



Congleton Town Council

Title	Environment Committee
Date of Meeting Time	2 nd April 2026 7 pm
Status	Draft Minutes – to be ratified at the next Committee meeting
Reference Documents	Agenda Papers for Environment - 2nd April 2026

Attendance

Committee Members	Cllr Suzy Firkin (Chair and Deputy Mayor) Cllr Heather Pearce (Vice Chair) Cllr Heather Seddon Cllr Glen Williams
Ex Officio	Cllr Robert Brittain (Mayor)
Non-Committee Members	Cllr Robert Douglas, Cllr Kay Wesley
Officers	David McGifford (Chief Officer) Doug Christie
Members of the Press	0
Members of the Public	1

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr David Brown Sally Ann Holland and Cllr Susan Mead

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

ENV/38/2526 resolved to approve and sign the Environment Committee minutes held on 5th February 2026 as a correct record.

3. Declaration of Interest

Declarations were received by Cllr Heather Seddon on matters relating to Cheshire East Council

4. Outstanding Actions

None

5. Questions from Members of the Public

Question from Barry Speed were received in advance (see appendix 1 for questions and responses)

6. Urgent Items

No urgent items

7. Congleton In Bloom Working Group

A verbal update was provided by Cllr Glen Williams

8. Streetscape Management Accounts

ENV/39/2526 resolved to receive the Streetscape Management account report.

9. Streetscape Update

ENV/40/2526 resolved to receive the report relating to the Streetscape Services.

10. Carbon Footprint Summary

ENV/41/2526 resolved to receive the report regarding the Town Council's Carbon Footprint.

11. Decarbonisation Update

ENV/42/2526 resolved to receive the report and update on the decarbonisation of the Town Hall.

12. Mobile Waste Service – Congleton

Cllr Seddon advised the committee that the mobile waste collection is currently on hold until the relevant licenses are resolved on other sites.

Committee requested that Cllr Seddon encouraged the opening of the Congleton site whilst other licenses are being resolved

13. Resolution to Exclude Public and Press from Item 14

ENV/43/2526 resolved to passing a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that public and press be excluded from the meeting due to commercial sensitivities.

14. Streetscape Private Works

ENV/44/2526 resolved to receive the update on the progression of private works

**Cllr Suzy Firkin
(Chair)**

Answers to Questions Submitted by Barry Speed – Phase 2

Q6. Carbon footprint. I notice that the figure for last year (24-25) was 154,959 kg CO₂eq, very similar to the figure back in 2019-20. It would appear that significant reduction has not been achieved. I would also note that the figures exclude the embedded carbon of bought-in items or services. Can the Council provide a detailed action plan for achieving the new target date of 2030 for carbon neutrality (moved from 2025). Is the Council considering outsourcing all its activities to a third-party, which would of course reduce the carbon footprint to zero at a stroke?

The council's progress on the carbon footprint in 2024/25 was obscured due to complications with the Green Tariff for our energy usage. The carbon footprint for 2025/26 is estimated to be approx 118 tonnes. This shows a significant decrease from the 155 tonnes in 2019.

This has been achieved by improved thermal efficiencies and use of green tariff electricity. The decrease is against a backdrop of increased building occupancy and increased scope of work for the Council. To your point on 'outsourcing' to reduce our footprint, it is infact the opposite that we are experiencing with the need to bring more services in house.

We will continue to make changes to the town hall and other council assets to drive down their carbon footprint and utilities costs. In parallel, we are also working to create the right commercial framework for our Streetscape work which will allow us to transition to electric vehicles, thus minimising our carbon footprint for our street and landscape team. This is dealt with in more detail in the Decarbonisation Update report.

Q7. Even if carbon emissions are reduced to a minimum, there will always be a need for some form of offsetting, to remove any residual element. Can the Council give an update on what offsetting scheme(s) are being considered, and whether any financial provision is currently in the accounts.

You are correct, that there will be a requirement to offset any remaining carbon footprint. We have a budget set aside to carry out ecology studies on local peats soils to investigate the potential for a peat soil restoration project.

Q8. It is noted that the Streetscape Climate Emergency action plan appears not to have been updated since January 2024. Can the Council please provide an update.

The new Streetscape Development Manager will be reviewing the plan and reporting back in due course.

Q9. It is understood that a previously proposed Town Hall decarbonisation plan has now been abandoned. Can the Council please provide a replacement plan.

The Decarbonisation Update paper covers this item.

Q10. Tree maintenance. It is understood that Streetscape staff undertake the maintenance of the circa 30,000 trees that were planted by the Tree Group. Can the status of these trees be included (from time to time) in the Streetscape report?

It's a good idea, we will look at a meaningful way to provide an update.