



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

24TH JUNE 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP - THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY PROJECT 2021-22.

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION IN CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS (CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group, which met on the 14th June 2021, to consider a report on the Queen's Green Canopy Project 2021-22.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the content of the attached report (Appendix A) considered by the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group on the 14th June 2021; and
- 2.2 Note the observations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To acknowledge the work of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group and its recommendations.

4. THE CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

- 4.1 The Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group met on the 14th June 2021 to consider a report on the Queen's Green Canopy Project 2021-22.
- 4.2 To mark the platinum Jubilee in 2022, Her Majesty the Queen has recently launched the [Queen's Green Canopy \(QGC\)](#), to celebrate 70 years of service to the Nation. The campaign is focused on the role of trees and woodlands in enhancing our environment and includes elements of sustainable planting and the protection of ancient woodland and veteran trees.
- 4.3 As part of its work, the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group have considered various reports, which have outlined the opportunities available to

maximise carbon storage through the natural assets in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Furthermore, the Council's new LDP will provide opportunities to promote Green Infrastructure, in line with the Welsh Government planning guidance (PPW10) published in 2018.

- 4.4 The Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group were in support of the unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee and acknowledged that the Council's participation in the project would make a positive contribution to the Council's climate change priority.
- 4.5 Members of the Group spoke of the need for officers to work together with individuals and community groups to send a clear message that areas identified for tree planting are appropriate for future manageability and maintenance.
- 4.6 One Member spoke of the need to engage with communities on the potential benefits of different tree species, such as carbon sequestration levels, the ability to habitat future wildlife and the ability to provide food for people.
- 4.7 Members suggested the Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, which had been a subject of vast tree loss, be considered as an area of priority.
- 4.8 During previous discussions, the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group had noted that protecting the existing woodland, including ancient woodland, within RCT is a priority. It was felt that this approach should be maintained and for new planting in RCT is to focus on urban areas, where the greatest 'climate' benefits for local residents can be achieved, without threatening other important carbon storing and biodiverse habitats in the countryside.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the report.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications as a result of the recommendations set out within the report.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no welsh language implications arising from the report.

8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 Information relating to community engagement and the wider communication strategy of the QGC consultation is detailed within the attached report. A fundamental aspect of QGC, is public and community engagement to maximise participation in the project, to raise environmental awareness and the extent of tree planting achieved. It is proposed that the Council would establish engagement with residents and groups through use of the new engagement Tool- [Let's Talk RCTCBC](#) . This platform could be used to promote the tree planting locations identified from the work outlined in paragraph 4.5 and to encourage public participation in organised tree planting activities at these

locations. This will ensure the location of all green projects is managed and that they are compatible with the wider climate change objectives.

- 8.2 A wider communication strategy including use of social media networks would ensure broader awareness of QGC and encourage participation through the range of resources available on the QGC website and through the Partners to the Project. Communication approaches could specifically target Schools to promote the involvement of future generations in the Project.
- 8.3 Furthermore, Members of the Steering Group spoke of the intention to consult with the Community and Town Councils through a future meeting of the Community Liaison Committee.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 As detailed within the report, there may be financial implications from participation in the Queen's Green Canopy Project, which will be determined by the extent of involvement planned. In order to be sustainable and complimentary to the green infrastructure approach previously set out by the Council, any tree planting should comprise larger trees and species that are appropriate for each location, which may be more expensive than planting saplings.
- 9.2 Community Groups and Schools may be able to secure sapling trees free of charge from the Woodland Trust, which is a partner of the QGC Project. This approach can present increased, ongoing management and aftercare costs for the Council however while the trees become established and they have a higher risk of natural failure.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 10.1 Participation in the Project would build on the Nature's Assets proposals and would contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, in particular the goals linked to ensuring RCT is a sustainable County Borough.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group has set out an ambitious programme to enable the Council to make progress towards achieving the 2030 target.
- 11.2 On the 14th June 2021, the Steering Group met to consider a report on the Queen's Green Canopy Project 2021-22.
- 11.3 The Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group recommends Cabinet consider supporting the content of the above-mentioned report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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