

CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date:	Tuesday, 9 April 2024
Title:	Future Meetings of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk

Background

At present the Committee meets virtually as an Advisory Committee for two meetings of every Council Committee cycle; the third meeting being the 'Full Planning' meeting which includes climate and environmental items, planning minutes and district planning decisions.

Current Situation

The above arrangement has been in place since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic and Members are asked to consider whether they would like to continue in this format. The only other alternative would be to hold all CB&P Committee meetings in-person. Legally, the meetings cannot all be virtual.

The current scheme has benefits as it limits the number of meetings both Members and Officers need to attend and provides flexibility, but virtual meetings may not operate as well or facilitate debate as in-person discussions can.

If Members recommend in-person meetings, the change will take effect from the start of the new municipal year on 15th May 2024.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- Virtual meetings do enable members of the public to attend, some of whom may not be able to for varying reasons.

Financial implications

- There are staff resourcing implications if in-person meetings were to be held.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Which format future CB&P Committee meetings should take from May 2024.