

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN AND MEDWAY NET ZERO CARBON BASELINE REPORT

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Summary

In April 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and committed to establishing a clear action plan for Medway to deal with climate change, setting out an achievable and clear timeline. The Climate Change Action Plan was adopted by Cabinet on 8 June 2021.

This report provides:

- an update on the Council's response to the declaration of a Climate Change Emergency and presents the Climate Change Action Plan setting out the activities required to adapt and mitigate against climate change
- an overview of the Medway Net Zero Carbon – Baseline & Pathway Report which has been commissioned so that the Council can understand its current carbon footprint and how it can reduce its emissions by 2050. It provides the evidence base which underpins the draft Climate Change Action Plan, setting out a series of interventions to reduce the Council's emissions by 95% by 2050

1. Budget and policy framework

- 1.1. The declared climate change emergency in Medway fits with the Council Strategy priority '*Medway: A place to be proud of*' and the key outcome of a '*clean and green environment*'. Climate Change is also now one of the Council's 6 values; we will take action to tackle the local and global threat of climate change, both internally and in partnership with local organisations and

residents, and to minimise its environmental impact by cutting carbon, waste and pollution.

- 1.2. The formally adopted Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (KMELES) (Appendix 1), forms part of the Kent Environment Strategy and Implementation Plan. It is also relevant to the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework. The Strategy includes the commitment to meet the UK Government's target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 for the country. The KMELES is a key element of the Council's approach to tackling the climate emergency and has informed the Council's emerging Climate Change Action Plan.
- 1.3. The Medway Net Zero Carbon – Baseline & Pathway Report has been commissioned so that the Council can understand its current carbon footprint, how it can reduce its emissions by 2050 and provides the evidence base which underpins the draft Climate Change Action Plan. The report sets out a series of interventions to reduce the Council's emissions by 95% by 2050.
- 1.4. We acknowledge the Government's recent commitment to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 however, for now, the Medway target will remain as net-zero emissions by 2050 (in line with the KMELES). We will monitor and assess opportunities to bring the reduction target forward, in particular responding to new funding opportunities as they are presented.
- 1.5. Progress towards the net zero carbon target will be dependent on Government funding being made available and successful bidding for funds, including joint bidding with Kent County Council and Kent's district councils. If funding doesn't become available, our actions will be limited.

2. Background

- 2.1. Full Council declared a climate emergency in April 2019 and passed a motion committing 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.*
 - *establish a clear action plan for Medway to deal with climate change, setting out an achievable and clear timeline.*
- 2.2. In March 2020, a report was presented to the Cabinet setting out a draft outline action plan and progress since July 2019. The report also detailed the decision on the 2020/21 budget, at Full Council on 20 February 2020, to allocate £100,000 to support climate change work.
- 2.3. The KMELES was formally adopted by the Council in January 2021. The Strategy has been approved by the Kent Chief Executives Group and Kent Leaders Group with the Leader as co-signatory. The objective of the KMELES is to outline a joint Kent and Medway approach to achieving a reduction in

carbon emissions and improvements in air quality, with an agreed Kent and Medway target of net zero emissions by 2050.

- 2.4. Adopting the Strategy serves to not only acknowledge its relevance in setting out a consistent approach to net zero emissions but also realises the significance of working in partnership at scale. It offers an opportunity to pool the resources and expertise required to address the climate emergency, which Medway Council has committed to do.
- 2.5. The Climate Change Action Plan was endorsed by Cabinet on 8 June 2021.

3. Achievements

- 3.1. Since the Climate Emergency declaration, significant progress has been made. Some of the highlights are detailed below. This is an update on progress reported at both Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 January 2021 and at Cabinet on 8 June 2021.
 - In addition to an allocation of £100k within the core budget, an additional £75k was allocated from the Modern Medway Fund at the beginning of this financial year (2021/22). This additional funding has allowed for the recruitment of two new posts (Climate Response Support Officer and Climate Response Engagement Officer) which are crucial to the delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan. All posts within the team now include “Response” in their job titles to emphasise the significance of the challenge ahead and the commitment to the agenda.
 - Climate Change has been included in the Council Plan (2021/22). The objectives are to work with partners and the public to minimise emissions of greenhouse gases and reduce Medway’s contribution to climate change to net zero by 2050. During Q1 and Q2, the Climate Response team has been presenting updates on the climate change action plan to senior managers, directorates and team groups to encourage everyone to include climate action in their service plans.
 - This summer, the Climate Response team hosted a 12-week internship further to the successful appointment of an intern during 2020 through the Employability Points (EP) Scheme hosted by the University of Kent. The intern carried out project work in support of the Climate Change action plan including a review of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and an audit of the Climate Change Action Plan. Their findings will be incorporated into the refresh of the Climate Change Action Plan. The Climate Response team are further promoting the EP scheme with other service areas and externally with partners including Medway NHS Clinical Commissioning Group.
 - A Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework Strategy, giving specific consideration to adaptation and mitigation for climate change, has been prepared and will be published in alignment with the Local Plan.
 - Work has continued to expand and improve upon Medway’s cycleways, now at 80 miles, with a 20% increase in uptake of cycling last year. DfT awarded

£242k during Summer 2020 to deliver measures to create an environment that is safer for walking and cycling.

- The delivery of an ambitious LED street lighting replacement programme has continued. Of the 26,776 streetlights in Medway, 17,409 of these are now LED.
- A River Source Heat Pump study is underway, further to a successful award of funding from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). A Senior team, including Councillor Gulvin, have met to understand the roles and responsibilities involved and intend to meet with other local authorities that are further along on their heat network journey. A Heat District Network Feasibility Study for the Hoo Peninsula and Strood has been completed and it is anticipated that the report findings will be progressed through the relevant democratic process for the findings and recommendations to be formally recognised.
- Work is underway to develop and implement Re:fit, a £12m retrofit programme across the Council's estate which will result in substantial energy and financial savings. Further to an assessment by SSE of 11 Council buildings, funding of £3m has been awarded to deliver Phase One. The annual guaranteed energy saving, across all 11 sites, is anticipated to be 2,185,431kwh, the financial savings at £265,665 per annum and the annual carbon savings equal to 476 tonnes of CO₂. Due to supply chain issues works are now programmed to commence in October 2021 and finish in February 2021.
- A web form for residents and businesses to support tree planting across Medway went live in November 2020. £740 has since been donated.
- 13,842 small trees were planted across 10 sites in Medway in early 2021, further to an award from the Forestry Commission via the Urban Tree Challenge Fund.
- The emerging Medway Tree Strategy is due to be submitted for approval in early 2022. The Strategy uses the findings of the successful tree canopy coverage study completed during the Summer. The study, led by the Greenspaces Development team and undertaken by volunteers from Medway's Urban Greenspaces Forum, identified a baseline coverage of 16.7% of land area in Medway.
- There are now a total of 35 sites across Medway hosting wildflower verges, allowing a wider diversity of wild grasses and flowers to thrive. Plans for a new approach to grass cutting and meadow management are being finalised following advice from Plantlife.
- An animated video has been produced to raise awareness of air quality and its effects and what to do to reduce these impacts. The video has been promoted to all schools in Medway, alongside a resources pack containing fun facts and the history of air pollution. The video can be accessed from the Council's website and so far it has received 213 views on YouTube. A survey was sent out to all schools; 11 have responded and provided positive feedback.
- Medway supported a bid to the Defra Air Quality Grant Programme made by Canterbury City Council for an air quality education project. Defra confirmed in Q1 that the application was successful. The award is for a project to develop an educational digital resource to be used in primary schools across Kent, in order to raise awareness about air quality and hopefully to promote behaviour

change amongst children and their parents. The resource will include an interactive story book and gaming elements which will earn rewards and unlock further information. The interactive story book will be piloted in October.

- A new public facing website (KentAir) went live on 1st April 2021. It contains near real time information on current air pollution levels, continuation of the free air pollution forecast service, a range of tools, reports, additional information and a refreshed and rebranded educational tool kit (Care for Air). The resource will be a critical tool in the delivery of the Air Quality Action Plan.
- Further analysis has been carried out by the Energy Savings Trust on a taxi and private hire engagement exercise, looking at attitudes, barriers and opportunities for the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles. The final report has been shared with the Air Quality Steering Group, and officers leading on the EV Infrastructure Strategy to inform their future work. The survey was undertaken during the pandemic so it is anticipated that the results will not be representative in terms of mileage and working patterns. Subject to funding, a feasibility study is planned which will review the previous survey, carry out more comprehensive engagement, policy impact analysis and a review of infrastructure.
- An Electric Vehicle (EV) Charge Point survey has been developed and promoted on the Council website and through social media. A total of 268 responses have been received since June 2020. The results of the survey are being used to inform a new 5- year Medway EV Strategy, due to go to Cabinet by the end of this financial year.
- EV charge points have been installed to support a trial of 6 EVs for staff business use. The scheme was successfully delivered in 8 weeks and will be monitored for a duration of 12 months, ending in November 2021. A review of usage has been carried out. Due to Covid, the initial uptake was less than anticipated. Therefore, three of the electric cars have been exchanged for two electric vans and one larger car and their use has been extended to other service areas, including Environmental Services.
- The Office of Zero Emission Vehicles has awarded up to 75% of the capital costs associated with installation of 34 EV charging points across three sites in Medway. The sites will be live and promoted in early October.
- Officers have continued to engage with KCC on the Kent 600 district network project; a prospective county wide series of EV charging points within 30+ car park sites in Medway (150+ sites across Kent) within council owned car parks. Feasibility studies are currently taking place, to be taken to Cabinet for approval during Q3.
- The Council delivered their first EV Event on 25 September in Rochester Castle Gardens. The event was sponsored by The Climate Coalition as part of the national 'Great Big Green Week' and involved collaboration with the Council's EV charging point suppliers and a number of other local EV stakeholders. The event was well attended and positively received and there is an intention to hold a similar event annually. In particular, the social media coverage before the event was positively noted.
- The Council supported Medway residents and small businesses to install roof-top solar panels via the collective buying scheme Solar Together Kent. Installation progress has continued to be slower than expected due to global

supply challenges slowing down the delivery of batteries into the UK, however delivery of battery stock is now expected and so the pace of delivery should increase. Of the 53 Medway households which accepted the offer, 16 have proceeded to install stage. The Medway conversion rate (28%) is higher than the overall Kent conversion rate of 24%. Officers from all participating Kent districts will be meeting with iChoosr for a progress update, lessons learned. The decision to participate again in 2022 has been delayed until all installs are complete.

- Improvements have been made to the way the Council communicates about Climate Change by developing a dedicated web page, a Medway Climate Change logo, promoting national awareness days and behavioural change initiatives via social media and regular updates in every edition of Medway Matters.
- The new Climate Change social media pages have had the following success;
 - 495 Instagram followers, reaching 1062% more accounts in September than in the previous month. New features are starting to be used including “Stories” to extend our reach and this will continue in Q3.
 - 2089 Facebook followers and a 205% increase in post engagement in September than in the previous month.
- A total of 759 people are subscribed to the Climate Change newsletter which is now sent out monthly. This is a 23% increase on Q1. Two more newsletters went out in Q2 highlighting national days, upcoming events related to climate change in Medway and helpful articles and updates. 285 people opened the most recent newsletter, however there were 558 total opens which means that people went back to look at it again. The most visited articles were promotion of the EV event followed by the climate change webpages, Farleigh Coaches/Kent REVS scheme and Kent Air. Sign ups to the newsletter have been encouraged at events where the Climate Response team have had a presence in Q2.

4. The Baseline and Pathway Report

4.1. To inform our approach to reducing the Council’s emissions, we commissioned a technical study to understand the Council’s carbon footprint for a baseline year of 2018-19 (the year prior to declaring a Climate Emergency). The scope of the study includes emissions for which the Council is directly responsible:

- Direct emissions (Scope 1 and 2) from our estate and operations including gas heating, fugitive emissions, emissions from our small fleet vehicles and refuse collection vehicles (RCV’s), electricity for council owned buildings and street lighting. It does not include Council owned housing except for energy supplied to communal areas and sheltered housing.
- Indirect emissions (Scope 3) staff business travel and water.

- *It does not include areas of indirect influence for example emissions from the delivery of services, Local Authority Schools, staff commuting and contracted out services, such as school transport and waste disposal.*
- 4.2. The study identified a series of interventions to put the Council on a path to reducing its emissions by 95% by 2050. The resulting Medway Net Zero Carbon – Baseline & Pathway Report underpins the Climate Change Action Plan.
 - 4.3. The Council's carbon baseline for 2018/19 is 12,105 tCO₂e which represents approximately 1.4% of the total direct emissions in the Medway area. The main sources of emissions are operational buildings (heating and electricity) which account for 58% of the total emissions, street lighting at 23% and emissions from Council fleet vehicles at 11%.
 - 4.4. The study uses the science-based target approach to reducing emissions at a rate that is in line with keeping global temperature rises below 1.5°C. This means that emissions will be halved every ten years as opposed to reducing emissions by a fixed amount every year. It sets the first carbon budget accounting period to 2027 and thereafter recommends 5-year intervals in line with the UK government carbon budgets.
 - 4.5. The recommended first carbon budget allowance for the period 2020-2027 is 57,631 tCO₂e. This budget allocation will be our target against which we will monitor progress.
 - 4.6. In order to meet the First Carbon Budget by 2027, interventions would include: energy efficiency measures within Council buildings, installation of Solar PV, LED lighting (in corporate buildings, carparks and housing stock) and an investment in a River Source Heat Network.
 - 4.7. A full list of interventions can be found in Table 1 below. The interventions are sorted by implementation date and biggest carbon saving.
 - 4.8. High level financial budget modelling based on current market conditions, indicate that an investment of more than £11.7m would be needed to meet the costs of these measures, which is far beyond existing allocated budgets.
 - 4.9. The LED street lighting programme is already approved and fully funded and is outside of the estimated £11.7m. With the exception of Re:fit Phase 1, these are all desktop estimates subject to actual site visits, detailed design and appropriate procurement.

Table 1 – Summary of Interventions to stay within the First Carbon Budget

Intervention	Carbon Savings (tonnes)	% Reduction against Baseline	Implement latest	Estimated cost	Cost per tonne of CO2e saved	Availability of Funding
Re:fit Phase 1 Buildings	809.00	6.68%	2021-22	£4,567,907.00	£5,646.36	Re:fit
Street Lighting to LED	1484.00	12.25%	2022-23	£11,155,144.00	£7,516.94	Fully funded
Low Carbon Heating	1063.68	8.78%	2022-23	£3,742,757.00	£3,518.69	Re:fit
Further solar PV in Buildings	180.54	1.49%	2022-23	£1,240,815.00	£6,872.80	Re:fit
Further LED Lighting Corporate	118.05	0.97%	2022-23	£354,143.16	£3,000.00	Re:fit
Further LED Lighting Housing	59.90	0.49%	2022-23	£179,689.62	£3,000.00	Re:fit
Vans Class II and III to EV	51.14	0.42%	2022-23	£580,145.00	£11,345.36	Part core funding (potential requirement for additional costs for EV solutions and infrastructure)
Further LED Lighting Carparks	22.46	0.19%	2022-23	Not available	Not available	Funding to be determined
River Source Heat Network	143.00	1.18%	2023-24	£889,831.80	£6,222.60	Funding to be determined
Controls Optimisation	59.50	0.49%	2024-25	£129,406.18	£2,175.00	Re:fit
Heating Controls	39.50	0.33%	2024-25	£32,824.50	£850.00	Re:fit

4.10. It is important Medway implements these measures within the First Carbon Budget, as the carbon savings achieved on electricity and renewable energy measures will diminish as the grid decarbonises.

4.11. Detailed work will be needed during 2021 to finalise the budget needs from 2022/23, and this will be part of the relevant actions in the plan. This will include:

- Revenue vs Capital needs
- Available external funding/Government Grant (such as the Social Housing Energy Efficiency Scheme recently announced)
- How existing plans/refurbishments can contribute (e.g., Re:fit Programme)

- Future Government interventions/programmes that may assist with the measures and reduce spend.

The above table excludes current initiatives that have been funded such as wild verging, tree planting and the proposal being developed for EV charging points in Council owned car parks.

4.12. Examples of successful grant funding awards include:

- £85,420 from the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles for the installation of 34 electric vehicle charging points at 3 council owned car parks
- The Climate Coalition awarded £1,500 to support an Electric Vehicle event held in the Rochester Castle Grounds in September 2021, to promote Great Big Green Week
- Officers supported Canterbury City Council with a successful bid to the Defra Air Quality Grant Programme for an air quality education project
- £232K allocated via the Capability Fund from the Department for Transport to support active travel initiatives, including the development of a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and delivery of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP).

4.13. Further interventions would also need to be considered by 2024-2026 to fully achieve the First Carbon Budget in line with the science-based pathway. These could include bringing forward the low carbon heating programme to start in 2021, bringing in additional measures to reduce emissions through staff business travel, accelerating the electrification of the Council's fleet, investment in solar farms and alternative energy. It is also important to remember that in some areas the technology is still not fully developed or proven. This is the case with the RCV's where there are still limitations on the electric battery technology for these heavy goods vehicles and therefore the electrification of this part of the Council's fleet is only modelled from 2030 onwards. Advances in alternative technology such as hydrogen power could expedite the move away from diesel RCVs, but these solutions are in very early days of development.

4.14. For this reason, the next step will be for the Council to undertake an options appraisal to determine which interventions are easier to implement and would have a better return on investment.

4.15. To allow for project set up time and delivery timescales the pathway does not show any significant savings before 2022. After the First Carbon Budget has been completed, it does assume continued efforts to keep within the remaining Carbon Budgets set in line with the science-based pathway. The interim carbon budgets for this trajectory will be 2032, 2037, 2042 in line with government and our area wide carbon budgets. The Council will need to be prepared to deliver larger interventions after the First Carbon Budget has been completed (post 2027), such as exploring the potential for larger scale solar PV generation through acquisition from third parties.

- 4.16. If the Council follows the science-based pathway and undertakes all the recommendations in the report, by 2050 projected emissions will have reduced to 605tCO₂e (a 95% reduction on 2018/19 emissions). This final 5% could be achieved by developing renewable energy assets and using the energy generated or by planting trees. Each hectare of trees planted will sequester around 315 tCO₂e over a 100-year lifetime.
- 4.17. It is of the utmost importance that the Council identifies the resources necessary to keep to a science-based pathway, selecting and implementing interventions in a timely manner so that the Carbon Budget deficit is drastically reduced.
- 4.18. The study also considered a reduction scenario of net zero by 2030. However, this was not considered to be achievable for the Council at this point in time.
- 4.19. The emissions data for 2019/20 has recently been assessed at 10,504 tCO₂e. This is 1,601 tonnes less than the baseline year; a 13% reduction in carbon emissions. This reduction is likely to be due to improved data and the decarbonisation of the electricity provided by the grid. The percentage of emissions by source continue to be stable (operational buildings and street lighting accounting for 82% and the Council's fleet contributing 11%).

5. Climate Change Action Plan

- 5.1. The Action Plan reports on the current carbon emissions across Medway (at the time of writing the action plan, the most recent national data set available was for 2018) and the main contributing sectors (domestic energy and transport). It sets out the key recommendations from the Medway Net Zero Carbon – Baseline & Pathway Report and identifies key areas of influence that we can work with our partners on to achieve the net zero carbon ambition across Medway. It is important to be reminded here of item 4.3; the Council's 2018/19 carbon footprint represents approximately just 1.4% of the total direct emissions in the Medway area, at 12,105 tCO₂e. While we recognise that we have a pivotal role to play in providing local leadership, this information shows the level of effort and commitment required, from as wide a range of people as possible including staff, residents, businesses, schools, local groups, suppliers, and visitors in Medway, to respond to the climate emergency. Everyone has a role to play.
- 5.2. The Action Plan aligns with the KMELES, adopted by Medway's Cabinet in January 2021, and, for consistency, applies the ten high level priorities as set out in the KMELES.
 1. Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050
 2. Public Sector Decision Making
 3. Planning and Development
 4. Climate Emergency Investment Fund
 5. Building Retrofit Programme
 6. Transport, travel and digital connectivity

7. Renewable Energy Generation
8. Green Infrastructure
9. Supporting Low Carbon Business
10. Communications

- 5.3. We have identified an 11th action – Resilience and Adaptation - which we feel is important to include in our planning.
- 5.4. The Climate Change Action Plan explores each of the priority areas identifying challenges and opportunities, progress made and proposed actions for the immediate, short term (2023) and long term (2030). Actions under each priority area are split into those that we can have a direct impact on such as our fleet and those that we can influence and work with our partners on, such as schools.
- 5.5. The actions focus on the following objectives:
 - reducing/eliminating our carbon emissions through efficiency and renewable energy initiatives.
 - supporting others in reducing/eliminating their carbon emissions
 - promoting climate resilience
- 5.6. Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored, and a report will be presented to Cabinet twice a year. Alternate reports will include the publication of the Council's annual carbon emissions data. It is intended that progress will also be reported to the cross party-political Member Advisory Group on a quarterly basis.

6. Advice and analysis

- 6.1. The challenge Medway has set itself of reaching the target of net zero carbon by 2050, is not going to be an easy task to achieve. The Council needs to identify and secure the appropriate resources and funding to implement the interventions, ensure that climate change is a key priority for the whole organisation and is at the heart of everything the Council does and ensure we have fully costed projects ready for when funding opportunities arise.
- 6.2. The scale and pace of near immediate investment and change is clear. To ensure that the Council does not fall behind, it is important that any potential barriers are identified which could slow down progress and that they are removed or amended.
- 6.3. One of the key interventions set out in the report is the conversion of the Council fleet to ULEV vehicles, this is an area of work which the Council has already started to progress in respect of its smaller vehicles. A study has been completed to understand the extent by which the power network will need to be upgraded to support the installation of EV charging points, particularly future demand, and the associated costs. Initial estimates had placed this at £100k although alternative options are now being considered. This

demonstrates that even a relatively simple project, to enable the replacement of lease vehicles with ULEV, carries potential financial barriers.

- 6.4. The level of infrastructure required to charge the RCV's will obviously be on a much larger scale, with much higher financial costs for the power network and ground infrastructure even before the increased costs associated with EV fleet purchase are factored in.
- 6.5. The intention of the Action Plan is to recognise the climate emergency and the role of the Council, along with our partners, in achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The challenge Medway has set itself is not going to be an easy task to achieve. If we are going to achieve this target, significant joined up action is needed in the next 10 years.
- 6.6. The Council needs to identify and secure the appropriate resources and funding to implement the interventions, ensuring we have fully costed projects ready for when funding opportunities arise. It will be important to ensure that climate change is a key priority for the whole organisation and is at the heart of everything the Council does.
- 6.7. Embedding climate change in policies and service delivery will require consideration is given to sustainability through:
 - running the Council's estate in a more sustainable manner
 - ensuring that all services consider the sustainability implications of their actions and work to reduce negative impacts
 - encouraging others in Medway to consider sustainability through sharing good practice and exercising an external influence on suppliers and peers.

7. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Financial	<p>There is a risk that the actions in the Action Plan cannot be fully funded and resourced at the scale required to achieve the necessary speed of change.</p> <p>Potential lack of Government funding to help Medway progress our ambitions.</p> <p>This could result in not being able to meet expectations at pace and the overall net zero carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The development of a robust financial strategy.</p> <p>Key officers on constant review of external funding sources.</p> <p>Full consideration of the financial/resource implications to be made before each action/project commences.</p>	B II

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Political/ Reputational	<p>The climate change action plan is not embedded, supported and resourced.</p> <p>Doing nothing would result in maintaining existing emissions in both the Council's own operations and across the whole of Medway which would have a negative impact on climate change. It would also negate the clear intentions and objectives of the Climate emergency declaration.</p>	<p>The Climate Change Action Plan was endorsed by Cabinet on 8 June 2021.</p> <p>Continued commitment to delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan and a commitment from across the Council to support and resource the actions is necessary.</p>	C II

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Lack of support from the public	<p>Lack of engagement on the Climate Change Action Plan could result in a damaged relationship with the wider community, mistrust and lack of support for the plan resulting in progress being hindered. It could also lead to potential negative media and press coverage.</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive Communication and Engagement Strategy and 12 month action plan. This has been developed and agreed on 6 August and can be found at Appendix 4.</p>	C II

8. Consultation

- 8.1. The action plan has been developed with consultation across the Council services and teams, including relevant management teams.
- 8.2. The action plan was also presented to the Climate Change Members Advisory Board on 20 April 2021 for discussion and review and was positively received. Members were invited to submit comments by 7 May 2021 and these were considered for inclusion in the plan or within the next iteration.
- 8.3. It is intended that the Action Plan will be a live document and will be reviewed formally on an annual basis. This review will include input from partners and the wider community.
- 8.4. On 8 June 2021, Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place & Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Leader to establish arrangements for oversight of the Climate Change engagement and consultation programme as the next phase of activity. A Climate Response Communications and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan, based on best practice from other local authorities, has been developed and agreed. The aim of this is to

support wider discussion of the Action Plan with community and other stakeholder interest groups, both internal and external during 2021 and on an ongoing basis.

- 8.5. To aid engagement a digital summary version and a simplified version of the action plan have been produced, following the endorsement of this plan, highlighting the key messages and actions. The summary version has been published on our website, alongside the version presented to Cabinet. Elements will be extracted and promoted via social media channels.
- 8.6. Officers have already started engaging with some key stakeholder groups including the Medway Placemaking Board, the Medway Learning Partnership and Medway Champions on the action plan. Further events are planned for Q3 in the lead up to COP26 (The United Nations Conference of Parties) including a community engagement event and councillor briefing session.
- 8.7. The Council has developed a comprehensive Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) process to ensure policies reflect potential impact on residents due to their racial group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, and religion. In line with this the first stage of a DIA has been carried out (Appendix 3). The findings of this indicate the plan does not need a full DIA in this area, rather further DIA's will be undertaken for individual projects in the action plan as required.

9. Climate change implications

- 9.1. The Action Plan is intended to have a direct positive impact on climate change and the Council's aspirations of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The impact will be monitored and reported through Service Plans, the Climate Change Member Advisory Group and Cabinet.
- 9.2. The Medway Net Zero Carbon – Baseline & Pathway Report is intended to support the development of the climate change action plan and ensure that the Council reaches its net zero carbon aspirations by 2050. So thus, this report will have a direct positive impact on climate change.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1. As actions are developed, the supporting evidence and any cost implications will be identified, and the business case outlined through the appropriate governance processes. Tackling the climate emergency will require the Council to develop a robust financial strategy and commitment to a significant level of investment, which is far more than the existing budget provision. Aside from the LED street lighting, which is already within the capital programme as an invest to save scheme, high level financial budget modelling based on current market conditions, indicate that an investment of more than £11.7m would be needed to meet the costs of these measures. Most of this would be delivered under the Re:fit programme, with the borrowing funded from the longer term energy savings generated, however officers will continue to identify and explore and respond to potential funding opportunities.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1. The Climate Change Act 2008 places national targets on the reduction of emissions by 2050. The Council has powers to do anything an individual could, under the power of general competence in the Localism Act 2011. This includes taking steps to reduce Council emissions, which contribute to the local and national targets.

12. The Way Forward

- 12.1. Members are asked to consider how they can uphold the Climate Emergency declaration by supporting the actions within the plan. Members have been invited to attend a Councillor briefing session on 20 October and this will provide further opportunity to consider how they can best use their role to support Medway's communities with the journey to net zero.

13: Recommendation

- 13.1 The Committee is asked to note the Climate Change Action Plan.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Climate Change Action Plan – June 2021

APPENDIX 2: Medway Net Zero Carbon – Baseline & Pathway Report V4
Issue Date 15 March 2021

APPENDIX 3: Diversity Impact Assessment

APPENDIX 4: Climate Response Communications and Engagement Strategy

APPENDIX 5: Summary of Achievements

Background papers

Climate Emergency Declaration – Full Council - April 2019:

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=4160&Ver=4>

Climate Change Report – Cabinet – July 2019:

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Link to recording of Climate Change Member Advisory Group meeting – April 2021

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=539&MId=4950&Ver=4>

[Officer Executive Decisions – Delegation from Leader and Cabinet: Climate Response Communications and Engagement Strategy](#)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=59502>