

## Wycombe Friends of the Earth - Minutes

For Zoom meeting on Wednesday 3rd February 2021 at 7.30pm:

**Present online:** 17

**Apologies:** 5

### 1. Ecotip and Finance

WFoE is £488 in credit and 4 membership fees were received.

The food waste January ecotip will continue for February also. Weight watchers to save the planet will be added to the Ecotip - 'Eat less, swap your transport to walking and cycling more to lose weight and help the planet' .

### 2. Officer recruitment

Two members have offered to take on the role of treasurer. One will take it on. The current treasurer will continue until the end of the financial year (early April) and do the end of year report, after which the new treasurer will take over.

### 3. Climate and biodiversity campaigns

- BCAA action

> A useful meeting was held last night to discuss the forthcoming council elections in May. Discussions revolved around how to put the climate emergency on the agenda, trying to get councillors to pledge to the emergency and how best to approach it. Subsequent discussions in BCAA included drafting wording for the pledge. The date for reaching zero emissions is up for debate.

> Some WFOE members and BCAA members wrote to councillors about their budget for the climate emergency. Replies mentioned a cabinet meeting on 16th Feb which is significant because the climate strategy will be tabled and fully costed. It is also likely to include mention of the budget for next year and a report about the budget being more transparent to take account of the climate emergency. It is not certain if there will be a public consultation on their climate strategy. Next meeting will be 22nd February.

- Divestment

The Coordinator is taking this on, on behalf of BCAA. This relates to the Council's pension investments. Members wrote to the Council about divestment and some replies were received. A member added that the next round of divestment letters could refer to Mark Carney who said that people should write to banks etc. to encourage divestment.

- Community boards and Bucks County Council

> Not yet sure if council elections will take place this year.

At the January meeting the HW Community Board, Environment and Climate Change subgroup agreed to set up a working team under 'WE' (Wycombe Environment) to see if patches of land can be found to increase biodiversity, for instance. Next meeting 10th Feb.

> The coordaintor is on the High Wycombe and the Beaconsfield community Boards. Beaconsfield CB has agreed to set up a climate and biodiversity subgroup. Funding is uncertain at present although some funding is available for local priorities with a level of public engagement.

> A member is on the NW Chiltern Community Board. They are getting funding for 2 projects in Princes Risborough - e-scooters, and publicly accessible charging points for electric cars.

- 5G

Is it going to be dangerous for biodiversity? Will transmitters be numerous and more closely spaced? Not sure what the detriment would be and it includes conspiracy theories. In the absence of the member who raised the question and any certain facts, this was deferred.

#### **4. Forthcoming events**

A member mentioned that the Climate Coalition is reporting on Friday on how climate change is impacting health. Will be previewed tomorrow. She will circulate details to access the report.

#### **5. AOB**

- Members are requested to sign Chris Packham's anti HS2 petition. There is chance of it being shelved as the government will have a massive deficit due to Covid.
- A member has made contact with Trevor Snaith about a chat re the Food Hub, possibly at our March meeting. Trevor will consult his board and get back to him.
- Genetic Engineering consultation. The paper is in two parts and is a brief consultation so **members** are encouraged to take a look at it. Deadline is mid March. It was thought that although there could be benefits, there should be a regulatory framework. For instance, GM crops do not always produce seeds so the next season's seeds have to be purchased from profit making companies who can control the market.
- Two new members will be added to the WFoE google group.

**6. Meeting ended** at 20.40. The next Zoom meeting will be on 3rd March 2021.