

Notes of the meeting of the **CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP** held remotely on Teams on Tuesday, 7 September 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor C A Vinson

Councillors: M Bates
S H Beer
N J Collor
D R Friend (as substitute for Councillor N S Kenton)
K Mills
H M Williams

Officers: Planning Policy and Projects Manager
Principal Policy Planner
Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer
Democratic and Corporate Services Manager

9 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N S Kenton and O C de R Richardson.

10 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor D Friend had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor N S Kenton.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

12 MINUTES

The consideration of the Notes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 were deferred to the next meeting.

13 FREQUENCY AND TIMINGS OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The members of the Climate Change Project Advisory Group (CCPAG) considered the future meeting arrangements for the CCPAG.

The consensus of opinion was that the meetings should be held remotely as this was considered greener as it reduced the need for members and officers to travel to the council offices.

In respect of the frequency of meetings, it was agreed that the CCPAG should meet every other month with the next meeting to be held in November 2022 following the conclusion of COP26.

14 HOW WE MEET THE CLIMATE CHANGE AGENDA?

The members of the CCPAG considered how the Council would meet the Climate Change agenda and be able to advise the Cabinet and Council on how to deliver on

its climate goals. It was acknowledged that this was an evolving area with potential new funding streams and technology opening up opportunities for the future.

The Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer advised that the initial focus would be on emission reduction and pointed to the example of the public sector decarbonization fund as an opportunity in that respect.

15 DELIVERY AGAINST 2030

The Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer gave a presentation to the CCPAG on the Council's delivery against the 2030 climate goals.

In respect of the Council's physical assets, Members were informed that the Dover District Leisure Centre was an 'A' rated building so had limited scope for improving its current emission levels. In the case of Maison Dieu, the age and listed status of the building meant that there were also limited options for improving its emissions.

It was acknowledged that social housing was not included in the Council's annual Greenhouse report as it did not form part of reporting requirements under the original National Indicator NI185 since the Council could only influence the behaviour of its tenants. Social housing was therefore included within the 2050 goals.

One of the biggest electricity users for the Council was the street lighting it provided. However, the switch to LED streetlighting would reduce the amount of electricity needed to power them. It was agreed that officers would provide an update to a future meeting on the progress of switching over to LED streetlights.

It was intended that the purchase of renewable electricity would offset emissions. The members of the CCPAG discussed the benefits of obtaining 'green' energy direct from source compared with using the Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) scheme. Councillor S H Beer advised that Deal Town Council had committed to using only pure renewables for its energy needs. Members were advised that the Council's energy procurement was managed by LASER, who are looking at providing a 'green' energy basket and officers would explore this option.

Gas consumption was lower in 2020/21 compared to 2019/2020 at Dover Museum, Tides and Dover Leisure Centre. However, while the Whitfield Offices did show an increase these figures were distorted by estimated billing at nil from January 2020 through until end of July 2020.

Councillor C A Vinson enquired as to the progress on using air source heat pumps to heat the Council Offices and was advised that the Head of Assets and Building Control was leading on that project. It was agreed that an update would be provided to the next meeting on the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund project.

16 DELIVERY AGAINST 2050

The Planning Policy and Projects Manager presented a report on the climate change chapter in the Local Plan which set out the council's strategy for the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change in the District over the plan period to 2040 as it related to new development.

Members were briefed in respect of the following areas:

- The key issues raised through the consultation process for the Regulation 18 stage of the draft Local Plan;
- The main changes to the Climate Change chapter;
- Energy efficiency standards for new buildings (including the Future Homes Standard); and
- An update on the Natural Environment chapter

The Principal Policy Planner advised that the Green Infrastructure Strategy would be published as part of the Regulation 19 stage of the Local Plan.

Members discussed the need to see the draft tree strategy at the appropriate time and it was agreed that an update would be provided to a future meeting.

17 GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer advised Members on the breakdown of emissions in the Dover District based on 2019 Local Authority CO₂ emissions figures. These were as followed:

- Domestic – 35%
- Transport – 35%
- Industry – 13%
- Commercial – 12%
- Public Sector – 5%

Members were informed that a study by the National Housing Federation estimated that carbon dioxide emissions from England's homes were greater than those emitted by all the country's vehicles (58.5 million tonnes of CO₂ per year compared to 56 million tonnes of CO₂ per year).

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) required all local authorities in England with a housing responsibility submit reports to the Secretary of State that set out the energy conservation measures adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation, and in particular fuel poor households.

There were a number of significant funding streams available that the Council could seek to utilise to help with moves to reduce district emission levels as follows:

- LADS1A/LADS1B: The council was part of a consortium of local authorities that had submitted a bid for funding under the schemes. The interest in LADS1A had been greater than the resources available and due to supply chain disruption than the installation timeframe of the scheme permitted. The Council had requested additional funding as part of LADS1B in recognition of this.
- LADS2: The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) provided funding to the Greater South East Energy Hub (GSEEH) to deliver the scheme. DDC was allocated £365,000. The contractual arrangements through the GSEEH procured delivery mechanism were still being negotiated.
- Sustainable Warmth Competition (Home Upgrade Grant and LADS3 combined): Dover District Council and Dartford Borough Council had made a joint bid to the fund with the outcome expected to be known in late 2021.

- ECO4: This was a £4 billion domestic energy efficiency scheme commencing in 2022 that councils were able to use to refer vulnerable residents to installers (or in some cases the supplier direct) that been allocated funding. It was noted that regardless of the outcome of Sustainable Warmth bid the Council was able to provide vulnerable residents with a path to affordable warmth.
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund: Wave 1 of the fund focussed on the worst energy efficient properties (E, F and G rated). However, the majority of the Council's owned housing stock was C or D rated with only 135 E rated, 10 F and no G rated properties.

Members noted that emissions in the district had reduced by 56% since 2005 and requested that a list of the grants be circulated. There was also discussion over how the charts presenting the data could be changed to show the journey to net zero.

18 WIDER POLICY UPDATE

The Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer presented the wider policy update.

Members were informed that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) briefing had found that humans had been responsible for 1.1°C of global warming since 1850-1900. However, it was still possible for humanity to affect the potential course of climate change by acting quickly to reduce emissions.

The National Audit Office had published a report on Local Government and Net Zero in England in July 2021 which examined emission reduction and concluded that local authorities had an important role in reaching the UK's national net zero target. The report set out a number of recommendations that would assist local government in making long term plans, build skills and establish reporting standards.

The final item related to the Government's UK Hydrogen Strategy published in August 2021, which set the target of achieving 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production by 2030. This equated to the amount of gas consumed by 3 million households each year.

The meeting ended at 7.48 pm.