

Climate Change Member Advisory Board meeting

SUMMARY

Thursday 26 September at 14:30-16:00
Civic Suite, Level 2, Gun Wharf

Present: Councillor Doe - Chair

Councillors Hackwell, Gulvin, Tranter, Maple, Stamp and Curry

Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation

Ruth Du Lieu, Assistant Director, Frontline Services

Lucy Kirk, Environmental Protection Team Leader

Vicki Emrit, Interim Climate Change Co-ordinator

Sarah Byrne, Executive Assistant to Assistant Director, Frontline Services

1. The Chair welcomed the group to the first meeting of the Member Advisory Board, following the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in Medway in April 2019. The Chair acknowledged the significance of the climate change agenda and the Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral.
2. The Director of Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation gave a presentation to the group, outlining the background to the Climate Emergency and the actions which have taken place to date:

25 April 2019	Full Council declare climate change emergency
1 July 2019	Directorate workshop
9 July 2019	Cabinet agree approach to tackling climate change
5 September 2019	First Officer Steering Group

The July workshop was well attended by officers from a range of Council services. Representatives from Medway Norse and Medway Youth Council also attended. Discussions identified a number of actions; those that the Council are already undertaking to lessen climate change and new actions the Council could consider taking in the future.

Medway are engaging with Kent County Council in the development of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (KMELES), a joint strategy to reduce emissions across Kent to net zero.

RESOLVED – The contents of the presentation were noted by the group.

3. The Assistant Director of Frontline Services provided a presentation which prompted discussion on the following matters:
 - Medway emission levels – there is a requirement for an early assessment of Medway's carbon footprint (both in terms of the Council's estate and the geographical area) so that realistic targets can be set for inclusion in the action plan. This will require additional expertise.
 - There is a requirement for sufficient resources to support the delivery of an action plan and communication strategy. Officers are currently overseeing the project until January 2020, alongside existing duties. This limits the time available to manage the significant

level of work required to deliver a robust action plan and therefore it is recommended that a dedicated officer be recruited immediately to undertake this role.

- In developing an action plan, consideration will be given to expanding on existing strategies and sharing best practice with other local authorities, businesses, universities and schools.

4. Members suggested the following actions and areas for further exploration:

- Officers from Planning and Public Health to attend future meetings to provide input and advice regarding the Local Plan and health implications and potential for shared resources.
- Medway Youth Council and Norse to be invited to sit in the audience at future meetings.
- Potential climate change levy for developers.
- Transport officers to attend the next meeting to provide an update on work that is underway/planned to tackle climate change, as the transport sector is one of the largest contributors to carbon emissions in Medway.
- Incorporate climate change implications in Cabinet reports.
- Consider embedding climate change considerations in Neighbourhood Plans.
- Review procurement processes to cut carbon footprint of supply chains.

RESOLVED – That the suggestions will be added to a longer list of actions and an update will be given at the next meeting.

5. Further to the above discussion, Members were recommended to comment and agree on the following proposals and approach:

- Terms of Reference for the group and standing items for future agendas.
- Length of action plan and proposed timeline for delivery – a 5 year “rolling” plan was proposed in order to support City of Culture 2025.
- Format of Year One action plan – to comprise of an update on current actions and quick wins
- Request funding to recruit a dedicated Climate Change officer to take the action plan forward.
- Request funding to build on baseline data and develop a robust communication strategy.
- Continue to collate baseline data, work with/learn from other authorities and explore funding opportunities.

RESOLVED – That the above proposals were noted and agreed for taking forward.

6. The Chair noted the intention to arrange the next meeting for December 2019. Members of the public will be invited to sit in the audience. Dates of future meetings will be arranged and the schedule advertised on the Council website.

Meeting ended at 16:00