

Diversity impact assessment

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| TITLE |
| Climate Change Action Plan |
| DATE |
| 21/03/2022 |
| LEAD OFFICER. |
| Vicki Emrit, Climate Response Officer, Environmental Services |
| 1 Summary description of the proposed change |
| <p>What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?</p> <p>This overarching DIA seeks to consider and summarise the cumulative impact the Climate Change Action Plan may have on people with protective characteristics within the Medway community and workforce (as defined by the Equality Act 2010). Further DIA's will be undertaken as required to consider the impact of the individual projects in the Climate Change Action Plan.</p> <p>In April 2019, the council declared a Climate Change Emergency and in June 2021, the Cabinet approved the Council's first Climate Change Action Plan.</p> <p>This rolling action plan provides a framework as to how the council will reduce or eliminate the carbon emissions associated with its own estate and operations. It establishes how the council can learn from, support, raise awareness and influence others to reduce carbon emissions across the Medway area to net zero by 2050. The plan also sets out actions to address climate resilience and adaptation. The action plan is a live document and will be monitored and updated regularly, to include new and refined actions as we build on our knowledge, new opportunities and national policy arise, new funding streams become available and as we build on our engagement programme.</p> <p>Acting on climate change is not a statutory requirement however, the council has a pivotal role to play by providing local leadership and embedding climate change in the delivery of its services. The action plan acknowledges the significance of working collaboratively with our stakeholders and partners to achieve this ambitious target and will also require considerable effort from the people, communities and organisations within Medway.</p> |
| 2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment |
| <p>Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile</p> <p>Responding to the climate emergency requires behaviour change across as wide a range of people as possible including staff, residents, businesses, schools, local groups, suppliers and visitors to Medway.</p> <p>We are committed to carrying out additional work to gather new evidence to support the developing Climate Change action plan. The plan includes a clear action to create a programme of events and opportunities for the communities in Medway to contribute to the developing action plan. We also support the Kent Environment Communications Strategy which intends to understand more about our target audiences across Kent and Medway, from schools and young people, older residents, vulnerable residents, disabled residents and those that are disengaged.</p> |

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Further to the completion of the Diversity Impact Assessment that accompanied the Climate Change Action Plan in 2021, we have published a Communications and Engagement Strategy which commits to better understanding our target audiences. Consequently, we have:

- sought views from residents on climate change via the Citizens Panel, resulting in 193 responses
- engaged with Assistant Directors and Heads of Service across the Council on the development of the plan. Climate Change is now a core council value and all officers have an obligation to consider the impact of key decisions on climate change and to further embed it into their service plans.
- committed to making sure the views of young people in Medway are included in our developing action plan and have appointed a representative from the Medway Youth Council to become a member of our Climate Change Member Advisory Board. This also supports our Child Friendly Medway vision.
- hosted our first large scale engagement event, the “Climate Change Conversation”, in November, to encourage the community to tell us what they could be doing to help tackle the climate crisis. We also held our first Community Network in February and anticipate more ideas and action to come from this, led by the community.
- acknowledged that there are gaps in the action plan in relation to engaging with harder to reach communities, further to a third party assessment of the action plan by Climate Emergency UK. We have included actions which commit us to developing an inclusive engagement programme.
- redesigned our Climate Change web pages to include tailored information for residents, businesses, community organisations, landlords, schools, universities and visitors, explaining what they can do to help lower their carbon footprint and the support that is available to help them.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

| Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010) | Adverse impact | Advance equality | Foster good relations |
|---|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Age | | Yes | |

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| Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010) | Adverse impact | Advance equality | Foster good relations |
|---|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Disability | | Yes | |
| Gender reassignment | | Yes | |
| Marriage/civil partnership | | Yes | |
| Pregnancy/maternity | | Yes | |
| Race | | Yes | |
| Religion/belief | | Yes | |
| Sex | | Yes | |
| Sexual orientation | | Yes | |
| Other (eg low income groups) | | Yes | |

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

Scientific evidence states that if no action is taken to respond to the climate emergency, everyone will be adversely impacted but particularly protected characteristic groups. For example, the effects of climate change will result in hotter summers which will lead to health and wellbeing risks particularly for vulnerable members of the community such as the very young or elderly.

Measures to tackle climate change, such as those in the action plan, will limit these threats and have direct positive health effects for example increased fitness from cycling and walking and better air quality from reduced car journeys.

Further DIA's will be undertaken for individual projects in the action plan as required. For example, in terms of the age equality strand, consideration will need to be given to differing concerns over accessibility of public transport and different abilities to walk and cycle as an alternative mode of transport.

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5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

Actions which have the biggest impact on carbon emission reduction, such as the installation of renewable energy sources (e.g., solar panels or heat pumps), install of insulation and transitioning to zero emission vehicles, generally require a bigger financial outlay than actions such as correctly recycling materials or buying locally produced food. This may be a barrier to low income groups.

We have included a commitment in the Climate Change Action Plan to continue to engage at a strategic level with local and regional partnerships to give our residents access to schemes for example offering discounted energy efficiency measures.

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

| Action | Lead | Deadline or review date |
|---|---|---|
| Roll out carbon literacy/climate change training for staff and explore opportunities to add carbon management messages to existing training that the Council creates. | Climate Response Engagement Officer | CL training - Q1 (June) 2022 Quarterly |
| Climate Response Team officer to sit on Equalities Board | Climate Response Engagement Officer | Quarterly |
| Review literature on the impact of climate change on health inequalities and apply findings to the Medway population. | Public Health Consultant | Quarterly |
| Develop and roll out an inclusive engagement programme (internal and external) to obtain the views of staff, residents, businesses, and stakeholders to inform the annual review of the action plan | Head of Communications and Marketing and PA10 – Comms Sub group | During 2022 |
| Build on community engagement opportunities through new and existing community forums, including with under-represented groups and via Medway's Citizen's Panel | Head of Communications and Marketing | During 2022 |
| Improve the way the Council communicates about discount and energy grant schemes available to businesses and residents including those who are in fuel poverty, on a low income and are vulnerable to living in a cold home due to age/health conditions. | Head of Strategic Housing | Quarterly |
| Monitor the progress of the Climate Change Action Plan and ensure DIA's are undertaken as necessary for the | Climate Response Officer and relevant | Quarterly Reporting |

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| Action | Lead | Deadline or review date |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| individual projects within the Climate Change Action Plan | project/service leads | |
| Participate in Kent Green Action meetings (in support of the Kent Environment Communications Strategy) and the Climate Change Network to further understand our audiences. | Climate Response Engagement Officer | Frequency to be determined by KCC – regular attendance |
| Review the DIA taking into consideration feedback from the engagement programme and intelligence from the above meetings | Climate Response Officer | January 2023 |

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

To proceed with the change, implementing the above action plan.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director Front Line Services

Date of authorisation

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