

## **Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group**

Held at:	Remote meeting
Date	Monday, 22 June 2020
Present	Councillors Gary Fuller, Connor McConville (In place of Jackie Meade), Ian Meyers and Lesley Whybrow (Chairman)
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Jackie Meade
Officers Present:	Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Susan Priest (Chief Executive), Hazel Sargent (Low Carbon and Sustainability Specialist), Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services) and Adrian Tofts (Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist)
Others Present:	Steve Marks and Andy Morgan (LASER Energy) and Sharon Bayne (Blackwood Bayne Ltd)

### **1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2020. The Chairman, Cllr Lesley Whybrow, agreed that her electronic signature could be added showing approval.

### **3. Baseline Survey by Laser Energy update**

Mr Steve Marks from LASER Energy gave a presentation, he said that LASER had been commissioned by the Council to carry out a review to look at how the Council could achieve net zero carbon emissions.

LASER were appointed in March however, the pandemic had caused a delay in progress. They were now looking at operational scoping using data from a wide range of sources.

Points noted from the presentation as follows:

- Fugitive emissions – leaked gases from refrigeration.
- Footprint and forecast – will look at current emissions (from the base year 2018/19) and targeted emissions over the coming years to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030 to meet the Council resolution..
- Options appraisal – looks at a wide range of different projects. The plan would be to arrange workshops starting in July to create a list of projects in achieving the Council's goals.
- Options appraisal output – This will compare a 'do nothing' scenario with projects to reduce energy consumption. Council could become a net exporter of electricity as opposed to a net importer by reducing consumption, bringing in own renewables and offsetting.

Mr Marks advised members the next step is modelling and demonstrate best actions for the Council. Modelling is virtually complete and will be ready to present at the next working group meeting in July.

#### 4. **Green Infrastructure Strategy**

Ms Sharon Bayne from Blackwood Bayne Ltd gave a presentation and further details on the definition of green infrastructure. She has been working closely with the Council's Low Carbon and Sustainability Specialist, Hazel Sargent including meetings with stakeholders.

Members noted the following points:

- Green infrastructure is multifunctional encompassing biodiversity, food production, climate adaptation, health and cooling as well as other aspects.
- Green infrastructure looks at not only green spaces, it also includes blue infrastructure, nature, allotments, cemeteries, public rights of way, canals and archaeology.
- Climate change is an important over-arching theme and green infrastructure can contribute to mitigating this, for example, reduce flooding, provide shade and cooling.
- Pollinator corridors shown within the district – domestic garden areas can increase pollination.
- Tree planting – The County Council has a plan to plant a tree for every person within Kent. A suggestion was made to encourage residents to plant trees and hedges. CIL funding and the Woodland Trust were mentioned as possible options for this.
- Green walls – there are a range of planning policies which include this option.
- SSSI site vulnerability.
- Urban green infrastructure
- Scope for Local Authority housing to be included in this strategy.

- The importance of drawing communities together and encouraging green infrastructure.

## 5. **Presentation on best practice in Carbon Action Plans**

Miss Hazel Sargent, Low Carbon and Sustainability Specialist, gave a presentation to members. Her presentation drew comparisons with other councils and the following points were noted:

Herefordshire Council – their approach has been to make their plan clear and readable, easy accessibility and good graphics. Their plan shows achievements and savings already made.

Peterborough City Council – 20 measures in place.

Chichester Council – A list showing short term carbon action plans.

Devon County Council – A two strand system comprising of two taskforces; Devon Carbon Plan and Devon Adaptation Plan.

Warwick District Council – Targeting net zero emissions by 2025. They have a carbon management plan in place showing cost and carbon emission savings.

Members were asked how the Council's Action Plan should be presented, Council or district wide. Members preferred to look at both the Council's own operations and a district-wide plan with public consultation.

Miss Sargent advised the presentation slides would be circulated to members for feedback.

An update was then given on SCATTERcities which provides an inventory of emissions. A downloadable report is available for respective Councils.

Turning to the report for this district, Miss Sargent said that the largest amount of direct emissions come from road travel, followed by residential buildings. The report suggests ways to reduce emissions, with a variety of different levels of intervention, which can be modelled to produce likely outcomes for emissions. The report for Folkestone and Hythe District Council will be circulated to the working group.

Prior to closing the meeting the Chairman, Councillor Whybrow, suggested members look further at the Carbon Action Plans prior to the next meeting. A further update to be provided by Laser Energy and a presentation on Grounds Maintenance to be received at July's meeting.