080 in Eckington would not be included in such a scheme should it be implemented in the future.

WCC are also awaiting Government changes to legislation announced in their Plan for Drivers (Oct 2023) suggesting changes that will ensure Lane Rental schemes are made more attractive to local highway authorities. Following the original legislation in 2012, only Surrey County Council and West Sussex County Council with their strong links to the TfL scheme, applied to Secretary of State for Lane Rental. The hesitancy across the rest of the UK appears to be due to the risks of increased costs to LHA's own works programmes and those costs then being distributed to the private sector utilities via the surplus pot through bids for technological advances to street works activity. There is an indication that changes will be made to legislation in near future that will allow LHA's to bid to the surplus pot for highway improvement works, thereby reducing the risk of net increased costs to LHA's.

In Eckington, poor works undertaken by L Healy Ltd in August 2021 and November 2021 on behalf of Spitfire Homes led to a suspension from working on the WCC network. L Healy Ltd have now served a suspension and have subsequently returned to work on the network and undertaken further works in Eckington to an improved standard with better organisation. WCC now issue warning letters and suspensions as standard practice to

improve compliance. WCC have also developed improvements to introduce standardised charges for developers to make a road space booking from March 2024 with major works being charged more than minor or standard works. WCC are also now seeking masterplans from developers as a way of viewing and reducing the number of incursions into the highway network.

Supplementary question

In response to a query, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport explained that for areas outside of Worcester, it was about the regime that was put in place whether through monitoring or getting tough on contractors. There was a lot of pressure to enable statutory works to be undertaken on the road network from Severn Trent Water, the gas companies, Broadband providers, electric improvements as well as the Council's own improvements to the highway. The Council needed local communities and councillors to work with the it to monitor the works taking place on the highway

QUESTION 6 – Cllr Lynn Denham will ask Cllr Mike Rouse:

“Modeshift stars is an accreditation scheme supported by the Department for Transport and active travel England and funded by Worcestershire County Council. The scheme rewards schools over 5 levels, green, bronze, silver, gold and platinum for increasing the number of young people who regularly walk, wheel, cycle and use other forms of sustainable transport to get to and from school

What communication has there been with schools to promote the scheme?”

Answer

The Highways Development Management Team require schools to register with Modeshift Stars to create a suitable Travel Plan aimed at promoting sustainable modes of travel and reduce the use of cars which we are keen to promote. I have said at previous meetings that schools can be a real transport interchange hub if we get it right, improving active travel. It feeds into the work with BSIF, Active Travel and partnership works

Currently we are only working with schools that have submitted a planning application so not all schools may be aware of the initiative. I appreciate that not all schools were putting in planning applications all of the time. We are mindful that there is a lot of communications with schools specifically centred around education. We will liaise with our colleagues in Worcestershire Children First to ensure the service is promoted widely. However, resources to work with schools on travel planning are very limited. If the individual school sign up for Modeshift Stars they can take advantage of the resources on offer to promote travel planning and the benefits that this can bring. If you have got any schools that you think the scheme could work well for, speak to highways officers or myself and we can try and make sure that we specifically work with you and the local school. It was important that local councillors helped with this to enable schools and the community to give it the full attention.

Supplementary question

In response to a query, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport undertook to look into the possibility of: linking the Modeshift Stars Accreditation Scheme with the engagement already undertaken with schools on Bikeability; inviting school representatives to the Active Travel Stakeholder Forum; and improving access to the Modeshift Stars Accreditation Scheme on the Council's website.

QUESTION 7 – Cllr Mel Allcott will ask Cllr Simon Geraghty:

"How much of the Worcestershire Pension Fund is invested directly into fossil fuel companies?"

Answer

Firstly, I would thank Mel for her question.

The Pension Fund does not generally invest directly in companies. Our Investments are generally made through a fund manager. In some cases, we participate in "fund of funds" investments where the link to the investment asset itself is even more indirect. For that reason, therefore Fund does not have any direct investments in companies deemed to be "fossil fuel" companies.

The Fund has a primary fiduciary duty to its members. The Pension Fund primary investment objectives are to ensure that there are sufficient assets are available to meet liabilities as they fall due and to maximise returns at an acceptable level of risk. Responsible investment is a core part of that fiduciary duty.

The Fund places a high importance on Responsible Investment and ESG factors, evidenced by our long-standing successful signatory status to the Financial Reporting Council's UK Stewardship Code. In respect of climate change specifically, the Fund has developed a Climate Change Risk Strategy which is published on the Fund's website. Embedded within that strategy is a commitment to publish an annual Climate Risk Report together with Climate Related Financial Disclosures which illustrate the portfolio's impact on climate change. The most recent versions of these reports are currently being revised and are expected to be presented to Pensions Committee in early February before being published on the Fund's website.

I hope this information I helpful.

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