

Appendix A - Net Zero Actions 2021/22 Progress Update

In November 2019, the Council agreed a series of actions to begin the process of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. These actions have now been updated and revised to take account of new opportunities and innovations. Additional actions have also been added. The 2021/22 Actions were agreed by Cabinet in February 2021.

The actions are grouped into a series of work areas relevant to the Net Zero commitment.



Energy and Water Efficiency

We are committed to increase the energy and water efficiency in Council buildings. This will also reduce the associated carbon emissions. In addition, we will aim to source the remaining energy needs from renewable and low carbon sources.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
ENG1	Increase energy efficiency in Council buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to ensure that the council can reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030 we will commission a Carbon Reduction Plan to map out our path to net zero. The Carbon Reduction Plan will be focused on how the council can reduce the carbon emissions from its assets but will also consider the wider district emissions, opportunities for renewable energy generation and carbon offsetting. • Six of the 13 recommendations in the Energy Management Survey of Argyle Road offices have been fully or are partially completed. • An internal staff competition, held via Grapevine (internal newsletter) was held in September offering prizes for ideas to improve energy efficiency and to reduce waste in Council buildings. The ideas have been presented to management and then implemented as appropriate.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
ENG2	Explore Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for energy efficiency improvements in the Council Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="712 300 2031 411">• A bid for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund was prepared and submitted; but later withdrawn following questions over long term future of Argyle Road building and match funding required.
ENG3	Water efficiency measures in Council buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="712 577 1995 647">• Water efficiency measures have been implemented including toilet refurbishments to replace old cisterns and waterless urinals.

Community Engagement and Encouragement

We will support businesses, residents and visitors to reduce carbon emissions across the District. We will do this through positive engagement, best practice and working with local communities.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
COM1	Create a dedicated “Net Zero” and “Climate Change” webpage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dedicated webpage has been set up and is regularly updated. www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero A Net Zero 2030 Communications has been developed and implemented. Net Zero 2030 regularly features on the Council’s social media posts and an InShape article has been published in July 2021.
COM2	Promote national events to support wildlife awareness and opportunities to improve biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sevenoaks Wildlife Event took place in July/August 2021 in partnership with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership. This included releasing “making space for nature at home” videos and “Eco-trails” in SDC owned open space and woodland. The videos, released via social media and available on the Council’s YouTube channel, sought to increase resident’s awareness of local biodiversity and provide engaging DIY activities for families to do at home. The scavenger hunts included an eco-quiz and awarded prizes to five randomly selected residents who took part.
COM3	Promote national events to support water saving initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Net Zero communications plan provides mechanisms for effectively sharing water saving initiatives with residents and businesses in line with future national events.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
COM4	Support and promote initiatives and opportunities to reduce waste and improve levels of recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero waste week was held at the beginning of September and provided guidance and advice to residents so they can take steps to reduce their waste. This included an informative video from the Leader of the Council.
COM5	Help householders and businesses improve energy efficiency by providing free advice and support for energy improvements and energy saving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice to increase home energy efficiency is set out on our Website by Public Sector Housing team including guidance on subsidised heating and insulation. A thermal imaging camera is also offered on loan so that residents can discover where heat is escaping in their homes.
COM5	Hold a Green Summit in bringing together groups, organisations, companies and experts to engage and inspire residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately, due to social distancing measures, it has been very difficult to plan an event such as a Green Summit. Therefore, hosting a Green Summit has been delayed beyond a short term action.

Movement and Green Travel

Transport is the greatest carbon emitter for both the District and the Council. Although we are not the highways authority for the District, we will work with Kent County Council and communities to develop and encourage sustainable travel. We also commit to reducing the carbon emissions from our own fleet by efficiency measures and embracing new low emission technologies.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
TRA1	Promote low carbon travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Movement Strategy is being produced to set out the council's priorities for sustainable travel and movement across the District. This will include low carbon travel opportunities. • The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy sets out how SDC will support low emission and electric vehicles within the Council's fleet and across the District. • The Movement Strategy will include consideration of cycling and walking. SDC are looking into the possibility of developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
TRA2	Improve the electric vehicle charging network across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy sets out how SDC will support low emission and electric vehicles within the Council's fleet and across the District. It was agreed by Cabinet in July 2021 and publish August 2021. • Working with KCC to deliver the ambitions in the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy. This includes encouraging Town and Parish Councils to take part in the Rural charging scheme. • Working with KCC to deliver 2 charging points for Taxi Vehicles to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
TRA3	Work with schools, local communities and groups to encourage community transport hubs for short journeys, minimising pollution, improving air quality and reducing congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with KCC and neighbouring authorities to consider the impact of the new national bus strategy and how Quality Bus Partnerships can help deliver the sustainable transport and support the Movement Strategy.
TRA4	Promote the annual Car Free Day and similar initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of initiatives to reduce car travel have been included in the communications plan. Car Free day takes place on 22 September and will be shared to staff and residents. Similar events such as Cycle to Work Day and Bike Week have also been shared to raise awareness of active travel and promote alternatives to car use.
TRA5	Continue our transition to a zero-carbon emissions vehicle fleet wherever practicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with potential providers to explore low emission and electric vehicles including hydrogen vehicles. • Direct Services Waste Collection Review

Green Spaces and the Natural Environment

We commit to improving our natural environment for now and future generations, taking account of a changing climate. We will also support multi-benefit projects which conserve and enhance the natural environment whilst also increasing levels of carbon sequestration.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
NAT1	Carbon emission offsetting through new planting including planting new trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical evidence and site selection underway. New planting will be included as part of the Queen's Jubilee Green Canopy initiative.
NAT2	Improve areas for biodiversity and create new habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be identifying land for biodiversity net gain offsetting to support the Environment Bill and the Local Plan. • We have developed a number of community based projects with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership including hedgehog highways and climate change community gardens.
NAT3	Natural flood management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing work with North West Kent Countryside Partnership and KCC to identify suitable projects and funding opportunities.

Engagement with Landowners, Partners and Businesses

Partnership working is key to the delivery of the Council’s Net Zero 2030 commitment. Many other organisations have also committed to a similar achievement and therefore there are many opportunities for partnership working and we all work towards the same goal.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
PAR1	Require bidders for all tenders to include an environmental statement, including their plan for achieving Net Zero, a ‘Net Zero Commitment’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with the Procurement Assurance Group about the introduction of social value in the council’s procurement processes, and how this can be used to lever Net Zero outcomes for goods and services. Provide appropriate information and training for officers once this has been agreed.
PAR2	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Councils webpages are updated with Council targets and actions to reach Net Zero and also offer helpful advice to residents on topics such as energy efficiency, biodiversity and even how to calculate their own individual carbon footprint. In addition, an extensive communications plan aims at sharing advice and support through social media to a wider audience. • Net Zero presentation was given at the Town and Parish Forum in July 2021. • Net Zero features in each issue of In Shape. Weekly net zero social media posts (in accordance with our communications plan). Net zero agenda included in communications where appropriate.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
PAR3	Encourage the location of clean growth businesses in our District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero 2030 presentation to the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce in September 2021. Looking for future opportunities to work with the business and commercial sector.
PAR4	Work with the local government family within Kent to deliver Net Zero across all our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with KCC Officers from the Transport Innovations Team, Climate Change Network and Sustainable Business and Communities Team. • The Kent and Medway ELES has been endorsed by the Council. The Implementation Plan has also been agreed.

Carbon Emission Baseline and Opportunity Audit

It is important to understand the baseline carbon emissions for the Council. This will be incorporated into the Carbon Reduction Plan and is currently calculated following the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy guidance and the Local Government Association Greenhouse Gas Reporting Tool.

We have also committed to looking ahead to 2030 by identifying potential opportunities for achieving Net Zero. This will also be incorporated into the Carbon Reduction Plan.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
BASE1	Audit our current and levels of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2019/20 and 2020/21 emission reports are available on the net zero webpages. https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/download/850/carbon_emissions_reports
BASE2	Undertake an Opportunity Audit for ways to reduce carbon emissions in Council buildings and assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently drafting the consultant brief for a Carbon Reduction Plan to include: Council emissions including reduction solutions; District emissions; carbon offsetting. The Plan will be produced by a consultant following the results of the Council's Asset Review.

Council Plans and Strategies

We are committed to ensure the Net Zero commitment is integrated into all aspects of the Councils plans, strategies and services to ensure all potential opportunities are utilised.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
STR1	Deliver the carbon emission reducing aspects of the Air Quality Management Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Air Quality Action Plan being drafted. Actions will align with the net zero commitment.
STR2	Deliver the environmental aspects of Sevenoaks District Councils Council and Development Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee report template to be revised to take account of carbon emissions implications for council decisions. A Net Zero carbon emissions assessment will be included in committee reports from the Autumn/Winter 2021. <p>Guidance for officers on how to complete the template will be provided once the report template has been agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant National and Local Plan Policies are being applied in decisions including the installation of electric vehicle charging points and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.
STR3	Explore opportunities to invest in clean growth such as a local Net Zero Bank to finance energy efficiency and carbon reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers are considering ways to support clean growth through SDC policies, government funding and partnership working.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
STR4	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Offsetting will be included as part of the Carbon Reduction Plan.

Sustainable Buildings and Renewable Energy Generation

Buildings remain a significant emitter of carbon and therefore we commit to supporting low carbon buildings where suitable. This will also include exploring renewable energy technologies and opportunities both large and small scale.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Progress (Spring/Summer 2021)
SUS1	Investigate ways to encourage sustainable building practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Agents and Developers Forum is likely to take place in Autumn 2021 and will include the Net Zero 2030 agenda. Work is underway to update the local plan. It is envisaged that policies will promote and encourage sustainable building practices in line with the latest evidence.
SUS2	In all new SDC and SDC owned company developments, set an ambitious stretch target for sustainable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers are looking at a number of options with regards to how sustainability measures can be included into new development.
SUS3	Investigate renewable energy generation possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be considered as part of the Carbon Reduction Plan.