

NET ZERO 2030 UPDATE - JANUARY 2021

Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 19 January 2021

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- Cabinet - 11 February 2021

Key Decision: No

This reports support the Key Aim of The Council's commitment to Net Zero 2030 made in November 2019.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Margot McArthur

Contact Officer(s): Helen French, Ext. 7357; Margaret Carr, Ext 7341; Naiomi Sargant, Ext.7122

Recommendation to Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee:

To recommend to Cabinet to agree the Net Zero 2030 actions for 2021-22.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

To agree the Net Zero 2030 actions for 2021-22.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council have committed to working towards achieving Net Zero emissions by 2030 on Council assets and services.
- 2 It has also been agreed that the Council will be a “community leader” and encourage low carbon measures across the District through education, best practice, incentives, policy and opportunities. This includes working collaboratively with Kent County Council, Parish and Town Councils, Local Interest Group and the Local Government Association.

Net Zero 2030 and the Environment

- 3 Reducing carbon emissions goes hand in hand with environmental conservation and improvement. The connection between climate change and nature has been recognised nationally through the Climate Change Act 2008, the Government's 25 year Environment Plan "A Green Future" and the forthcoming Environment Bill.
- 4 Climate Change is expected to cause hotter drier summers and warmer wetter winters in Kent. There will be increased frequency and severity of storms causing additional flooding. The changing climate will also have an impact on health and wellbeing, and biodiversity and wildlife causing the natural environment to be under increased pressure.
- 5 Therefore, the net zero work, undertaken by the council, will include measures and projects to mitigate the causes of climate change, namely through reducing carbon emissions, and also adapt to the expected effects of a changing climate. Helping the Council and District to be more climate resilient.
- 6 Adaptation measures could include:
 - Creating new habitats and increasing connectivity for wildlife
 - Natural flood alleviation measures to protect places from fluvial and surface water flooding
 - Improving the quality and resilience of green spaces and making the most of new opportunities
 - Sustainable water management to ensure water is used efficiently in an area already classed as "water stressed"

Net Zero Actions 2021-22

- 7 In November 2019, the Council agreed a series of actions to begin the process of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Progress on these actions was reported to the Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee in October 2020.
- 8 These actions have now been updated and revised to take account of new opportunities and innovations. Additional actions have also been added. The actions for 2021-22 are shown in Table 1.
- 9 The Net Zero Cabinet Working Group and the Net Zero Officer Working Group were involved in drafting the actions and both groups expressed support.

- 10 The actions vary from the relatively straight forward to those more complex. It is important to ensure actions are ambitious and innovative but also effective and achievable.
- 11 Progress in achieving the actions will be delivered through specific delivery projects. Table 1 shows example delivery projects related to the actions. The list of projects is not exclusive to allow for flexibility throughout the year. New opportunities will arise and circumstances may change and therefore the list and number of delivery projects is likely to change.
- 12 All projects will be assessed for feasibility, viability and the impact on achieving the Council's Net Zero 2030 commitment. Each proposal will undergo a rigorous appraisal to explore the project in detail and to ensure it is reasonable, appropriate and achievable. This may result in projects being modified, adapted or deferred so that they achieve the maximum benefit and have the desired outcome.
- 13 There will be a monitoring and review process to evaluate the success and impact of the project. This will also be an opportunity to consider whether the project could be repeated in an alternative way, in a different location or by another delivery partner. It will also allow officers to identify best practice and future improvements.
- 14 A timescale of either short, medium, long or ongoing has been included for each action. The majority of actions are ongoing, as progress will continue to be made each year.

Table 1: Net Zero 2030 Actions - 2021/22

Category	Actions	Example Delivery Projects
<p>Energy and Water Efficiency Measures in Council Buildings</p>	<p>Increase energy efficiency in Council buildings (Ongoing)</p> <p>Explore Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for energy efficiency improvements in the Council Offices (Short Term)</p> <p>Water efficiency measures in Council buildings (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Move to a renewable electricity supplier</p> <p>Promote Green Office Week and encourage staff behavioural change - Educate staff about how they can be more energy and water efficient e.g. turning off computers/screens, reducing screen brightness, turning off taps etc.</p> <p>Include projects identified in Energy Management Survey recommendations (January 2020) in bid to Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund such as glazing and solar PV.</p> <p>Work with APSE Energy to produce a heat decarbonisation plan for the Council and its assets</p> <p>Reduce energy and water usage in the office at source e.g. efficient heating, replacing poor performing equipment/appliances, smart lighting (timer/sensor etc.)</p>
<p>Community Engagement and Encouragement</p>	<p>Create a dedicated “Net Zero” and “Climate Change” webpage (Short Term)</p> <p>Promote national events to support wildlife awareness and opportunities to improve biodiversity (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Develop and implement a “Net Zero 2030 Communications Plan”</p> <p>Making space for nature at home event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional videos e.g. pond creation, making habitats, bug hotels etc. • Plots for Pollinators

Category	Actions	Example Delivery Projects
	<p>Promote national events to support water saving initiatives (Ongoing)</p> <p>Support and promote initiatives and opportunities to reduce waste and improve levels of recycling (Ongoing)</p> <p>Help householders and businesses improve energy efficiency by providing free advice and support for energy improvements and energy saving (Ongoing)</p> <p>Hold a Green Summit in bringing together groups, organisations, companies and experts to engage and inspire residents (Short Term)</p>	<p>Participate in Zero Waste Week</p> <p>Promote the Green Homes Grant</p> <p>Include useful information on the Net Zero 2030 webpage and ensure that the page is kept up to date</p>
Green travel	<p>Promote low carbon travel (Ongoing)</p> <p>Improve the electric vehicle charging network across the District (Ongoing)</p> <p>Work with schools, local communities and groups to encourage community transport hubs for short journeys, minimising pollution, improving air quality and reducing congestion (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Promote low carbon travel including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle to work scheme • Health walks • Local Walking Routes • Reducing Officer Mileage • Cycle routes • Car share • Public transport • Salary sacrifice schemes

Category	Actions	Example Delivery Projects
	<p>Promote the annual Car Free Day and similar initiatives (Ongoing)</p> <p>Continue our transition to a zero-carbon emissions vehicle fleet wherever practicable (Ongoing/Long Term)</p>	<p>Support an electric vehicle car club, to promote the use of zero-emissions vehicle, to improve air quality in our District and produce an income to support Council services</p> <p>Investigate incentives for taxi drivers to use vehicles with zero tailpipe emission</p> <p>Roll out “free” electric car charging points across our car park estate</p> <p>Install Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Council buildings</p> <p>Working with landowners to install new charging points across the District</p> <p>A Development Plan Policy - Require the installation of electric vehicle charging points in all new developments, both residential and non-residential</p>
<p>Making the Best Use of Green Spaces</p>	<p>Carbon emission offsetting through new planting including planting new trees (Ongoing)</p> <p>Improve areas for biodiversity and create new habitats (Ongoing)</p> <p>Natural flood management (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Pocket Forest planting</p> <p>Wildflower planting and creation of new habitats</p> <p>Investigate areas where natural flood management measures could be used to alleviate flooding</p>

Category	Actions	Example Delivery Projects
Engage with landowners, partners and businesses	<p>Require bidders for all tenders to include an environmental statement, including their plan for achieving Net Zero, a 'Net Zero Commitment' (Ongoing)</p> <p>Report and promote our actions towards Net Zero, and support our partners including landowners, residents, businesses and visitors to our District to play their part (Ongoing)</p> <p>Encourage the location of clean growth businesses in our District (Ongoing)</p> <p>Work with the local government family within Kent to deliver Net Zero across all our communities (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Support the delivery of Kent and Medway's Energy and Low Emissions Strategy and it's priority actions</p> <p>Engage with the business community to discuss how SDC can support low carbon initiatives</p> <p>Investigate how SDC and businesses can effectively manage post Covid plastic waste and encourage a green recovery</p> <p>Look across local government both in the UK and beyond to find further appropriate and deliverable ideas and initiatives</p>
Carbon Emission baseline and Opportunity Audit	<p>Audit our current and levels of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions (Short Term)</p> <p>Undertake an Opportunity Audit for ways to reduce carbon emissions in Council buildings and assets (Short Term)</p>	<p>Continue to use the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reporting Tool on an annual basis to audit our levels of emissions and energy use</p> <p>Work with APSE Energy as part of our bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund to map a heat decarbonisation plan for the council and its assets</p>

Category	Actions	Example Delivery Projects
<p>Council Plans and Strategies</p>	<p>Deliver the carbon emission reducing aspects of the Air Quality Management Action Plan (Ongoing)</p> <p>Deliver the environmental aspects of Sevenoaks District Councils Council and Development Plans (Ongoing)</p> <p>Explore opportunities to invest in clean growth such as a local Net Zero Bank to finance energy efficiency and carbon reduction (Medium Term)</p> <p>Where everything possible has been done to achieve zero carbon but there is still a shortfall, take action through offsetting carbon dioxide emissions where necessary, and explore a Carbon Offset Fund to finance this (Medium/Long Term)</p>	<p>Officers to consider how SDC plans and strategies can take account of Climate Change and contribute to the Net Zero 2030 work</p> <p>SMT to embed actions in the Net Zero report in their teams where they apply to their service areas</p> <p>Include consideration of Net Zero 2030 in committee reports and decisions</p>
<p>Sustainable buildings and renewable energy generation</p>	<p>Investigate ways to encourage sustainable building practices (Ongoing)</p> <p>In all new SDC and SDC owned company developments, set an ambitious stretch target for sustainable homes (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Provide a one year 100% reduction on the District Council element of council tax for new certified Passivhaus 'Classic', 'Plus' & 'Premium' homes built in the District, in any year until 2030</p> <p>Undertake a renewable energy opportunities audit</p>

Category	Actions	Example Delivery Projects
	Investigate renewable energy generation possibilities (Short/Medium Term)	

Next Steps

- 15 Officers will continue to assess and implement the delivery projects and investigate new opportunities.
- 16 Regular update reports on the Net Zero 2030 work will be provided for members via the Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

The Council have made a commitment to Net Zero 2030.

Key Implications

Financial

Funding for the Net Zero 2030 commitment will be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

No legal implications have been identified.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

The Council have committed to Net Zero 2030 and have identified revised actions to go towards achieving this target.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Richard Morris

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