

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Climate Change and Ecology Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Monday 2 February 2026

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Nicole Trehy (Chair) Nikos Souslous, and Liam Downer-Sanderson

Other Councillors: Councillors Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Ecology) and Councillor Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform)

Officers: Bram Kainth (Executive Director of Place), Hinesh Mehta (Assistant Director Climate Change), Will Noton (Head of Development), John Galsworthy (Director of Climate Change and Transport), Lubab Labab (Head of Partnership Investment and Assurance), Kellie Gooch (Head of Finance -Place) and James Newman (Assistant Director - Finance)

7 members of the public in attendance

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Callum Nimmo and Omid Miri

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. **OVERVIEW OF H&F'S DIRECT DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECOLOGY STRATEGY**

Will Noton (Head of Development) gave a presentation on how the Council's development programme responded to the Climate, Ecology and Energy challenge. He showed slides that highlighted the following key aspects:

- The vision and context of the design strategy which focused on energy efficiency, passive design and biodiversity.
- All projects were being delivered to enhance sustainability standards.
- The importance of Energy, Climate and Ecology considerations in housing.
- The Council's Commitment to carbon neutrality – including air source heat pumps and solar PV integration
- Measurable sustainability outcomes with three 3 Passivhaus schemes under construction
- A case study of Hartopp and Lannoy – delivering 100% affordable Passivhaus homes.
- Resident benefits and aftercare to ensure homes performed effectively post-handover
- Legacy and Future Outlook – expanding Passivhaus adoption and circular economy practices.

The Chair thanked Will Noton for his clear and engaging presentation and asked for further clarification on financial costs. Will Noton explained that there were 10 live projects delivering around 750 new homes, and all schemes were being self-financed through a combination of S106 contributions, GLA funding, grants. There would also be an element of borrowing which would be paid off through rental income. He stressed that all projects must remain viable and not place pressure on other Council services.

The Chair asked whether delivering homes to such high "green" standards created significantly higher costs or whether these were offset by grants. Will Noton confirmed that the costs were higher, but the team was ensuring schemes remained financially viable and did not impact other services. Despite the increased sustainability requirements, the programme was still managing to self-finance.

The Chair asked whether rainwater was being considered as part of the development design. Will Noton explained that rainwater harvesting was included in schemes where it was feasible to do so. He added that he would seek further information from the consultants on its application across current projects and report back to the Committee.

Action: Will Noton

Councillor Nikos Souslous asked for further clarification on how the developments would interact with district heating networks. Will Noton explained that officers planned to work with the design team to ensure each development was fully self-sufficient and able to operate without reliance on a district heating network. However, he confirmed that schemes would be future-proofed so they could connect to a district heating network if required in the future.

Councillor Nikos Souslous asked how transport and cycling infrastructure, as well as the impact on highways, would be addressed within the developments. Will Noton explained that all Council developments were car-free, with parking provided only for Blue Badge holders. He noted that the Council aimed to provide additional cycle parking for each scheme to encourage sustainable travel. He added that highways impact assessments would be undertaken as part of the Planning process. In addition, most of the developments would not be eligible for parking permits to support a low carbon approach.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Ecology) added that the Council had an Active Travel Working Group, which was looking at all aspects of sustainable transport and how these considerations would be integrated into the wider transport strategy.

Councillor Liam Downer-Sanderson asked for an approximate figure for the additional investment required to deliver all the sustainable elements, and how much would come from Council funding versus central government grants. Will Noton explained that there was an approximately 5–10% uplift in construction costs to achieve the sustainability standards outlined. He noted that most of this uplift was funded through affordable housing grants, Right to Buy schemes and some Section 106 contributions.

The Chair noted that residents living in these developments would benefit from significantly reduced energy bills, which was a major advantage in terms of affordability. She asked whether the Council was planning to deliver similar benefits across the borough so that more residents could benefit. Councillor Wesley Harcourt explained that the Council had a retrofit strategy in place, with 516 properties across the borough currently undergoing retrofit works. He added that this programme would be expanded across the wider Council housing stock, and that the Council was also working separately with private housing to support improvements wherever possible.

Councillor Nikos Souslous asked about the White City Central development, seeking more information on the scheme and its sustainability features. Will Noton explained that the project aligned closely with the sustainability approach outlined in the presentation. The scheme included 253 new homes, along with a new primary school and community centre, for which the Council already had planning consent. He confirmed that the development aimed to incorporate as many green initiatives as possible and would be built to Passivhaus standards, although it would not be fully Passivhaus-certified, which was the main difference.

Resident Questions

A resident asked whether an additional PAC meeting could be scheduled in the lead up to 2030, given the Council's commitment to achieving its net-zero target by that year. He asked how actions arising from meetings could be tracked by residents and councillors in a timely manner. He also requested an update on the progress of the Transport Strategy and the review of School Streets.

The Chair explained that scheduling an additional PAC meeting was constrained by the Council's meeting calendar and the volume of existing committee meetings, making it challenging to add further dates. She noted that regular discussions on the PAC work programme took place with Cabinet Members and officers, focusing on when items were sufficiently developed to return to the Committee. The Chair confirmed that both the Transport Strategy and the School Streets review would come back to at a future meeting once fully formulated.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt added that he received regular reports and updates through his Cabinet Member Briefing sessions and would discuss with officers how these updates could be shared more effectively with residents and how reporting could be improved.

Action: John Galsworthy/Hinesh Mehta

A resident commented that it was encouraging to see the work the Council was doing on its own developments and praised the reopening of Hammersmith Bridge to cyclists, noting it was a positive step for active travel and felt that it should remain car free. He then asked about private developments, and how stringent the Council was when assessing major Planning applications and whether private developers were being held to the same sustainability standards, including Passivhaus principles. Councillor Nikos Souslous responded that, as Chair of the Planning Committee, green and sustainable design considerations were discussed regularly. He noted that officers consistently worked to maximise environmental standards and ensured developers incorporated as much passive and sustainable design as possible.

Hinesh Mehta (Assistant Director Climate Change) outlined the Planning policy framework under which applications were assessed. He explained that developers needed to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, GLA guidance, and the Council's Local Plan, all of which included detailed environmental and sustainability requirements. These standards must be addressed within proposals and were considered through the Planning Committee process.

The Chair added that, in her experience as a member on the Planning Committee, many developments now voluntarily included solar panels, air-source heat pumps, and other green technologies, and she felt that larger schemes were often leading the way nationally in adopting these measures.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt noted that during his many years on the Planning Committee, issues relating to sustainability and carbon emissions were discussed in depth and remained an important part of evaluating Planning applications.

The resident expressed concern that they had not seen many green or sustainable features being incorporated into the Shepherd's Bush Market development and requested further reassurance that environmental considerations were being applied to this scheme. The Chair requested for officers to feedback further information on the sustainability measures included within this development.

Action: Will Noton

A resident asked what percentage of Council properties would be retrofitted by 2030. Councillor Wesley Harcourt explained that the Council had approximately 17,000 properties, of which around 14,000 were rented and the remainder were leasehold. He noted that the Council was progressing the retrofit programme as quickly as possible, but it was currently difficult to provide a precise estimate of how many homes would be retrofitted by 2030. He reassured the Committee that housing remained a central part of the Council's net-zero target.

The resident asked a follow-up question regarding the transparency of reporting and timelines, so progress could be measured more clearly. Hinesh Mehta explained that some elements of the Council's climate work carried statutory reporting duties, and the Council had internal processes in place to track progress against climate targets. He noted that the Council published an annual climate report, with the latest edition due next month. He also highlighted that the Council Tax booklet, published each March, also included information on the borough's progress against its climate commitments.

A resident asked for an update on the Council's Green Investment Fund and how the Council planned to invest the money. Councillor Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform) explained that the fund would be used to support a programme of capital projects designed to deliver environmental improvements across the borough. He noted that the money was required to be spent within two years of being raised, and the Council was working to ensure investment was allocated within that timeframe. He also confirmed that the Council would explore additional ways to share updates with residents and highlight the positive work being delivered through the fund.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the report and the contents of the accompanying presentation.

5. 2026/27 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS)

Corporate Budget

Councillor Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform) introduced the item and gave a presentation that detailed the proposals for the 2026/27 budget. He showed slides which highlighted the following:

- Strategic context – including the Chancellor's Budget Statement and changing demographics within the borough
- The fair funding review was now a three-year settlement and there were expected to be budgetary pressures due to this in 2027/28
- The revenue budget strategy was to ensure a sustainable, legal and balanced budget
- The budget was set to set aside money for pay inflation (2.5%), price inflation (3.2%) and essential pressures

Departmental Budget

Kellie Gooch, (Head of Finance, Place) gave a presentation on the department's revenue budget 2026/27. This covered the department's recent achievements, relevant to this Committee as follows:

- A-rating from the Carbon Disclosure Project for transparent and bold climate action and commitment.
- Highest concentration of electric vehicle charging points in UK and largest concentration of air quality monitors in Europe
- Recognised by UK Divest as amongst the most successful local authority Pension Funds in divesting from fossil fuels
- Promoting active travel - creating a legacy of cycle trained young people, delivering Bikeability for families and green local deliveries through 'Parcels Not Pollution' cargo bike scheme
- Launched the H&F Green investment scheme – targeting £5m of funding.

Additionally, the team was focussed on securing external funding, both within the Place Department and across the Council, to maximise Climate Action at the least cost to the Council. Since 2021 the team had successfully brought in approximately £19m of external funding, enabling the delivery of climate projects with a total value of approximately £34m (£15m match funding). The team was also investing £30m+ in green capital projects, transport schemes and emission reduction schemes

The Chair requested further information on how commercial income was recorded within the Council's budget. Councillor Rowan Ree explained that commercial income was treated as a saving because it represented money the Council did not need to spend. This income was therefore accounted for as a reduction in the amount the Council must find in savings elsewhere in the budget.

The Chair said that she was pleased to hear that funding was being used for tree planting and paving, as well as for refurbishing and modernising Council-owned homes.

Councillor Nikos Souslous asked for an update on the work being undertaken to roll out electric vehicle charging across the borough. He also queried whether there were opportunities to introduce turbo charging facilities more widely. Hinesh Mehta (Assistant Director Climate Change) explained that, following a recent national government announcement, residents without access to off-street parking would now be permitted to plug their electric vehicles into chargers at home using cross pavement solutions. He noted that the associated grant funding was a limited national pot available to all local authorities. The Council had applied for this funding and was expected to be successful. Officers were currently reviewing how the scheme could be implemented within the borough, including the identification of potential trial sites ahead of any wider roll-out.

Councillor Nikos Souslous requested further clarification on the plans for rolling out additional cycle hangers across the borough. Hinesh Mehta explained that officers were progressing a substantial programme to install new cycle hangers. These were secure, lockable, "breadbin-style" cycle-parking units. He noted that there was significant resident demand for these facilities, and the Council was working to meet

that demand as far as possible. Funding for the programme had already been secured. The main limiting factor was now the speed at which manufacturers could supply the units. Once deliveries began, the wider roll-out would proceed.

Councillor Liam Downer-Sanderson asked for further clarification on how the Council increased its commercial income. Councillor Rowan Ree explained that the majority of the Council's commercial income was generated from advertising sites, and that the Council had consistently over-performed against expected returns in this area. Kellie Gooch added that the Council was exploring new schemes aimed at reducing reliance on the core council budget. This included income generating initiatives within Highways, as well as seeking external funding that could be ring-fenced and reinvested directly into Highways services rather than drawing on the Council's own resources. She noted that the intention was to expand and implement these approaches going forward.

Councillor Liam Downer-Sanderson asked a further question regarding the projected budget shortfall for 2026/27 and how this compared to the savings identified. Councillor Rowan Ree explained that the Council was currently expecting to set a balanced budget for 2026/27. He highlighted that the slide titled "*Savings Proposals 2026/27*" in the presentation outlined the additional savings required for that year and demonstrated how these savings would contribute to achieving a balanced budget position.

Councillor Liam Downer-Sanderson asked whether it remained the Council's intention to reopen Hammersmith Bridge to motorised traffic and what the next steps were to progress this. Councillor Rowan Ree explained that reopening the bridge to motorised traffic was still part of the Council's plan. He explained that a business plan had been prepared to outline how the Council would fund its share of the required bridge improvement works. This plan had been submitted to the Government, and the Council was currently awaiting a decision from the Department for Transport (DfT)

Resident Questions

A resident commented that one of the major successes of the Council had been keeping Hammersmith Bridge closed to motorised traffic, which she felt had improved air quality in the borough and encouraged active travel across the bridge without traffic fumes. She also highlighted the proposed electric pod scheme as a positive alternative travel option. She questioned why the Council was not more openly recognising these outcomes as significant achievements for Hammersmith & Fulham. Councillor Rowan Ree responded that these achievements should indeed be recognised, noting that the Council had invested in improvements to the bridge that support and encourage active travel.

The same resident said she was pleased to hear about many of the positive initiatives undertaken by the Council. However, she felt that some schemes such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), electric vehicle charging, and the food-waste collection rollout needed to progress more quickly for the Council to meet its target of net-zero by 2030. The Chair acknowledged these points and said officers would explore ways to provide clearer reporting back to residents on progress against

targets. She noted that, although progress may at times feel slow, the Council was moving in the right direction, even if improvements were being made incrementally.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Ecology) added that improvements to Hammersmith Bridge, including measures to enhance segregation for users, were recognised successes. However, he noted that the Council had a legal requirement to work towards reopening the bridge to motorised vehicles.

A resident requested that a report be brought to a future PAC meeting setting out the progress made against all goals adopted from the Climate Commission's programme, including the expected timelines for delivery of each goal.

Action: Hinesh Mehta

A resident asked if there was a possibility to combine and offer a borough-based app that could bring together parking information and crucial services (such as defibrillators and EpiPens) all in one place. John Galsworthy (Director of Climate Change and Transport) explained that officers could explore this idea, however, delivering such an app was more challenging than the Council would like due to various technology constraints. He noted that, to some extent, Google Maps already offered similar functionality through users overlaying their own data.

A resident asked if there was any financial or budgetary allocation for reopening Hammersmith Bridge to motorists. Councillor Rowan Ree explained that the Council had an obligation to reopen Hammersmith Bridge to motor traffic. Funding was available within the capital budget for bridge maintenance and preparatory work for the wider renovation. He added that there was an agreement for TfL, the Mayor of London, and the Council to each contribute one third of the total cost. The Council was currently waiting for these contributions before progressing further with the proposal.

A resident asked a series of questions. He asked whether the budget was set to meet the net-zero target by 2030. He also requested further clarification on the £120k allocation, which he felt was too small for climate-related work. In addition, he requested details on carbon offsetting, as well as the timelines and funding arrangements for the Community Climate Action Fund. Councillor Rowan Ree explained that the budget had been designed to support the borough's progress towards achieving the 2030 net-zero target. He highlighted that there was £30 million of capital expenditure dedicated to climate-related initiatives, demonstrating the Council's ongoing commitment in this area. He further clarified that the £120k reference was part of the revenue budget, and that most of the climate-related spending was held within the capital budget.

James Newman (Assistant Director - Finance) added that matters relating to carbon offsetting would fall under capital expenditure. He noted that this was covered in a separate report, which would be available as part of the Cabinet agenda for the meeting on 9th February. He confirmed that the carbon offset fund would be included within the Section 106 framework.

Hinesh Mehta (Assistant Director for Climate Change) noted that he would circulate further information regarding the Community Climate Action Fund to the Committee outside of the meeting.

Action: Hinesh Mehta

A resident asked whether there would be an opportunity for a discussion on Hammersmith Bridge and which Committee would consider it. The Chair advised that the most suitable Committee for this matter would be the Economy, Arts, Sports and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee. Councillor Rowan Ree added that this could be explored with the Committee Chair for potential inclusion in the Committee's future work programme.

Action: Amrita White/Charles Francis

RESOLVED:

1. That the Policy and Accountability Committee considered the budget proposals and makes recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.
2. That the Committee considered the proposed changes to fees and charges and makes recommendations as appropriate.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair requested that any suggestions for future agenda items to submitted to her directly.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair noted that the April meeting was likely to be cancelled, and that the next scheduled meeting would take place on 30 June.

Meeting started: 7pm
Meeting ended: 9pm

Chair

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