

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
CLIMATE CHANGE SUB COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING ON FRIDAY, 17th APRIL 2026
Held in the Chamber, Alton Town Hall**

Present: Councillor Barbara Tansey (Chair)
Councillor Don Hammond
Scott Gudrich – (Youth Representative) – from 9:40am
Kevin Ray (Energy Alton)
Chris Chappell (Active Travel Representative)
Rod Painell (ACAN)
Pennie Brown (EHDC)

Apologies: None

In attendance: Marcus Van-Hagen (Chair of Allotment Association) – until 9:40am
Councillor Lorna Woodcroft
Tom Horwood (Town Clerk)
Hayley Carter (Deputy Town Clerk) – for agenda items 10 & 11 only
Wendy Simson (Assistant to Clerk)

115 Chairman's Announcements

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting.

The Chair informed the Committee that Cllr Treacher had stepped down as a Councillor and so the Committee were looking for a new bio-diversity Lead.

Scott Gudrich was attending a school assembly but planned to join the meeting once this was completed.

The Chair declared an interest in the agenda item on the Cycle Alton grant.

116 Apologies for absence

All members of the Committee were present.

117 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of their obligation to disclose any pecuniary interest in items on the agenda. The Chair declared an interest in Cycle Alton and would therefore not take part in the discussions about the grant application.

118 Minutes of the last meeting

On the proposal of Cllr Hammond, seconded by the Chair, with all voting in favour, the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2026 were agreed as a true record. The Assistant to the Clerk provided a set of minutes for signature.

119 Questions / Representations to the Committee

The Chair introduced Marcus Van-Hagen, Chair of the Allotment Association Committee, who joined the meeting to give an update on the solar panel project for which the Climate Change Committee provided a grant.

Marcus explained that the project was 2 months behind schedule due to the assessment of the number and orientation of the panels on the shipping container at Wooteys Allotments. It has been approved that six panels be installed but without the racks which tilt the panels and instead lay them flat on the roof on the container. Support from Wickes Building Supplier of £100 of

materials including the sockets has been received. The total cost of the project is £2,495 and the panels will be installed by the end of April and working at capacity by the end of May.

The Climate Committee asked if other Allotment Associations had been consulted about the plan, Marcus explained that a group in Sheffield has been very helpful.

The Chair asked that Marcus provide a written update for the July meeting on how well used the panels an energy source is being used.

Marcus Van-Hagen left the meeting.

Chris Chappell introduced the grant application made by Cycle Alton for £300 to support the work being done to encourage cycling in the town, this includes printing of maps and documents to respond the planning applications, publicity for training, workshops and led rides, and printing questionnaires. As a member of Cycle Alton the Chair abstained from the discussion. As only the Councillors can vote on financial items, Cllr Hammond was the only eligible person on the Committee to vote. The Grant was approved.

120 **Cycle Planters**

The Chair reported that the cycle planter stands have been removed by the Grounds Team. As there are some locations where they were well used, Cycle Alton had requested four new planters to replace those taken away. These have been purchased and delivered.

121 **Update on actions from last Climate Change Meeting**

The actions for the last meeting are:

Ref.	Action	Person responsible	Date due
Finnimore	Speak with Energise South Downs to progress this solar panel project – Kevin to cover as part of ACAN update	Kevin Ray	15.04.26
Solar Panels	Contact Chawton Indoor Bowls and Esteem Ironing for annual energy use for discussion with Energise South Downs - completed	Wendy	15.04.26
Allotments	Chair of Allotment Association to be invited to join the April meeting - completed	Wendy	15.04.26
Action Plan	Update progress on all actions – updates have been sent by some members of the Committee, the Chair and Assistant to Clerk to meet to update.	All members	15.04.26
Action Plan	Update format to include progress against actions – this form part of the work to be carried out by consultant	Wendy	15.04.26
Strategy	Add “impact on Climate Change” to Council reports template – the Clerk confirmed that all reports would incorporate the Climate Change impact but would not have a specific heading as this would the require a number of other headings to be added, which would make the reports repetitive	Town Clerk	15.04.26
Utilities	Track changes and reduction in carbon for 2023 to 2026. Meeting with EHDC consultant to discuss the Action plan – completed, proposal included on agenda	Don & Wendy	15.04.26
Electric vehicle	Arrange test drive period for Grounds Team – the electric Toyota Hilux is due to be available in June/July, the Assistant to the Clerk has booked for the local garage to make the Town Council aware when delivered so a test drive can be booked	Wendy	15.04.26
National Planning Policy Review	ATC to look at responding reference heritage buildings – the Clerk confirmed that the Town Council would respond to the EHDC Local Plan.	Town Clerk	15.04.26

Jubilee bungalows	Arrange a meeting with tenants and Energy Alton to discuss heat pumps to replace oil fired heating. – the tenant at one of the bungalows has agreed to meet Energy Alton to investigate options	Wendy	15.04.26
Alton Social Bowls Club	Invite to next meeting for an update on installing solar panels – update given with photographs of the new panels in situ.	Barbara	15.04.26
Picnic Bench	Apply for Cllr Grant and order new picnic bench – bench has been purchased and is being installed at Anstey Park as agreed.		
Tree planting	Numbers of trees and hedging plants installed since 1 st April 2023 to be collated. – data received and added to the report shared with consultant.	Jenny & Wendy	15.04.26
Alton in Bloom	Launch of competition to be held until criteria for environment sustainability are created – criteria on the website along with the application form	Hayley	15.04.26
Cycle routes	Inform EHDC of launch date for new maps, website, and cycle routes - completed	Chris	15.04.26
Water fountain	Source and have Installed a unit in the Market Square – the water fountain in the Public Gardens has been repaired, there isn't a suitable location in the Market Square but signs to be produced for all the businesses to say they will fill a water bottle. It was agreed that information about the history of the fountain be included on a sign along with a piece in the Altonian.	Wendy	15.04.26

122 **Update of Climate Change Strategy**

The Committee agreed that the Strategy had been updated recently and was still current.

It was agreed that Aim 3 should be re-worded to say, “To engage with stakeholders to deliver the Climate Change Strategy by providing sustainable alternatives as part of the planning process” when the flyer next needs to be printed.

During the discussion Pennie reminded the Climate Change Committee that in 2023 EHDC changed their own Climate Change Strategy target date to 2035. The Climate Change Committee agreed to keep the Alton Climate Change Strategy target date to 2030.

123 **Actions of Climate Change Action Plan**

Updates to the action plan have been received, these will be included in the work for the consultant Alan Williams who will be amending the plan to ensure it is more measurable.

'Alan Williams has been recommended to the Town Council by EHDC. He has experience with other councils in Hampshire.

The cost of the proposed work was above the delegated powers for the Climate Change Committee, the Committee resolved to recommend to Council the proposal from Alan Williams for a carbon footprint and climate change strategy action plan audit and review. Cllr Hammond proposed this, Cllr Tansey seconded this, the Committee all agreed with this course of action.

124 **Cutting schedule for Will Hall Meadow**

The Deputy Clerk joined the meeting and informed the Committee that the management plan for Will Hall Meadow is on the website (<https://www.alton.gov.uk/open-spaces-2/willhallmeadow>).

The Town Council plan to cut the site in the spring and late summer, this should ensure that the land is dry enough to get the vehicles onto the area and also avoids cutting back the ragwort which the Cinnabar Moth eats and lives on.

Cllr Hammond asked about the maintenance plan for the part of the meadow owned by Hopfield's Residents Association, Hayley explained that they only cut the estate grass and leave the wild areas close to the river.

It was agreed that the paths which were cut in the area worked well in 2025 and should be repeated as they allow access but preserve the habitat and will be added to the Management Plan.

The Management Plan is due to be reviewed and once completed will go to Full Council for approval.

125 Alton In Bloom

Hayley directed the Committee to the Town Council website where all the categories for the Alton In Bloom competition are listed, (<https://www.alton.gov.uk/alton-in-bloom/>). The criteria for the Gold Star awards for sustainability and environmentally friendly gardens are included.

The Alton In Bloom competition will be launched at the Spring Garden Fayre on Saturday 16th May, the sunflower seeds will be given to children at this event. A press release and marketing will be issues prior to the event to ensure it is well publicised.

Cllr Tansey asked that prizes for the Gold Star awards be confirmed and included in the publicity. The Committee recommended £15 book vouchers for the 11 categories the Gold Star relates to.

126 Update from EHDC

Pennie informed the Committee that the new Chief Executive, Dawn Adey, will take on the role subject to full council agreement on 23rd April. Dawn was previously at Winchester City Council and has a background in Climate Change.

As part of the Local Government Re-organisation, EHDC will fall into the Mid Hants Unitary Authority, it will include both the South Downs National Park and the New Forest.

Community Climate Action Fund (CCAF) – it is aimed that this will be launched in September 2026 with £129,000 available for projects. The criteria will be issued over the summer.

Air Quality Strategy – EHDC have developed an Air quality strategy, this is progressing through the decision making process to adoption.

Climate Action Dashboard – Quarterly updates published along with three green tips each month, these could include projects like the Alton in Bloom competition, the link to the dashboard is: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/climate/our-climate-dashboards>

127 ACAN Update

Rod informed the Committee that the final report on the Business Engagement Project should be available in May. Chris explained that she had been involved with an Energy Alton project 2 years ago which visited local small businesses. It was agreed that the reports from those visits should be included with the final business engagement project reports. Kevin agreed to send the reports to Rod.

128 Young ACAN Update

Scott updated the Committee on the School Eco Conference which was a huge success. This has been followed up with food days in schools to encourage the pupils to eat for the planet.

The next project is “nature on your doorstep”.

129 Energy Alton Update

Kevin informed the Committee that the Solar Farm Project at Caker Stream is on hold. The next meeting is planned for June. The objections are primarily about how the equipment is being taken onto the site.

Kevin is still looking to speak to Catriona about the Finnimore Pavilion and the possibility of having Energise South Downs install solar panels under the same criteria as Energique.

There have been changes to the law about installing solar panels which allows small units which plug directly into the mains to be used. These units are about £400 each and can save up to £100

from the energy bill each year. Energy Alton are investigating as an opportunity to support the energy poor with a proposal to contribute to the costs of the unit.

An Energy Survey has been completed on the Social Bowls building in the Public Gardens. The report has been sent to the Clerk. There are multiple areas where energy can be saved including the single glazed windows, un-insulated walls and roof, large void up to the roof, etc. There may be some funding opportunities to support some of the work which would allow the building to be used more and improve activity for their members throughout the year, socialising, combat loneliness and even hiring the building out.

130 **Active Travel Update**

Chris informed the Committee that two new signs have been requested from HCC for the Ridgeway and Gilbert White Way.

The launch of the website, cycle/walking map and safer cycling routes went very well; the police marked 37 bikes to ensure they can be identified if stolen. Sponsorship was given by local businesses to provide refreshments.

114 **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will therefore be on Friday 24th July 2026 in 16 Market Square at 9:30am to 11:30am.

Future meetings will be:

- Friday 23rd October 2026
- Friday 22nd January 2027
- Friday 30th April 2027

The Assistant to the Town Clerk agreed to send meeting invites to all.

The meeting closed at 11:33am.

Minutes signed as a true record of the meeting _____ 24.07.26

Ref.	Action	Person responsible	Date due
Finnimore	Speak with Energise South Downs to progress this solar panel project	Kevin Ray	24.07.26
Utilities	Consultant, Alan Williams, to audit and review action plan and carbon footprint data, if approved by Full Council.	Don	24.07.26
Allotments	Update on solar panels at Wooteys Allotments to be provided for July meeting	Wendy	24.07.26
Access to drinking water	Investigate stickers for businesses to inform residents and visitors that they can fill their water bottles	Wendy	24.07.26
Access to drinking water	Directional signs and a sign on the Fountain for drinking fountain for Public Gardens.	Wendy	24.07.26
Solar charging for Grounds EV	Meeting planned with TILE to look at possible solar and battery storage at the Barn in Jubilee, the Compound at the Public Gardens and the Enclosure at Anstey Park.	Wendy	24.07.26