

## **CABINET**

**9 JULY 2019**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Howard Doe, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive

Author: Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director, Front Line Services

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this report is to set out how the Council proposes to deal with the 'Climate Change Emergency Motion' which has been declared by Full Council on 25 April 2019.

A Climate Change workshop will establish baseline data, key actions and themes which need to be developed, measurable outcomes, resources/funding requirements, identify potential risks and set out an indicative timeline.

A cross-cutting action plan will then be developed which will see short, medium and long term outputs outlined to achieve measurable change throughout Medway.

Members are asked to agree the approach, including the establishment of the Climate Change Member Advisory Group, which has been set out in this report for tackling climate change.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 The Council does not have a statutory duty to reduce emissions in line with the Climate Change Act 2008 or to develop plans. However, climate change would feature under the Council Plan 2016/17- 2020/21 which has the following priority 'Medway a place to be proud of' one of the key outcomes is a 'clean and green environment'.
- 1.2 In addition to the motion agreed at Full Council on 25 April 2019, the Council has also signed up to the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (Appendix A) which is out for consultation between July-October 2019, which has a strong climate change theme. This will be a key document in Medway's future climate change action plan.

1.3 The Cabinet authorised the signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change on 18 July 2006.

## **2. Background**

2.1 On 8 October 2018, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report on the state of climate science. They warned that if the planet warmed by 1.5 °C there would be devastating consequences, such as the loss of most coral reefs and increased extreme weather such as heatwaves and floods. The report found that global emissions of carbon dioxide are projected to be 52-58 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030. Annual emissions need to be about half that (25-30 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr. on average) by 2030 to limit warming to 1.5°C.

2.2 In November 2018, major cities Bristol and Manchester both passed motions that declared a 'climate emergency' and set ambitious targets aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030 and 2038 respectively. Their decisions have since been echoed by councils across the country, with close to 90 councils passing climate emergency motions so far.

2.3 On 25 April 2019 a Climate Emergency Motion (Appendix B) was unanimously agreed by Full Council (minute no. 1038D/2019 refers). In summary, the Council noted that current targets are inadequate to respond to the challenge of keeping global temperature rises below 1.5 °C and requested:

- Cabinet establish a Medway Climate Change Working Group to respond to this challenge, which meets in public and includes representation from all party groups, in order to create a clear action plan for Medway;
- Cabinet set more ambitious targets for Medway to become carbon neutral;
- The Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer stating the concern of the Council with respect to the above, the likely national impact on the economy and on the wellbeing of citizens, and requesting government funding be made available to implement swift appropriate actions in response.

2.4 The Chief Executive wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 10 May 2019 as requested by the Council. However, no response from the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been forthcoming at the time of writing this report.

2.5 On 1 May 2019, the UK Parliament followed the lead of these local councils, unanimously approving a non-binding motion to declare a climate emergency and calling on the government to increase its ambition to adopt more ambitious targets for reaching net zero emissions.

2.6 This report sets out what the Council plans to do in relation to climate change and how this is going to be achieved over the next 4 year period.

### **3. Approach**

#### 3.1 What is a climate change emergency?

3.1.1 Declaring a Climate Change Emergency acknowledges that Medway Council recognises the need to put resources in place to reduce carbon emissions. Targets will be set which aim to make Medway carbon neutral within an appropriate timescale. An action plan is to be written to implement any appropriate policies, schemes and projects which aim to reduce greenhouse gases within Medway.

#### 3.2 What does the Council want to achieve?

- The Council wants to reduce its carbon footprint and provide the local community with a clean, green future and be a place people want to work and live, which has a sustainable future.
- The Council has an aspiration to be recognised as a City of Culture in 2025; working towards reducing the Council's carbon footprint will help support this aspiration.
- The Council needs a clear action plan to deal with climate change which sets out an achievable and clear timeline.
- The Council has an aspiration to become a beacon for excellence in reducing climate change, developing a commercial offer to other authorities and bodies struggling to achieve their own and national targets.

#### 3.3 How are we going to achieve this?

3.3.1 A workshop will take place on 1 July 2019 for officers from across the Council from a number of different disciplines. This is a starting point, but will help officers scope out the wider piece of work.

#### 3.3.2 The aim of the workshop will be to establish the following:

- Baseline data (collate the work which is already being undertaken by the Council)
- Key actions and themes to be developed
- Measurable outcomes
- Resources/funding requirements
- Identify potential risks, and issues which could affect outcomes
- Indicative timelines
- Stakeholders
- Communications and marketing
- Governance.

3.4 A cross-cutting action plan will be developed which will see short, medium and long term outcomes outlined to achieve measurable change throughout Medway. The action plan will cover a 4 year period and will include measurable targets which will be reported on regularly to the Member Advisory Group and the Officer Steering Group.

### 3.5 Stakeholders

- 3.5.1 Key stakeholders will be identified to take part in and to consult with on this project. There is a strong emphasis on involving young people especially. The workshop will identify how we can look to do this but initial thinking is to approach the Medway Youth Council, Mid Kent College and the local Universities for their support.
- 3.5.2 The joint working with KCC will be maintained and built upon to progress joint actions and outcomes. Councillor Doe sits on the Energy and Low Emissions Champion Group. Officers are sitting on the various officer groups to progress the objectives in the Strategy.

### 3.6 Project Management

- 3.6.1 The outcomes will be managed via a project plan and project management from within RCET. This will be monitored by the Director via the Officer Steering Group on a monthly basis.

### 3.7 Governance

- 3.7.1 It is proposed that a cross-party Member Advisory Group be established which will be chaired by Councillor Howard Doe. The Group will be established as a Cabinet Advisory Group on a 6:3 basis and the membership and terms of reference are set out in Appendix D. This Group will meet quarterly to set direction and monitor success.
- 3.7.2 In addition, an Officer Steering Group will be established to ensure that the Action Plan is produced with relevant measures in and that these measures are progressed and reported on. Membership will include the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director, Front Line Services and Director of Public Health.

### 3.8 Timeline

Action	Date
Climate Change Workshop	1 July 2019
Officer Steering Group Meeting Chair – Ruth Dulieu Richard Hicks James Williams (Public Health) Other officers to be agreed	August 2019
Member Advisory Group Meeting	September 2019
Officer Steering Group Meeting	September 2019
Officer Steering Group Meeting	October 2019
Officer Steering Group Meeting	November 2019
Member Advisory Group Meeting	December 2019
Officer Steering Group Meeting	December 2019
Officer Steering Group Meeting	January 2020
Member Advisory Group Meeting	March 2020
Officer Steering Group Meeting	March 2020

Officer Steering Group Meeting	May 2020
Member Advisory Group Meeting	June 2020
Officer Steering Group Meeting	July 2020
Overview and Scrutiny	July/August 2020
Cabinet	July/August 2020

## 4. Options

4.1 As referred to above, the workshop in early July will help officers establish both the current situation and set out the ideas for action that will move Medway into a better position and allow us to play our part in reducing the factors which are leading to climate change in the world. However, to inform the initial work there is some key baseline data and detail of work that is underway that can be shared at this stage:

- Medway Council's Business Intelligence Team already holds baseline data for carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) transport emissions, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per person, which show a steady reduction in emissions from 2005 (Appendix C). Strategies can be identified to increase our knowledge and understanding of the data.
- Medway Council has identified four areas where pollution from vehicles exceeds regulation levels. Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) have been declared and an air quality action plan was approved by Cabinet in 2015. Since then, Medway Council has been working with local communities to promote a reduction in personal vehicle use and push stakeholders to more sustainable transport solutions, among other plans to reduce emissions. Strategies are already in place to encourage a reduction in vehicle emissions.
- From the air quality action plan, a communications strategy was launched by the Environmental Protection Team and Public Health in June 2018 which described communication activities aimed to increase awareness of the health impacts of air pollution and outlined tangible actions that stakeholders can take to protect themselves.
- The Environmental Protection Team commissioned a Council-wide Fleet Review by the Energy Savings Trust. This is due to be presented to RCET divisional management team on 1 August 2019.
- LED streetlights are being installed across parts of Medway with plans being drawn up to extend the programme across the authority over the coming years. LEDs are more energy efficient than existing streetlights, helping to reduce Medway Council's carbon footprint. This is in addition to ongoing works to reduce the energy consumption of Medway Council's estate.
- A reduction in building space required by officers within Medway Council has been achieved through new portable ICT systems and 'hot desking'.

4.2. Medway Council is a major contributor to the development of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (Appendix A), a sub-strategy to the Kent Environment Strategy. Its purpose is to identify strategies and actions

that eliminate poor air quality, reduce fuel poverty and deliver a secure, clean and affordable energy supply. This is currently in its draft form and is out for consultation between July-October 2019. This Strategy will assist the Council's work on climate change. The strategy will also allow Medway to investigate the possibility of cross-boundary working with KCC and Maidstone Borough Council who have also declared 'Climate Change Emergencies'.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1 Details of an officer workshop are set out in paragraph 3.3 above. The Member Advisory Group will consult on issues and actions as appropriate.
- 5.2 The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy is subject to consultation as set out in paragraph 4.2 above.

## 6. Risk management

- 6.1 Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Reputational Risk	The reputational risk to the Council if it does not act now that a 'Climate Change Emergency' has been declared is high	Produce an Action Plan.  Member Advisory Group  Officer Steering Group	B2

## 7. Financial implications

- 7.1 While the actions set out at paragraph 4.1 are being delivered within existing budgets, further action is likely to require additional budget. Some of the possible funding streams are listed below, some of which are already being utilised by the Council and others which will require further investigation:
- HIF bid – this ambitious bid will realise Medway's aspiration to create a 'rural town' on the peninsula and will be used in part to promote sustainable growth and transport systems.
  - Energy Savings Trust Fleet Review – Medway's Fleet Review, which was conducted by the Energy Savings Trust, was funded through a successful application from the Environmental Protection team.
  - Office for Low Emission Vehicles – Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points – funding is available but Medway would have to provide part of the funding.

- Access Fund Phase 2 (in partnership with KCC) – links to economic growth and smart mobility

7.2 Further funding streams will be identified and explored as part of the workshop.

7.3 Additional funding may be required to resource the project. This will become evident once the action plan is established and will be reported to Cabinet accordingly.

## **8. Legal implications**

8.1 The Council does not have a statutory duty to reduce emissions in line with the Climate Change Act 2008 or to develop plans.

8.2 Requirements under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 concerning political proportionality do not apply to Cabinet Advisory Groups. It is a matter for Cabinet to establish and/or remove such groups as appropriate, as well as determine their size and composition.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 The Cabinet is asked to agree the approach to tackling climate change, as set out in section 3 of the report, including the establishment of the Climate Change Member Advisory Group, its membership and terms of reference, as set out in Appendix D to the report.

9.2 The Cabinet is asked to agree to delegate authority to the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, to report the findings of the workshop along with a project plan and draft Climate Change Action Plan to the initial Climate Change Member Advisory Group meeting in September 2019.

## **10. Suggested reasons for decision**

10.1 This will enable the Cabinet to respond to the motion agreed by Full Council in April 2019.

### **Lead officer contact**

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### **Appendices**

Appendix A: The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy

Appendix B: Climate Emergency Motion

Appendix C: Climate Change: Related data statistics for Medway

Appendix D: Climate Change Member Advisory Group – membership and terms of reference

## **Background papers**

Climate Change Act 2008

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>

Air Quality Action Plan 2015

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/1982/medway\\_air\\_quality\\_action\\_plan\\_2015](https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/1982/medway_air_quality_action_plan_2015)

Medway Air Quality Communications Strategy December 2017

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/2845/medway\\_air\\_quality\\_communication\\_strategy](https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/2845/medway_air_quality_communication_strategy)

Special Report on Global Warming October 2018 (IPCC)

<https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

Cabinet report Climate Change (Nottingham Declaration July 2006)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=2092&Opt=3&nobdr=2>