



## **Medway Council Climate Response - Communications and Engagement Approach**

### **Our Aims**

- Ensure that everyone who lives, works, studies or visits Medway understands our journey to net zero carbon, and is equipped with the knowledge, tools and support required to make their contribution to it, and takes ownership and corporate or individual action to help us get there.
- Maintain a strong and consistent message across environmental communications issued by Medway Council and our key partners.
- Raise the profile of what we and other key partners are doing to reduce emissions and improve and protect the local environment.
- Inspire, promote, and enable action and collaboration towards reducing emissions and improving the environment in Kent.
- Create targeted behaviour change campaigns through collaborative working and better understanding of public perceptions and behaviours.
- Evaluate regularly how we're doing.

### **Our Approach**

- Remain positive, showing the added value and benefit of changing behaviour
- Have a clear call to action
- Not use 'green guilt' or environmental 'shaming' to force people to change their habits
- Allow people to feel part of the solution, not the problem
- Empower people to feel capable of making change which will contribute to helping us achieve net zero
- Use the Medway identity and link in with Kent Green Action where relevant
- Be factual, not political
- Be accessible, inclusive and represent the diverse community of Medway.

### **Key Messages**

- Medway has ambitious plans to tackle the climate challenge and reduce emissions. We can only do this by acting together as a community.
- We can all do our bit – together we can make change happen.
- Action we take now will benefit generations to come.
- We must reduce the impact of climate change and support nature recovery.

- Low carbon economic recovery presents opportunities for new jobs and infrastructure.
- Reducing emissions has environmental, social, health and economic benefits.
- Medway Council has an accountable action plan for the next five years.
- What will you do?

#### **Engagement approach – Residents**

- Promote the action plan and drive to the website
- Small changes campaign - My Eco Journey...
- Make use of our spaces to engage e.g., libraries/hubs, sports centres, children's centres
- Campaigns – Recycling, reduce plastic use
- Create and deliver energy efficient awareness campaigns to housing tenants and private landlords and homeowners
- Hubub activities - what people can do to support
- Promote case studies: <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/schoolgirl-recognised-for-innovative-wind-powered-car-concep-249803/>

#### **Engagement Approach - Businesses**

- Resources and advice on website for businesses to use
- Develop business network to share expertise and knowledge with events
- Business climate change newsletter with case studies
- Commitments for organisations to sign up to for Medway Climate Friendly status – Medway Healthy Workplace Awards
- Lobbying for better business practice e.g., not leaving lights on all night
- Encourage businesses to appoint CC champion to help engage others in the company
- Our procurement rules set high standards for contractors

### **Engagement Approach - Communities**

- Neighbourhood groups – challenge each other – lead more climate friendly lives...green streets initiative building on local litter picks or greening our streets/alleyways
- Work with MVA to establish process to recruit volunteers to help champion in their communities and be part of the wider network.
- Share case studies/success stories via PR and website
- Adult Education family programme on how to reduce waste and consumption
- Creation of networks and projects to support the sharing economy e.g., sustainable cafes, resource libraries.
- Encourage participate in green category of Pride in Medway awards.

### **Engagement Approach – Education (Schools, FE and HE)**

- COP26 Autumn challenge
- Set up young person's action network – get young people linked together to share ideas and support with Medway# and socials. Support with promoting case studies.
- Work with schools to develop lesson plans and home learning resources
- School governor intervention commitments to reducing carbon emissions
- Incorporate into our Public Health schools programme e.g., supporting Eco schools award programme.
- Support KM Green Schools Awards and promote successes
- Regular updates in Headway (schools' newsletter)
- Research programme led by local academics involving Medway university students on specific research projects.

### **Engagement approach - Medway Council staff and councillors**

- Behavioural change programme focused on reducing our carbon impact while working
- Regular CC updates
- Champions in each service – and each member of staff should be a CC champion
- Aware of all our priorities to support in their own work.
- Corporate values – gold thread
- Challenge services
- Dedicated section on intranet
- Improved induction
- Team volunteering opportunities for a team climate challenge – one/two days a year.

## **Channels**

- Develop and maintain our Climate Change area of the website to be a hub of practical information and resources for all stakeholders in one place. Bespoke and national/international resources. Toolkit with brands, messaging, and style guide on how we are doing.
- Dashboard on how we are doing, achievements and measurements
- Dedicated social media channels - Instagram, Twitter, FB, LinkedIn
- E-newsletters
- Videos on You Tube
- Calendar of campaigns we can all be part of
- Events in the community – all Medway events to have CC element and we must lead by example e.g. recycling bins, no paper, no plastic etc.
- Article in each edition of Medway Matters

## **PR approach**

### Aims

- Secure local media coverage of Medway Council's climate change action plan
- Explore trade media opportunities to promote the council's climate change work
- City of Culture
- Child Friendly

### Approach

- Also need a USP for Medway – what makes us different
- Secure local media coverage of Medway Council's climate change action plan
- Planning around each milestone
- Explore trade media opportunities to promote the council's climate change work
- Promote climate change progress in Medway Matters
- Encourage CC agenda with KM group locally and regular joint activity – champion with us.

## **Risks and Challenges**

- Big expectations on the council – careful positioning regarding how much we are responsible for and can do (1.4%) – this is for all of us
- Huge subject – measured and measurable approach
- Climate change deniers

- Apathy – I can't be bothered, my small act won't count
- Resources to do it all.

**Evaluation – is critical**

- Monitor and collect data from all communications and engagement campaigns to evaluate success.
- Public perception survey annually focusing on residents' attitudes to the climate emergency and their own behaviours.
- Social media – reach and engagement with posts and video views
- Website analytics
- Staff engagement, induction completion,
- Event numbers and attendance.

## Climate change communications and engagement actions

### Three/six/twelve months

*Table 1 communication and engagement actions to be completed within a three-month period, July to September 2021*

|                                      | <b>Three months (July-September 2021)</b>   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
|                                      |   |
| <b>Action Plan</b>                   | Launch our Action Plan to our communities with a virtual community event – call to action is to ask what people can do in their homes/communities to do their bit.        |
|                                      | Create shorter more accessible summary of our Action Plan on our website.   |
| <b>Website</b>                       | By end of October (ready for COP26) have case study content (videos and written) and enable access to live streaming of events that we may support in the run up to COP26 |
| <b>Governance</b>                    | Agree governance routes for community engagement.   |
|                                      | Establish possible chair of Medway climate change network.  |
| <b>Engagement and COP26 planning</b> | Engage with community groups wishing to get involved in projects through 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector organisations and neighbourhood groups/forums.                            |
|                                      | Launch new Small Changes campaign ahead of COP26 (31 October-12 November)   |
|                                      | Community “Call for ideas” as part of COP26   |
|                                      | Launch schools’ campaign - COP26 autumn challenge   |
|                                      | Finalise other plans for COP26 initiatives  |
|                                      | Develop an informal staff network to become conduits for campaign information and share best practice.  |
|                                      | Section on the intranet for staff with ideas and case studies of what we’ve done so far.  |
|                                      | Explore joint working and academic research opportunities with universities   |
|                                      | Provision and promotion of climate change training through Medway Adult Education   |
|                                      | Align campaigns to link to national/international days for 2022.  |
|                                      | Youth led climate change project facilitated by Youth Services  |
| <b>PR</b>                            | PR – milestones to celebrate e.g. EV charging points  |
|                                      | If possible, have presence at some of our summer events for our climate change agenda   |

*Table 2 communication and engagement actions to be completed within a six-month period, October to December 2021*

|  | <b>Six months (October-December 2021)</b> |
|--|---|
|--|---|

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
|                    |  |
| <b>Action Plan</b> | Implement an engagement exercise to obtain views of stakeholders to inform the annual review of the Action Plan  |
| <b>Website</b>     | Develop the hub on the climate change section with a mix of bespoke content, more audience centric information, include more information on what we are doing, tangible results and case studies - start with community groups and young people. Update the design to tie into the latest campaign materials. For launch in January. |
|                    | Create toolkits for communities to use   |
|                    | Signpost to content on the website for businesses and toolkit to use. Incorporate new case studies (written or videos) to refresh the site. Turn the climate change action plan document into web pages to make it more accessible and readable.   |
|                    | Publish first carbon emissions data report   |
| <b>Governance</b>  | Have different engagement cells established and up and running providing content, ideas and suggestions for projects.  |
| <b>Engagement</b>  | Use council spaces to engage with people e.g., libraries.  |
|                    | Work with Medway Voluntary Action to establish process to recruit volunteers to help champion in their communities and be part of the wider network.   |
|                    | Continue to align campaigns to link to national/international days for 2022.   |
|                    | Set up young person's action network – get young people linked together to share ideas and support with Medway# and socials, building on results of young people's survey. Support with promoting case studies. Possible Medway Youth Champions scheme.  |
|                    | Regular updates in schools' newsletters  |
|                    | Include and promote climate change/energy campaigns on Adult social care portal  |
|                    | Explore and launch Medway Council staff volunteering opportunities   |
| <b>PR</b>          | Ongoing promotion of PR milestones.  |

Table 3 communication and engagement actions to be completed within a nine-month period, January to March 2022

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
|                    | <b>Nine months (January-March 2022)</b>   |
|                    |   |
| <b>Action Plan</b> | Review and updating of the Action Plan with input from community groups                             |
| <b>Website</b>     | Dashboard - create an online dashboard that tracks KPIs   |
| <b>Engagement</b>  | Business climate change newsletter with case studies.   |
|                    | Improved staff induction/training referencing climate change commitment and climate/carbon training |
| <b>PR</b>          | Ongoing promotion of PR milestone   |

Table 4 communication and engagement actions to be completed by June 2022

|                    | <b>Twelve months (up to June 2022)</b>  |
|--------------------|---|
|                    |   |
| <b>Action Plan</b> | Possible climate summit for Medway?   |
| <b>Website</b>     | How are we doing dashboard – action plans updated with comment on achievements over the past year.                            |
|                    | Further resources for communities and other stakeholders.   |
| <b>Governance</b>  | Governance system working well with flow of ideas, projects and case studies  |
| <b>Engagement</b>  | Develop and deliver a Medway Champions training model.  |
|                    | Council staff workshop  |
|                    | Adult Education family programme on how to reduce waste and consumption.  |
|                    | Work with schools to develop lesson plans and home learning resources.  |
|                    | Further engagement with young people through Medway Primary and Secondary School Associations and Trust executives.           |
|                    | Work with schools on school governor commitments to reducing carbon emissions.  |
|                    | Create and deliver energy efficient awareness campaigns to housing tenants and private landlords and homeowners.              |
|                    | Creation of networks and projects to support the sharing economy e.g., sustainable cafes, resource libraries                  |
|                    | Commitments for organisations to sign up to for Medway Climate Friendly status – Medway Healthy Workplace Awards.             |
|                    | Explore options for development of behavioural change programme for staff/councillors focussed on reducing our carbon impact. |