

## Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group

Held at:	Remote meeting
Date	Thursday, 18 March 2021
Present	Councillors Connor McConville, Ian Meyers, Stuart Peall and Lesley Whybrow (Chair)
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Gary Fuller
Officers Present:	Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), John Holman (Assistant Director of Housing), Hazel Sargent (Low Carbon and Sustainability Specialist), Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services) and Adrian Tofts (Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist)
Others Present:	None

### 29. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 30. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 were approved. The Chairman asked for her signature to be added to the minutes.

Although the Chair, Councillor Whybrow, is aware that the agendas and minutes are published on the Council's website, she asked if these meetings could also be open to the public. As all current working groups were created at the Leader's request and the terms of reference state they are not open to the press or public, this request would need to be considered outside of the meeting.

### 31. **Carbon Action Plan**

The Low Carbon and Sustainability Specialist gave a presentation concentrating on Stage 1 Actions and Measures of the Carbon Action Plan with indicated timelines.

A wide ranging look at topics including:

- Carbon literacy courses for staff, short brief courses to be considered with help from KCC.
- Climate Change Champion scheme – the staff intranet contains details.
- Street lighting – underway, however remaining actions have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Travel – the Council currently has a cycle to work scheme and car sharing incentives for staff. Members noted that cycling proficiency lessons are available, including e-bike lessons.
- Water usage – to be part of a general awareness energy campaign as soon as the office reopens. Looking at the whole district a member had contacted Affinity Water who had provided shower timers for some households and this could be extended to every household in the district.
- EV staff pool cars – need to look at business mileage. An EV charging point is not possible in the Civic Centre Car Park, however installation is possible in the Visitors Car Park.
- Review carbon and waste impacts for catering events – to be reviewed in October as many events are online at present.
- Measure waste – improvements to recycling bins to be made.
- End single-use plastic – switch to using glass/china cups and tea-towels, however hygiene will need to be considered. The Chair commented that the coffee machines at the Civic Centre produce too much waste; kitchen facilities could be better utilised.
- Reduce printing and paper waste – possible reduction of photocopiers at the Civic Centre and encourage online applications.
- Review of Green Infrastructure Strategy – Long list of priorities to be produced by May, and it is hoped that a report will be available for the next meeting.

### 32. **Implementation Plan for the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy- Council's response**

Members were provided with suggested responses that Folkestone and Hythe District Council could make to the consultation on the Implementation Plan. There are ten priority areas including timelines.

Priority 1: Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050

Priority 2: Public Sector Decision Making

Priority 3: Planning and Development

Priority 4: Climate Emergency Investment Fund

Priority 5: Building Retrofit Programme

Priority 6: Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity

Priority 7: Renewable Energy Generation

Priority 8: Green Infrastructure – Members comments included tree planting, Stagecoach's strategy for carbon neutral transport and supporting business sign up to 'Plastic Free' initiatives.

Priority 9: Supporting Low Carbon Business

Priority 10: Communications – KCC to lead this strategy with the District Council to amplify the strategy. Members were advised that a meeting, suggested by KCC, is to be arranged.

Members suggested that the response is made more positive encouraging open communication channels to continue conversations. It was agreed that the offered meeting should be arranged as soon as possible.

### 33. **Housing**

The Director of Housing and Operations presented information on Housing current thinking and the approach to achieving Net Carbon Zero. He advised members that, the initial priority was to clearly establish the carbon footprint of the housing stock, from which an action plan can be produced using best practise. A stock survey is currently being procured which will inform the process. Members were advised of timelines of these various actions.

HRA new builds – Government requirement is that all new build should be net carbon zero from 2030. It's the intent for any new build produced by housing will be as carbon neutral as possible from now. This may impact on scheme viability. New sites would include open green space and parking provision. The Highview site was used as an example. A presentation will be brought back to this working group with further development details.

The government vision is that all buildings, including the Housing Stock should be carbon zero by 2050 through retrofitting, changes in how energy is produced through the grid and future technologies not yet available. It was noted that installation of gas boilers to new builds has to cease by 2025 but housing would endeavour to stop replacing gas boilers in existing stock where ever possible sooner. Significant costs would be incurred in achieving these targets.

The Assistant Director – Housing, took members through the 'Advancing Net Zero' presentation which provided a definition of how the Council achieves net zero carbon. Four key principles were outlined; measure and disclose carbon; reduce energy demand; generate balance from renewables; improve verification and rigour.

Turning to costs, an important aspect in achieving net zero carbon. Members were advised of retrofitting costs, (indicatives costs are £20k/property - £68m for the councils housing stock), new approaches and remote management.

Members were keen to explore funding methods, such as partnerships, Homes England and the Decarbonisation Fund. For residents, Warm Homes Initiative and Green Homes Grant were mentioned.

### 34. **Wider District Emissions work**

The Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist gave a presentation on addressing district-wide carbon emissions drawing attention to the original

Council resolution in declaring a climate and ecological emergency. Also taking into account the ambitions within the Corporate Plan.

The presentation included:

- District Emissions Profile – which included transportation and stationary energy scopes.
- Key Considerations – broken down into six groups; road transport, residential buildings, industrial/commercial, aviation, other activities and net absorption through land use
- Potential Structure and Focus – consisted of five pillars as above (excluding aviation) concentrating on focus strategy and suggested key partner involvement.
- Key questions for members – around structure and focus, priorities, realistic delivery, influence and further ideas for consideration.

Members thanked officers for this presentation and were keen to understand the data and how this relates to this District. They were a little concerned that the information was not specific enough for the District, bearing in mind the uniqueness of it. Their concerns centred around Lydd Airport, Dungeness Power Station, Channel Tunnel and the M20, which generate emissions and that the Council would not be able to influence.

Officers were asked to look at providing data that is more specifically centred around the district in order to make the information distinguishable to this area, rather than nationally.

Prior to the closure of this meeting, with the Chair's consent, members suggested the following updates for the next meeting.

- Wider District Emissions
- EV Charging points
- LED street lighting
- Flood resilience