

**Subject:** Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum

**Report to:** Environment Committee – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**Report by** Paula Boyce, Strategic Director

## **SUMMARY**

At Environment Committee (16 March 2022), Members resolved to recommend to Council the adoption of a Sustainability Strategy for the borough of Great Yarmouth and the development of an Action Plan; these will be tabled at Environment Committee and on to Council in July 2022.

At the same time, members agreed on 16 March 2022 to the establishment of a Sustainability Forum to enable the Council to work collaboratively with external stakeholders to support delivery of the Strategy and its developing Action Plan.

The Committee requested that the terms of reference for this Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum be brought back to the Environment Committee for approval. This report provides those Terms of Reference for members' consideration.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Members are asked to:**

- (a) Approve the Terms of Reference for a Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum.**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 A Sustainability Strategy for the borough of Great Yarmouth is being developed through a collaborative approach with Members and officers of the Council with input from local community and partner organisations and individuals across the Borough.
- 1.2 Initially over the next five years (2022 to 2027) it is proposed that the Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan will be a live document that will be reviewed annually and refreshed in milestone years over the next 13 years to 2035 i.e., 2027 to 2032 and 2032 to 2035.
- 1.3 The Sustainability Strategy provides a framework for action to address the three interconnected environmental challenges it sets out:

- **The Climate Challenge:** Globally the world faces increasing climate insecurity driven by an unprecedented rise in temperature and the release of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere.
- **The Nature Challenge:** In the last 50 years the UK has witnessed a dramatic loss in the diversity of species present in our natural areas. ‘Biodiversity’ is a measure of a natural systems resilience and the loss of biodiversity limits nature’s capacity to respond to change.
- **The Waste Challenge:** The health and quality of ecosystems is negatively affected by increasing levels of pollution; both from the release of chemicals and the mismanagement of physical waste.

1.4 The impacts of these three challenges affect life in Great Yarmouth directly and whilst the problems may have complicated causes, actions that are taken locally can become part of the solution, or at least avoid contributing to further damage.

1.5 Given that there are already many active people, local projects and initiatives within the borough of Great Yarmouth, where local people are tackling and addressing these challenges, it is proposed to reach-out to community groups and individuals working in this field to form a Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum.

## 2. GREAT YARMOUTH SUSTAINABILITY FORUM

2.1 The aim of the new Forum is to establish, where needed, support and grow a community-led network of people and community groups interested in supporting the local natural, environment, climate change, sustainability, waste prevention, circular economy and net zero.

2.2 The Forum offers a positive network where people can come together regularly, share ideas, provide feedback to the Borough Council and its partners organisations about sustainability projects and initiatives linked to the Great Yarmouth Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.

2.3 The Forum, chaired by the Chairperson of the Environment Committee and supported by officers, will meet twice per year, either virtually or in-person to facilitate the sharing of local project information. It can also consider best practice sustainability solutions in similar coastal areas and explore external funding opportunities.

2.4 Its purpose therefore is to develop opportunities to protect and enhance the human and natural environment of the borough of Great Yarmouth for the benefit of residents and communities. The Terms of Reference for the Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum can be found in Appendix 1 for members’ comments and consideration.

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Within existing resources, the Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum will be supported by the newly appointed Climate Change Officer commencing in autumn 2022.

## 4. LEGAL IMPLAICATIONS

- 4.1 In June 2019, the UK Government legislated the 2050 Net Zero target, following a recommendation from the Committee on Climate Change by amending the Climate Change Act 2008. Whilst local authorities find themselves in an ambiguous position as to their role in tackling climate change and where they fit into a coherent national picture, as they do not have a specific duty to deliver Net Zero, nor to report emissions reductions, they clearly have a leading role under this agenda.

## 5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum will bring together environmentally conscious community and neighbourhood organisations working across the borough to support delivery of the actions contained in the borough's Sustainability Strategy. In turn where the council can support the development of opportunities to protect and enhance the human and natural environment working with residents and communities.

## 6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	As part of ELT review.
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	As part of ELT review.
Existing Council Policies:	Corporate Plan Annual Action Plan Economic Growth Strategy Culture, Heritage & Tourism Strategy Locality Strategy Open Spaces Strategy Sustainability Strategy Carbon Reduction Plan
Financial Implications:	N/a
Legal Implications (including human rights):	N/a
Risk Implications:	N/a
Equality Issues/EQIA:	On file
Crime & Disorder:	N/a
Every Child Matters:	N/a

# Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum

## Terms of Reference



### Aim

To establish, support and grow a community-led network of people and community groups interested in supporting the local natural, environment, climate change, sustainability, waste prevention, circular economy and net zero.

The Forum will be a positive place with space to come together regularly, share ideas, provide feedback to the Borough Council and its partners organisations about sustainability projects and initiatives linked to the Great Yarmouth Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum will work to develop opportunities to protect and enhance the human and natural environment of the borough of Great Yarmouth for the benefit of residents and communities.

### **2. Key Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum will:
  - Support the delivery of Great Yarmouth's Sustainability Strategy Action Plan in relation to community-focused sustainability projects and initiatives which benefit the environment.
  - Raise awareness of environmental and sustainable development issues in partnership with the community, including capturing feedback and sharing updates across the communities to encourage more people to actively support participation in sustainable/green projects.
  - Disseminate key research, showcase best practice relating to sustainable development, carbon reduction, the circular economy and net zero, building links to support community projects across the borough of Great Yarmouth.
  - Create opportunities for increased partnership projects, investment and funding opportunities to benefit the borough of Great Yarmouth and its natural environment.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1 Membership and representation will be drawn from local environmental, sustainability, low carbon community groups and partner organisations. The Sustainability Forum will seek to develop and maintain appropriate links with other themed groups, including the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP) and Norfolk Waste Partnership (NWP), and other key sectors of interest to maximise engagement with the widest community base.
- 3.2 Partner bodies and representatives will be expected to participate fully in the development and delivery of the responsibilities of the Sustainability Forum.
- 3.3 Members of the Forum are expected to be respectful of each other's views so as to foster an inclusive and receptive environment where all individuals are welcome to seek help, foster ideas and exchange knowledge. Participants in the Forum will therefore:

- Encourage free sharing of knowledge.
  - Respect fellow members as human beings, along with the diversity of our members' backgrounds, perspectives, education, and experiences.
  - Be supportive of each other.
  - Be polite and friendly.
  - Be tolerant and considerate.
  - Act professionally, ethically and with integrity.
- 3.4 Any representative of the Sustainability Forum who has a personal financial interest, a business interest or any other direct or indirect private or personal interest in a matter under discussion should, as soon as it is practicable, declare that interest and take no part in the discussion of the matter.
- 3.5 Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum meetings may include the following personnel as required:
- Chair/Vice Chair of the Environment Committee
  - Strategic Director/Head of Environment & Sustainability
  - Climate Change Officer
  - Note-taker
- 3.6 Members of the Sustainability Forum may, from time to time, arrange for other individuals to attend meetings of the partnership in a supporting or advisory capacity with the approval of the Chair. Other officers or individuals may be invited to attend meetings to provide information or advice about specific matters, at the discretion of the Chair.

#### **4. Chair**

- 4.1 The Sustainability Forum will be chaired by the elected councillor nominated to chair the Borough Council's Environment Committee.
- 4.3 The responsibilities of the Chair are:
- To decide on the agenda of meetings.
  - To decide on matters of order, competency, relevance and conduct and keep meetings focussed on the agenda.
  - To ensure that a fair opportunity is given to all members of the Forum to express their views on any matter of business.
  - To preserve order during the meeting.
  - To determine any matters of procedure or protocol for which no provision is made in these standing orders.

#### **5. Meetings**

- 5.1 The Sustainability Forum will meet twice per year either in-person or virtually. Other meetings may be called, as required, by the Chair.
- 5.2 Membership, administration and secretariat will be supported by Great Yarmouth Borough Council.
- 5.3 The agenda of the Sustainability Forum will be prepared by the lead officer in consultation with the Chair. Members of the Forum will be invited to propose agenda items which are relevant to the Great Yarmouth Sustainability Strategy.

- 5.4 Meetings of the Great Yarmouth Sustainability Forum may be attended by the press and public, subject to adequate space being available and within health and safety guidelines. Members of the press or public may observe but not participate in meetings, unless by prior arrangement with the Chair in relation to an item on the agenda.