

Climate Change Member Advisory Group

1 February 2022

Item 5. Update on Action Plan

1. Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050

- Officers also attended the Kent Environment Strategy annual conference; Kent 2050: The Road to Net Zero in November 2021 and are currently preparing an annual progress report against the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES).
- The Council's annual Carbon emission reports can be found on the Council website at https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200348/climate_change/1502/our_carbon_emissions_reports
- A Carbon Reporting Working Group has been set up to assist with the streamlining of data collection by the Business Intelligence team which will start in Q2 2022. Data for 2020/21 is currently being collected and validated in preparation for submission to Cabinet in June 2022.
- The Organisational Change section of the Business Change Team worked with the Property service on a re-organisation of the team. Part of this re-organisation included the creation of a new "Energy & FM Data Officer" post, which was filled in November 2021. The post holder has already carried out extensive energy data collection and validation which will assist with reporting the Council's carbon emissions
- Officers have been exploring options for assessing Scope 3 emissions and this includes offering an industrial placement to a university student to assist with this work.

2. Public Sector Decision Making

- Work has commenced on the refresh of the Climate Change action plan, ensuring that actions are appropriate and SMART and reviewing any gaps.
- Recommendations from a review of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are informing the action plan refresh.
- Following trials, it has been agreed that Warm Mixed Asphalt can be used for resurfacing schemes where appropriate. Less energy is used, less emissions are produced, and it is still 100% recyclable back into asphalt in the future.
- The digital team have undertaken work to decrease the amount of energy used by servers hosting medway.gov.uk by removing embedded videos and unnecessary documents.
- All new Medway procurement activity now has a weighted social value element, and a consistent consideration is tonnes of CO₂e reduced. In addition, services have the option to choose additional environmental impacts such as a reduction in single use plastics.
- A trial to ascertain the benefits of the draft Social Value policy is well under way. The final illustration of benefits will be ready in early 2022.

- Contract documents for the 'Mixed dry recycling contract and Waste Transfer Station' include extensive environmental impact clauses.
- The Climate Response team has confirmed it will host 2 student interns during Summer 2022 through the Employability Points scheme.
- Medway Adult Education continue to embed carbon management in their programmes. The free level 2 Certificate in Understanding Climate Change and Environmental Awareness, e-learning course had 4 registered learners confirmed at the end of Q3. Some classes have gone online and supported learning has become virtually paperless by using Google Classrooms. The ongoing embedding of reuse/recycle is taking place across many courses, both centre and outreach based, including targeted areas/deprived wards. Medway Adult Education delivered an online interactive eco-wrapping course in December.

3. Planning and Development

- Local plan draft policy documents are being progressed as per the key milestone schedule for the Medway Local Plan.

4. Climate Emergency Investment Fund

- A new external investment officer is now in post and the Climate Response Team is engaging with the new post holder with a meeting planned early in Q4.
- A bid has been submitted via the DEFRA Air Quality Grant Programme for a project, in conjunction with the University of Kent, to reduce idling in the Rainham AQMA through the use of signage.
- Officers have raised with counterparts at Kent County Council to see if there is any funding available to support opportunities for a joint Kent & Medway Renewable Energy (and storage) Opportunities Mapping study. This is still to be confirmed.

5. Building Retrofit Programme

- We are part of the Greater Southeast Energy Hub bid for Sustainable Warmth which is targeted solely at private properties and comprises LADS3 and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) and runs for two years. We are awaiting the outcome of the bid.
- Under the Government's Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme, Local Authorities have the flexibility to define eligible households living in, or at risk of fuel poverty. This scheme is known as the Local Authority Eligibility Flexibility (LA Flex). The Housing Service continues to promote LA Flex through the contractor, Aran group and is providing a top up to a small number of cases where work over the initial grant is needed. To date this financial year, 38 applications have been granted funding. The measures being requested are loft and cavity wall insulation (31) and boiler replacement (some with loft and cavity wall) (13).
- Work continues on the £12m retrofit Re:fit programme across the Council's estate which will result in substantial energy and financial savings. Solar panels have been installed at Gillingham, Cuxton and Lordswood libraries. An

LED lighting replacement programme is currently underway at Gun Wharf and Cuxton library. Planning approval is still required for heat pumps which will be installed after the heating season has ended at the Brook Theatre and Gillingham, Lordswood and Wigmore libraries. Air handling systems work has been reprogrammed to next financial year.

- The rollout of the LED smart street lighting scheme continues on schedule. 17 CMS base stations have been installed, 15,855 new LED lanterns completed, and 3845 new columns installed. 783 lantern designs approved for areas which required a design.
- SSE are reviewing suitable car parks to establish the possibility of installing solar PV, including solar canopies and EV charging points, with a possible location identified in Rainham.

6. Transport, travel and digital connectivity

- The EV Strategy was presented to CMT in January. Feedback from the group necessitates some additional work on the strategy and it is anticipated that it will be presented to Cabinet later in the year.
- Connected Kerb have produced a landing page for the “Kent 600” Kent and Medway wider EV Network Project (<https://www.connectedkerb.com/kent>)
- Officers now have access to Connected Kerb’s back-office system to monitor usage of new EV charge points and continue to publicise these wherever possible.
- 2 more businesses have signed up to participate in the Kent REVS scheme (a total of 10 businesses across Medway have signed up since May 2021).
- 20 fast chargers (7kW each) are due to be installed at Gun Wharf. The fast chargers will support charging of fleet vehicles overnight.
- A successful 3-day operational trial of Electric RCVs was undertaken in Q3. Waste services continue to investigate possibility of an RCV vehicle as part of the phased replacement in conjunction with Medway Norse and the Finance team.
- A rights of way survey has been undertaken of every Medway Public Right of Way. This will enable a comprehensive asset register to be developed allowing the Highway Authority to properly assess the state of the network and plan improvements, and co-ordinate maintenance. The final works are being completed on the Cliffe to Grain section of the England Coast Path and extension of the Thames Path, which are two National Trails.
- The Digital team has supported the introduction of ANPR in Rochester Multistorey car park. Initial indications are extremely positive but this pilot will be closely monitored to inform the business case to roll out smart parking to other car parks. This will reduce printed materials and waste.
- 14 out of 16 parking permits are now available to apply for on [Medway.gov.uk](https://www.medway.gov.uk). Since early November, customers can now also apply for a Traders parking permit online. This will reduce printed materials and waste.
- The Safeguarding team are moving towards a fully hybrid approach to child protection conferences that allows families and friends networks along with key staff to meet in person for meetings with other professionals dialling in. Currently trialling new equipment to seek the suitability and quality of this approach and if successful will roll out in full, from January (Covid-dependent).

- During Covid home working has been made available to staff, reducing home to work mileage.
- Delivery of the Air Quality Action Plan continues with the following key achievements:
 - The Annual Status Report has been approved by DEFRA and positive feedback received. All of the changes and enhancements have been completed for the new Kent Air website.
 - Work continues on a draft Action Plan for the Four Elms Hill Air Quality Management Area.
 - During the autumn we carried out campaigns to encourage awareness about our air quality through activities such as car sharing and choosing cycle routes with the best air quality as well as encouraging people to talk to us about how our air quality alerts could improve people's days.
- Available fleet recognition schemes are currently being researched and the findings will be brought together by the end of March 2022. The briefing note will include benefits, disadvantages and next steps.
- Work is continuing at pace on the full fibre to the premises (FTTP) build. As of October 2021, full fibre connectivity is now available to over 8,900 premises.

7. Renewable Energy Generation

- Installs of solar panels as part of the Solar Together Kent scheme have continued across Kent. The final number of installs is awaited but currently stands at 21 which is a conversion rate of 32% and is similar to the overall county wide conversion rate of 33%. The Council has committed to support the next round of Solar Together Kent, with residents able to register from 7 February.

8. Green Infrastructure

- The community continues to be engaged in community growing through projects including the allotment at Fort Amherst and the Dementia gardening project at Eastgate House.
- Cozenton tree nursery report was approved by the Property board in December 2021. Officers are working with Norse to investigate cost neutral options for the running of the site by the end of January. Subject to further approval by Property Board, delivery of the project will commence in the new financial year.
- A tree planting ceremony took place in Parkwood, with one tree planted using donations from the Medway Tree Fund.
- Over 500 donated and grown on trees have been planted during the winter by Volunteers and Medway Norse.
- The State of Nature in Kent report is due to be published in March 2022, and work is ongoing to establish Biodiversity Network Recovery Strategies for Medway; a requirement under the Environment Act 2020 that received Royal Assent this quarter.
- The draft of Medway Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework was published, with the final version due to be published in Q4.
https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/6279/medway_green_and_blue_infrastructure_framework

9. Supporting Low Carbon Business

- Medway's business support programme will be re-procured in Q4. The objective, to work with the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and the Kent and Medway Growth Hub to embed net zero carbon understanding in start-up business support and other business training provided on Medway's behalf, will be a key element of the invitation to tender
- The Skills & Employability Plan for Medway is currently being refreshed and as part of this de-carbonisation is being reviewed as a theme for action. MidKent College are running a decarbonisation in construction programme.
- All self-certification proposals through the Innovation Park Medway (IPM) Local Development Order will consider emission reductions, sustainability, and environmental considerations in line with the adopted IPM Design Code. This will be implemented as part of the initial discussions and selection of prospective tenants. Legal advisors are drafting this into the agreement documents.

10. Communications

- Please refer to agenda item 4, Communications and Engagement.

11. Resilience and Adaption

- The Surface Water Management Plan for Lower and Middle Stoke has now been commenced.
- The Cold Weather plan has been updated by the Public Health Consultant and is currently awaiting approval. Communications have been issued to residents to spread key cold weather messages since the last meeting.