

NET ZERO 2030 UPDATE - JANUARY 2022

Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 5 January 2022

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

Status: For Information

Also considered by:

N/A

Key Decision: No

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

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Margot McArthur

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

Recommendation to Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee:

To note this update report for information.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) has 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 (KCC), Parish and Town Councils, Local Interest Groups and the Local Government Association.
- 3 This report provides a short update on progress on delivering the Net Zero Agenda during Autumn/Winter 2021.

Movement Strategy and Sustainable Transport

- 4 The **Movement Strategy** is currently being finalised. This overarching strategy will set out the key issues and priorities for sustainable movement and transport for the District. This includes reducing the need to travel, promoting active travel, improving the cycling and walking network, encouraging the use of low emission vehicles and making it easier to access public transport.
- 5 The Movement Strategy relates to and is supported by other SDC strategies and plans which will help to deliver the vision, including:
 - Net Zero 2030
 - The Local Plan
 - Air Quality Action Plan
 - Local Transport Plan
 - Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy
 - Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans
 - Staff Travel Plan
- 6 The Movement Strategy will be considered by members of this committee in Spring 2022.
- 7 To deliver the priorities within the Movement Strategy and support the Council's Net Zero 2030 commitment we have committed to producing **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)** for the District.
- 8 LCWIPS assess, plan and prioritise cycling and walking infrastructure within an area over short (<3 years), medium (<5 years) and long term (>5 years) periods. Although they are not mandatory, they are the preferred strategy when applying for funding for projects.
- 9 We have recently secured funding from the Kent County Council Capability Fund to support the production of the first LCWIP which will be focused on Sevenoaks Urban Area. Officers are currently in the process of appointing consultants to undertake the LCWIP with an estimated completion date towards the end of 2022.
- 10 In June 2021 KCC invited SDC to submit three bids for their consideration for Department for Transport's Tranche 3 of the Active Travel fund. KCC as the local highway authority were invited to submit bids for funds to install cycling and walking improvements. SDC put forward three bids for Sevenoaks Urban area- East to West cycling route, Otford to Sevenoaks Town Centre cycle route and improvements to sections of Darent Valley Path to enable shared use for cycling and walking. KCC have since advised one of these bids, the Sevenoaks Urban area- East to West cycling route project, in addition to an Otford and Kemsing PROW link have been submitted to the Active Travel fund.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

11 The UK Government has committed to phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030. All new cars and vans will be fully zero emissions at the tailpipe from 2035.

12 The recent **Government consultation** on “The Future of Transport Regulatory Review: Zero Emission Vehicles” states that:

“The rollout of charging infrastructure is critical to achieving our ambitions. Over 25,000 public chargepoints are now available but we must go further and faster. Infrastructure that is easy to use, accessible and affordable is vital in supporting motorists to make the switch to using electric vehicles.”

13 The consultation included a number of proposed changes to the way electric charge points are planned for and delivered. A response to the consultation was sent on behalf of SDC stating that whilst we appreciate and understand that Local Authorities need to play a part in the transition to electric vehicles, we have concerns with regards to this current consultation. Our concerns relate to the following aspects of the consultation:

- The proposed statutory duty on Local Authorities to plan for sufficient provision of electric vehicle chargepoints
- The proposed statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide sufficient electric vehicle chargepoints
- The requirement for landowners to provide a minimum level of chargepoints in non-residential car parks

14 The response was agreed by the Cleaner and Greener portfolio holder and can be found on the website.

[06 \(2021/22\) - Response to Zero Emission Vehicle Consultation - Portfolio Holder Decision](#)

15 The Council are working in partnership to **install new electric vehicle charging points** across our car parks in the coming months. This is part of a wider project with Connected Kerb to bring 600 charging points to Kent and Medway. The charging points will be installed in car parks in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Westerham. In most cases, they will be a mixture of 7Kwh and rapid 50Kwh chargers.

16 We are also working to install a **charging point for electric Taxis** in South Park, Sevenoaks. This is to encourage the uptake of electric taxis within the town to reduce emissions and help improve air quality.

17 Officers are considering additional ways to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles and increasing the provision of charging infrastructure. The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy remains a live document and it is likely that an update, alongside some additional technical analysis work, will be

undertaken during 2022 to ensure it remains relevant to this rapidly changing market.

Solar Together Scheme

- 18 Domestic energy currently accounts for 28% of carbon emissions in Kent and Medway and future growth is expected to increase these emissions. Low carbon and renewable energy production is increasingly important to help reduce the District's carbon emissions.
- 19 Solar Together Kent is a collective buying scheme to help able-to-pay households, who may not know where to start with solar panel installations and want the reassurance of a Council-backed scheme, to get a reduced-price installation of solar panels. It relies on large numbers of households signing up to negotiate a better deal for everyone taking part. The scheme is co-ordinated by Kent County Council (KCC) on behalf of participating Councils and is administered by iChoosr.
- 20 The objectives for this project are:
 - To increase the number of solar panels installed in Kent and Medway.
 - To provide access to reduced price quotes to make solar energy more accessible to residents.
 - To help reduce carbon emissions in the domestic sector.
 - To stimulate the local solar economy by raising public awareness and interest in solar technology and supporting the mainstreaming of roof-top solar as a household improvement.
 - To reduce carbon emissions by around 777 tonnes per year.
- 21 The first phase in Kent ran from autumn 2020 and is forecast to install panels and/or batteries on around 400 homes in Kent, saving 9130 tonnes of carbon over 25 years. This scheme suffered a number of delays due to Covid and so drop off rates after residents registered were higher than predicted. However, a similar scheme run in a different area during autumn 2021 has seen high rates of registration, most likely due to uncertainty in energy markets.
- 22 SDC is participating in the next phase due to commence in February 2022. This phase is expected to surpass the number of installations from the first as a result of changes in energy markets, raised awareness, changes the provider will make to roll out installations more efficiently and reduced impacts of Covid.
- 23 The scheme supports our ambition to help the reduce carbon emissions within the District and the outcomes of the scheme will be reported to members during 2022.

SDC Operational Working

- 24 The Net Zero 2030 commitment is being embedding into the culture of SDC. All committee reports and decisions must now consider the potential impact on the commitment.
- 25 An internal communications plan and a positive behaviour change approach is being enacted in 2022 to encourage staff to consider how they are working and how we can reduce energy use and therefore carbon emissions. We will be considering work processes as well as the use of technology and efficiency measures. For example,
- Reducing work mileage including making site visits more efficient and reducing deliveries where possible
 - Going further to become a “paperless” office and reducing printing
 - Saving water and energy by encouraging staff to turn off taps and electrical sockets when not in use
 - Reducing the level of waste at the offices and implementing the “reduce, reuse, recycle” waste hierarchy.
- 26 Work is currently being undertaken on the Council’s IT Server hardware to reduce energy use and associated carbon emissions.

Community Engagement

- 27 Cllr Fleming and Helen French were invited to give a presentation on the Council’s Net Zero work to students at **Sevenoaks School** as part of their “Green Week”. The presentation was well received and the students had many insightful questions.
- 28 We are looking forward to working with Sevenoaks School in the future and to find ways we can assist in helping them achieve their own Net Zero 2032 ambition.
- 29 We continue to **engage with the community** to publicise how we are working to meet our Net Zero 2030 commitment and also how others can reduce their own carbon emissions. At the end of 2021:
- We continued to have at least one Net Zero social media post each week including pumpkin waste for Halloween, new EV charging points, planting trees for the Queen’s Jubilee and the new solar powered bins.
 - In December we had a social media focus on how to have a less wasteful Christmas including tips for residents e.g. cutting down on food waste, recycling right.
 - The winter InShape included articles about EV charging points, plastic recycling, insulating homes, planting trees for the Jubilee and shopping locally.

Carbon Reduction Plan

- 30 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.
- 31 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.
- 32 The Plan will include in-depth analysis of the carbon emissions from the Council's assets to produce a baseline inventory and forecast emissions using modelling. A carbon reduction strategy, with a trajectory that shows targets and carbon "budgets" from now to net zero will be produced that will lead to a specific and measureable action plan for the Council and assets.
- 33 The plan will also consider the carbon emissions of Sevenoaks District. Although many of these emissions are not within the control of the Council, we have an important role to help residents, businesses and visitors reduce emissions and therefore reduce the overall emissions across the District. This analysis will lead to specific actions to be incorporated into the Net Zero Action Plan and support other strategies and plans including the emerging Local Plan.
- 34 It is highly likely that the Council will need to offset some carbon emissions in order to reach net zero in 2030. The plan will set out the level of emissions likely to need offsetting as well as potential opportunities for renewable energy generation to further reduce the remaining carbon emissions.
- 35 The Carbon reduction Plan will be produced by consultants and officers have begun the procurement process.

Next Steps

- 36 Officers will continue to make progress to achieve the Net Zero 2030 actions. We will also continue to identify new opportunities and projects to deliver the Net Zero 2030 commitment.
- 37 Net Zero Actions for 2022-23 will be presented to members in Spring 2022.
- 38 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

Not Applicable

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.

Net Zero Implications

Members are reminded of the Council's stated ambition to be Net Zero with regards to carbon emissions by 2030. This report is to inform members of the ongoing work to meet the commitment.

Conclusions

The Council have committed to Net Zero 2030 and have identified actions to help achieve this goal. We are currently making good progress to achieve the actions within the agreed timescales.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Richard Morris

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services