

8 January 2015

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR TRANSPORT, PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENT

THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE EXCELLENCE'S LOCAL AUTHORITY ENERGY COLLABORATION (APSE ENERGY) AND THE COUNCIL'S CROSS-PARTY ENERGY GROUP

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide feedback on the work of APSE Energy, including recent events attended by members of this Committee, and to provide a brief update regarding the Council's newly established cross-party energy group. Also to seek agreement for attendance at future APSE Energy events, subject to the necessary internal approval process.

Information and Advice

2. Since its inception earlier this year, APSE Energy now has more than 40 local authority members committed to its vision of municipalisation of local energy services; a range of consultancy support available at preferential rates; and has staged a number of excellent free events on the energy investment opportunities available to local authorities. The Council has benefitted from some free advice and support provided through APSE Energy and from attendance at a number of APSE Energy events.
3. One of the recent APSE Energy events was a Local Leaders Forum on municipal energy, held at Leicester De Montfort University and attended by Councillors Creamer and Wilkinson, along with the Council's Energy and Carbon Team Manager. This event focused on the role of political leadership in driving and facilitating local sustainable energy programmes, and included presentations as follows:
 - Dr Richard Williams, University of Southampton and a leading light in establishing Southampton's district energy scheme and APSE Energy, spoke about the value of local leadership, with reference to Bernard Cribbins' Hole in the Ground as a metaphor for the importance of local vision and determination, mixed with a bit of healthy disrespect for Whitehall!
 - Dr Hugh Ellis, head of planning at the Town and Country Planning Association, spoke about the lessons we can learn, particularly around planning, from political leadership and sustainable energy initiatives in Europe, with examples such as Hamburg's energy hill, where a large landfill site has been turned from a liability into an income generating asset featuring wind and solar power, linked to social housing and an on-site educational facility.

- Case study presentations on Stockton on Tees' 'Go warm' fuel poverty project; Buckinghamshire County Council's countywide energy strategy; and Derbyshire County Council's work to identify and bring forward renewable energy opportunities on its own land.
4. Other APSE Energy events attended by officers and/or Members include:
- A joint seminar held with the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities Energy Partnership (LAEP) on transforming former industrial land for energy projects
 - An event supported by OVO Energy looking at community energy
 - An event supported by BG looking at social finance for solar energy.
- Presentations have proved to be interesting and informative and the opportunity to network with other authorities with similar ambitions has been much appreciated.
5. Closely associated to APSE Energy's national work supporting local authorities to explore and take up energy opportunities, Members of this Committee agreed to establish a cross-party energy group, following a report in June, membership of which is as follows:
- Coun Jim Creamer (Chair)
 Coun Pam Skelding
 Coun John Wilkinson
 Coun Steve Calvert
 Coun Stan Heptinstall
 Coun Richard Butler
 Coun Roger Jackson
- The group has now held 2 meetings, and these have included a presentation from Mark Bramah, Director, APSE Energy; updates from officers in exploring and implementing opportunities identified in the June energy opportunities report; and the initiation of work to assess Council land holdings and develop a 10 year energy strategy. It is proposed that more detailed feedback be brought to a future meeting of this Committee.

Attendance at APSE Energy events

6. Given the opportunities presented for learning by APSE Energy events, it is proposed that attendance should be offered across the membership of the cross-party energy group, with attendance approved for free to attend events, and places offered at the Chair's discretion.

Other Options Considered

7. None

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

8. The recommendations will enable members of all parties to gain benefit from the Council's membership of APSE Energy, which will assist in contributing to the work of the cross-party energy group. A report to a future meeting of this Committee, as set out in paragraph 5, will broaden engagement with the Council's energy initiatives and provide an opportunity to both report back and influence further activity.
9. APSE Energy events are usually promoted at relatively short notice and so at this point it is not possible to specify dates and venues. Therefore, a general approval from the Committee is sought so that use of the urgent approval process is not required in future.

Statutory and Policy Implications

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

11. None

Financial Implications

12. Attendance at APSE Energy events is free to officers and Members of Councils who have joined APSE Energy, such as Nottinghamshire County Council. It is proposed that approval is given for two Member places at relevant future APSE events. Travel costs will be covered from the relevant Democratic Services budget.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

13. None arising directly from this report, however the energy opportunities being explored through APSE Energy and the cross-party energy group are likely to have positive benefit through contributing to tackling greenhouse gas emissions, developing the local low carbon economy and supporting local communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That approval be given for attendance of two Members at future relevant APSE Energy events, with the travel costs covered from the relevant Democratic Services budget.
- 2) That attendance by Members at APSE Energy events be reviewed by the Environment and Sustainability Committee in one year's time.
- 3) That the work overseen by the newly established cross-party energy group be reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

Jas Hundal

Service Director, Transport, Property and Environment

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LM 18/12/14)

14. The Environment and Sustainability Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendation in the report.

Financial Comments (TMR 18/12/2014)

15. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 12.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All