

## **Climate Change Member Advisory Group**

**1 December 2021**

### **Item 5. Update on Action Plan**

#### **1. Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050**

- The format of the action plan aligns with the 10 high level priority areas identified within the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy, with the aim of reaching net zero across all of Kent by 2050.
- Officers continue to attend the Kent Climate Change Network hosted by KCC, and attended by other Kent districts, and participate in information sharing via the online network.
- The 2019/20 carbon emissions assessment has been completed.
- Carbon Pathway (C Path) is an automated energy and carbon data management tool for the public sector, with a specific focus on the domestic sector. The C Path Project Board (led by KCC) were successfully awarded funding from the Sector Support Fund in December 2020 to develop the datasets and dashboard design. This work has been underway throughout 2021. Officers have attended a launch session which introduced the tool and explained its functionality.

#### **2. Public Sector Decision Making**

- The Climate Response team have noted an increase in the number of strategies and policies that they are being asked to comment on including the Local Plan and the School Place Planning Strategy. The team monitor the Directorate Management Forward Plan and request that all new and refreshed plans and strategies have given due consideration to the climate change agenda.
- The concept of monetising social value has been included in new tender documents over £100k, as part of the introduction of a new social value policy (More information is reported against item 3 on the agenda). The Climate Response team has provided compulsory measures to include within Invitation to Tender documents. This will include a request for evidence of savings in carbon emissions achieved through the contract. Procurement Policy Note (PPN06/21) "Taking Account of Carbon Reduction Plans", also mandates that, local government opportunities seek Carbon Reduction Plans from bidders who apply for contracts worth more than £5m per annum from 30 September 2021. Where appropriate the Council will include this requirement in its own tenders. Procurement Board has been appraised of the benefits and a draft Social Value Policy has been produced for consideration. The proposal

within the policy is being trialled for 6 months and will be presented at Procurement Board for endorsement.

- Recycled materials are continuing to be used as part of the Councils annual resurfacing programme. Medway has jointly been working, with our contractor Volker Highways and asphalt supplier Tarmac, to produce a carbon tracker which includes, identifying CO2 emissions and recycled content. The first year's usage data was captured for financial year 2020/21 and will be updated annually with the aim of increasing the use of materials with low carbon and using more recycled material.
- The first City Hall was held in Q2, attended by 134 children, young people, parents and carers to promote Child Friendly Medway. A strong theme around open spaces, environment and climate change was identified. The Climate Response team also facilitated a slot at the recent Child Friendly City Hall on 10 November with the session largely led by young people. Work on the Child-friendly vision and action plan continues for launch in 2022. During planning of our first City Hall event, officers identified a youth led organisation (Medway Youth Climate Change Movement) who were invited to attend our first City Hall. They are keen to help champion climate change issues for young people in Medway. We have introduced them to both Medway Youth Council and Medway Youth Service. The Climate Response team at Medway Council and all teams are exploring collaboration opportunities and ways to get more young people involved in the climate change agenda. In Q3 the Child Friendly Medway team, Climate Response team and Transport and Parking team launched an October Walk to School Challenge for COP26. The participating schools had an opportunity of winning an array of prizes including, a special presentation by the Kent Wildlife Trust, climate classroom delivered by the Climate Response team, a scooterpod, assembly delivered by MBE Rugby Star Martin Offiah on COP26 and climate change and an outdoors educational day with the Medway Rangers.
- Two new posts have been appointed to the Climate Response team - Climate Response Support Officer and Climate Response Engagement Officer which are both crucial to the delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan.
- A Councillor briefing session was held during October to provide members with an overview of their sphere of influence on the climate emergency. Members were asked for their thoughts on how they can support others to take climate action and the support required from officers to do this. The session was attended by 20 members and was positively received. The team will be reviewing all comments and feedback.
- 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.

### **3. Planning and Development**

- 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.
- Local Plan policies and development framework have continued to be drafted for inclusion in the Local Plan. Supportive policy frameworks have been drafted to encourage community-led initiatives, such as the promotion of decentralised renewable energy use or securing land for local food sourcing. Transport policies have been developed for the draft Local Plan and Hoo Development Framework.
- Work has continued on the development of an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Housing Infrastructure Fund Road and Rail schemes.

### **4. Climate Emergency Investment Fund**

- The Medway Tree Fund has received donations totalling £740 since it launched in November 2020.
- 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.
- £232K has been 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).
- Greenspaces officers have explored a potential partnership with Kent Wildlife Trust on their 'Wild Carbon' programme and have opened a discussion with Sussex LA's who have a Natural Capital and Offsetting pilot project underway.

### **5. Building Retrofit Programme**

- Trading Standards have drafted a policy around housing standards for private Landlords/Letting Agents and enforcement issues, this is currently being adopted corporately.
- The Housing Service is continuing to review asset information to provide an accurate position in relation to the energy efficiency of Housing Stock. Various software options are also being explored to enable more accurate forecasting and generation of programmes of work to improve the energy efficiency of Council stock. It was not feasible for the Council to bid for Social Housing

Decarbonisation Funding in wave 1 but preparation continues to be ready for future rounds.

- Medway Adult Education are working with the Climate Response team to collaborate and deliver online/video interactive talks including an eco-wrapping course in December.
- 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. Re:fit Phase 1 now consists of 11 buildings with an allocated spend of £3.m. The annual guaranteed carbon savings, across all 11 sites, is anticipated to be 446 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Due to supply chain issues, works have been slightly delayed and commenced in October. Solar panels have been installed at Gillingham library and work has started on Lordswood Library.
- The delivery of the ambitious LED street lighting replacement programme has continued. Of the 26,776 streetlights in Medway, 18,205 (68%) of these are now LED.

## **6. Transport, travel and digital connectivity**

- 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' focus campaign and involved collaboration with Connected Kerb, the Council's chosen EV charging point supplier and a number of other local EV stakeholders. The event was well attended and also received positive feedback on social media. As a result, it is intended that this will be an annual event.
- 34 electric vehicle charging points have been installed across 3 council owned car parks using funding from the Office of Zero Emissions Vehicles. The charge points, located at Rochester multi storey car park in Cory's Road (20 points), Station Road car park, Rainham (10 points), and Commercial Road car park in Strood (4 points) are now live and feedback has already been received from the operator, Connected Kerb, to say that uptake has been good.
- Officers have continued to work in partnership with KCC on the Kent 600 EV District Network project to deliver a consistent electric vehicle charging point network across 150 public car parks in Kent, including 30 in Medway. Procurement Board have recommended to approve the installation of the charge points via a 12-year concessionary contract.
- 10 twin fast chargers (7kW each) are due to be installed at Gun Wharf by the end of this year. The fast chargers will allow staff to charge their vehicles whilst at work while also supporting charging of fleet vehicles overnight.
- 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.

- Medway's EV Strategy is due to go to Cabinet by the end of this financial year for consideration.

## **7. Renewable Energy Generation**

- 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, has met to understand the roles and responsibilities involved and intends to meet with other local authorities that are further along 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.
- The Council supported Medway residents and small businesses to install rooftop 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, 15 have proceeded to install stage. The Medway conversion rate (27%) is similar to the overall county wide conversion rate of 28%. An evaluation report is currently with officers for review and consideration of participation in the next round, scheduled for Spring 2022.
- The Capital projects team have received cost options to upgrade to a fully traceable green supply of electricity.

## **8. Green Infrastructure**

- A web form for residents and businesses to support tree planting across Medway went live in November 2020 (donations totalling £740 has since been received).
- 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 Summer 2020.
- Medway Adult Education Community Learning team are working with other Medway partners as part of a Garden and Eco forum- aiming to work together on mapping community spaces and either referring people to projects or look to help/add provision.

- Opportunities are being explored and costed for the proposed community tree nursery and environment volunteer hub at Cozenton Park.
- Planning permission for Cockham Community Parkland was granted in Q2.
- The feasibility of a “living bridge” over the Peninsula Way as part of the HIF scheme is being delivered. Options include a green bridge and shared use bridge. The team are aiming to submit a pre-planning application during 2021/22. The Cumulative Ecological Assessment for the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid is underway and due to be completed this year.
- It has been confirmed that another i-Tree survey will be completed in 2026, as they are required every 5 years.
- Bio-diversity Net Gain is to be reflected in a new policy in the draft Local Plan. The draft of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will be published with the Local Plan. The draft Local Plan includes updated green infrastructure policy on developer contributions. Projects noted in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Schedule are to be published with the plan.
- This autumn there will be 47 additional trees planted by Medway Norse, on Medway owned land, including at 4 Friends sites. This work will be supported by contributions from Friends and Community Groups.

## **9. Supporting Low Carbon Business**

- The team supported the Medway Food Partnership launch event in November, presenting an update on the intentions of the Climate Change subgroup.
- Medway Remakery has now launched with pop up workshops to promote the initiative. Devised by the Medway Adult Education Community Learning Team, the Medway Remakery initiative launched in September - it aims to run a range of pop-up workshops in Medway and secure funding to set up a practical workshop/ studio. This will enable the running of courses which focus on our common desire to share skills and generate environmental impact. Using tutor experts to share a wealth of expertise to mend, reuse, recycle and upcycle and reduce landfill waste. Medway Adult Education has also been promoting a Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Climate Change and Environmental Awareness e-learning course, in Q2. So far, 1 student has enrolled, and 7 enquiries have been made.
- 21 Medway businesses have made a total of 72 environmental pledges which include recycling, encouraging car sharing/active travel, cutting food waste, regular servicing of fleet vehicles and reducing workplace energy usage. All participating businesses are actively recycling their waste and National Grid, MTS, Ward and Volker have also pledged to monitor energy use and reduce energy use in the workplace. Ward and National Grid are regularly servicing fleet vehicles and seeking to switch to technology which minimises environmental impact of their fleet vehicles. MTS have a sister company, composting the waste so that nothing goes to landfill and Chatha hygiene are (as a waste company) also involved in a move to have zero waste to landfill. Case studies of organisations which undertake pledges will be

collated to represent progress during 2021/22. Promotion of the programme via social media is planned for Q3.

## **10. Communications**

- There has been a strong focus on communications and engagement since the last meeting. 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. More information is reported against item 4 on the agenda.
- A survey is currently being undertaken to measure the current climate change response within schools and education centres this has been designed and sent to all schools. The survey aims to record the good works already being accomplished within Medway schools, so that we can celebrate and inspire new ideas and initiatives to be utilised by pupils and staff alike. The survey also looks to identify and address constraints and challenges faced in making the important changes necessary to build a sustainable future for our schools. The deadline for responses to the survey is the 20 December 2021.

## **11. Resilience and Adaption**

- A Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Annual Action Plan are in place which cross references with objectives within the Climate Change Action Plan. The Strategy will be revised in 2022/23.
- Areas for additional gully cleansing have been identified for 2021/22 and include an annual cleaning regime of the A&B network, the Resilient Network and known flood sites. These sites are monitored and amended annually as required. The next review will be April 2022.
- A hydraulic sewer model has been undertaken by Southern Water Work to explore options for a Flood Alleviation Scheme to reduce flood risk and increase resilience in Luton is underway. The next stage is design during 2022/23.
- Work to identify and deliver improvements in Hoo using outputs from the Surface Water Management Plan and work to develop a Strood Flood Risk Strategy is ongoing.
- The Lead Local Flood Authority has input into the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Sequential Test, Flood and Water management policy in the draft Local Plan, site assessment process and Hoo Development Framework.
- The role of consultee for planning applications, to promote sustainable surface water arrangements in new developments, is underway and ongoing. The numbers of units with SuDs are unknown until schemes are built out.
- No significant flood events occurred in Q2 or were recorded on the Severe Weather Impact Monitoring System (SWIMS).