

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Climate Change Member Advisory Group**  
**Wednesday, 17 June 2020**  
**4.30pm to 6.45pm**

**Notes of the meeting**

**Present:** Councillors: Doe (Chairman), Curry, Filmer, Gulvin, Hackwell, Maple, Andy Stamp, Thompson, Tranter and MYC Cabinet Member

**Substitutes:** There were none

**In Attendance:** Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director, Front Line Services  
Vicki Emrit, Climate Change Coordinator  
Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive  
Sarah Byrne, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Director, Frontline Services  
Rob Dennis, Head of Property and Capital Projects  
Lynette Godwin, Communications Account Manager  
Martin Hall, Greenspace Access and Bidding Manager  
Lucy Kirk, Environmental Protection Team Leader  
Matthew Pinder, Planner  
Catherine Smith, Planning Manager, Policy  
Karen Yusuf, Youth Development Worker  
Michael Edwards, Head of Integrated Transport  
Sarah Valdus, Head of Environmental Services  
Andrew Bull, Strategic Infrastructure Planner

**1 Welcome and Apologies**

1.1 The Chair welcomed the group to the meeting, apologies from David Tappenden (Transport) and James Williams (Public Health).

**2 Notes and actions from the last meeting**

2.1 The group agreed that the summary of the meeting was an accurate reflection and agreed the minutes.

**3 Declarations of Interests by Councillors and officers**

3.1 None to declare

#### 4 Updates on Strategic Plans - Planning

- 4.1 Officers from Planning welcomed the invitation to provide an overview of the opportunities to use their corporate work to address climate change both in terms of vision for growth and decision making.
- 4.2 Planning officers gave a presentation on the technical aspects of the planning system and what is achievable under planning, using agenda item 4 as a reference. There were several points and actions raised see below.
- 4.3 Cllr Tranter asked how we ensure that we maintain the competitiveness of developments whilst also ensuring that climate change measures are incorporated. Planning confirmed that a requirement of the Local Plan is to undertake a viability assessment which takes into consideration policies, national minimum standards and expectations from developer contributions. Officers are currently working with a consultant to develop a viability assessment which will still allow the Local Plan to be deliverable.
- 4.4 With regard to the plans for the new sports centre at Hoo, Cllr Gulvin asked if opportunities for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) will be considered along with the possibility of exporting some of the energy generated from this site to supply facilities in the local area including residential properties. Planning officers confirmed that consideration of heat district networks is included in the master planning of the new settlement at Hoo.
- 4.5 Medway Youth Council queried why progress on the carbon fund has not been made since 2010. Planning officers confirmed that timing may have been an issue due to recession, changes to the Local Plan and policy updates and potentially insufficient resources given the scale of the work required to take forward. However, the Council are in a better position to explore this now. **Action: Item to be added to a future meeting WHEN the base line assessment has been produced.**
- 4.6 Councillor Maple asked if there is evidence of planning authorities in other parts of the country turning down applications, as the developers have not met the climate change requirements? DH advised that he has not heard specifically although this may be the case. The Local Plan must justify the requirement in line with the climate change agenda and if necessary, supports the power to refuse the application.
- 4.7 Cllr Doe asked Planning officers to consider how to support communities in preparing community energy plans to underpin neighbourhood plans. Planning officers confirmed there is a legal duty to give neighbourhood planning groups support and they can buy in technical support available from government and a number of them are looking at how they can promote environmental policies. The evidence from neighbourhood

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planning groups may start to come through in future, for example the Arches Local Plan.

- 4.8 **Action: Planning team to capture which of the items discussed and presented will be picked up by the Local Plan, what additional resources will be required (including cost) and how we can achieve them. Officers to consider if there are any funds that we can bid for or learn from experience elsewhere. Agreed that opportunities will come from the development of the Local Plan.**

### 5 Update on Year One Action Plan

- 5.1 Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy – sign off has been held up slightly due to Covid. The final version is due to be signed off with a launch by KCC on 27<sup>th</sup> November at the Kent 2050: Road to Net Zero Conference. **Action: Further details on net zero conference to be circulated by link**
- 5.2 Further to an update on the current Re:fit programme, Councillor Thompson requested consideration be given to demand side response in council buildings to manage heating and lighting levels and therefore grid consumption while also earning an income. **Action: Capital Projects team to inform ward councillors when Re:fit works are undertaken in their ward so that they are aware.**
- 5.3 Cllr Tranter requested green energy supplied for the council. Officers confirmed that the council are working with Laser on this.
- 5.4 Agreed that where there are appropriate opportunities to tie the LED lighting programme in with EV charging points, this will be considered, as long as this does not impede the delivery of the LED programme.
- 5.5 Officers noted a successful bid for funding from HNDU for a techno-economic feasibility study for heat district networks in Medway. The study will be supported by the Housing Infrastructure Fund and included in the master plan. It is anticipated that officers will be able to share this work in 6 months' time with potential heat sources identified. **Action: Update on techno-economic study to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.**
- 5.6 The group discussed how traffic has been reduced during Covid. Councillor Curry asked for additional monitoring to be put in place across the urban area from September to capture impact of schools going back. Environmental Protection noted that monitoring has shown that levels have continued to drop although they have seen elevations in particulates. No additional monitoring is required as sufficient resources are already in place and will share the results with the group. **Action: Environmental Protection to share graphs of air quality levels and trends during the lockdown and provide an update on progress at the next board meeting for discussion.**

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- 5.7 Councillor Thompson asked if the imminent legislation of e-scooters will be included in transport plans. Transport officers advised that this is being evaluated and will need to be part of a long-term strategy. **Action: Transport to bring an update on e-scooters to the next meeting.**
- 5.8 **Action: Councillor Doe asked for a multi-themed working group to be set up, re-establishing previous walking/cycling and tree groups.**
- 5.9 Councillor Doe asked officers to monitor the Council vehicle fleet and report on the conversion to alternative fuel vehicles. **Action: Officers to report on fleet conversion at each meeting.**
- 5.10 Councillor Maple asked officers to progress the opportunity for a review of expenses rate for electric cars in parallel with the Employment Matters committee and also ensure that modal shift is reflected in updated HR policies and processes. Councillor Stamp noted that staff should be encouraged to walk and cycle to/for work where they are able to do so. **Action: HR to progress updated policies and processes to support modal shift and changes to working practices as part of Back to Better recovery process.**
- 5.11 Councillor Hackwell raised concerns that there is evidence where planning has been granted on the proviso that electric vehicle charging points are installed but this has not always been actioned. Councillor Hackwell queried with Planning officers how they ensure that there are not any deficiencies in approved planning applications and requested a process to monitor agreed planning conditions. **Action: Planning to investigate examples provided of developers not meeting EV charge point obligations. Transport and Parking team to look into future process.**
- 5.12 Councillor Gulvin asked officers to consider adding EV charging points in the Brook multi storey car park. **Action: Capital Projects team to take this action away.**
- 5.13 Cllr Stamp asked officers to consider promoting the EV charging point survey via other means including the Citizen Panel to enhance awareness. **Action: Transport and Parking team to develop communications for EV charge point survey.**
- 5.14 An overview of the wildflower verge initiative was provided. Councillor Maple asked for wildflower signs to be redesigned (reworded) and installed around the cemeteries (in particular Chatham Cemetery) **Action: Medway Norse and Communications team to develop signs.**
- 5.15 Councillor Doe noted that the proposed planting of 15,000 trees (if Medway's Urban Tree Challenge Fund application is successful) as crucial to environmental plans and was in agreement that time should be

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spent between now and hearing about the bid to develop match funding plans. **Action: Greenspaces team to share the details of sites identified in UTFC bid with the group and discuss use of Councillor Ward Improvement Funds towards tree purchase**

- 5.16 Officers noted the intention for a tree sponsorship scheme to go live by November 2020 in time for planting season. **Action: Add tree sponsorship scheme and the work around UTFC match funding to the agenda for a new cycling/tree group.**
- 5.17 Councillor Maple asked for an update to be given at the next meeting on environmental actions and reactions on the river. **Action: Update on environmental river work to be provided at next meeting.**
- 5.18 Cllr Maple queried whether Medway Council has a pollinator action plan. Officers noted that KCC have also asked Medway to consider this and two country parks have been involved in a pollinator action project. An online workshop, organised by MUGS and hosted by the Bumblebee Conservation Project, was attended by around 20 volunteers. The volunteers are now able to identify bees and collect data. **Action: Councillor Curry to provide an update on the work of the group for sharing at the next meeting.**
- 5.19 Cllr Maple asked for sufficient focus on encouraging and supporting businesses to work towards becoming single use plastic free and would like to see content put on the council website to this effect. **Action: Include content on web page to support businesses becoming single use plastic free.**
- 5.20 The Communications Account Manager showcased the work that has been undertaken since the last meeting, including branding and graphics. Communications will be developed around how Covid has helped climate change, to highlight where the impacts are apparent and where people have a choice to change their behaviour i.e. to shop locally. Informational graphics are being developed for example on the importance of trees, marshland and tie in with national tree planting day. **Action: Communications team to share graphics and presentation with the group.**

## 6 AOB

- 6.1 Councillor Curry noted that it was really good to see the amount of subject areas that were covered during the two hour meeting and suggested that the meetings were made more frequent and each meeting covered a particular theme. **Action: Climate Change team to coordinate changes to the format of future meetings.**
- 6.2 Medway Youth Council highlighted that they have their own campaign following on from their climate change conference in November 2019

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and if any service areas want to work with them on the recommendations in their report for example development of waste audit with local schools or developing comms literature to inform others of the climate crisis. **Action: Climate Change team to continue to coordinate joined up working with MYC.**

### 7 Date of next meeting

8 September 2020 at 13:00hrs

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