

CABINET
29 OCTOBER 2020

**THE KENT AND MEDWAY ENERGY AND LOW EMISSIONS
STRATEGY (ELES)**

1. Summary

1.1 This report outlines the details of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Council's commits to support for the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy.

2.2 That a future report be submitted to Cabinet on the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy Implementation Plan, linking with future Council activities.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) outlines the Kent and Medway approach to achieving a reduction in carbon emissions and improvements in air quality with an agreed Kent and Medway target of net zero emissions by 2050. The ELES aims to help identify ways to deliver a clean growth strategy and action plan around air quality, reducing fuel poverty and delivering affordable, clean and secure energy for Kent and Medway.

3.2 The ELES was recently considered by Kent local authorities' Chief Executives and the Kent Leaders Group. The ELES itself has been some time in its preparation and has gone through a number of consultation processes as well as consideration of issues created by the COVID 19 pandemic.

3.3 The resulting revised ELES is attached as Appendix A and Cabinet's approval is sought to support the aims of the ELES as set out in the document.

The 10 priority actions are listed below and further details on these can be found on pages 15 to 28 of the ELES:

- Priority 1: Emissions Reduction Pathways to 2050.
- Priority 2: Public Sector Decision Making.
- Priority 3: Planning and Development.
- Priority 4: Climate Emergency Investment Fund.
- Priority 5: Building Retrofit Programme.
- Priority 6: Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity.
- Priority 7: Renewable Energy Generation.
- Priority 8: Green Infrastructure.
- Priority 9: Supporting Low Carbon Business.
- Priority 10: Communications.

These will form the basis of an implementation plan

CABINET
29 OCTOBER 2020

3.4 A detailed Implementation Plan is also being developed by officers and partners across Kent and Medway and this will be available in the near future for local authorities to consider the links with their own Climate Change Action Plans.

3.5 The ELES will formally be launched at the Kent and Medway Net Zero Conference on 27th November 2020, which will now be a virtual event.

4. Dartford Borough Council Activity

The following paragraphs detail ongoing activity within the Council that supports this agenda and would sit alongside the ELES.

4.1 Dartford Borough Council has collected its Greenhouse Gas Emission data annually since its involvement in the Carbon Trust Carbon Management Plan (our first baseline data collected was 2007) and the Council has monitored its carbon emissions since then including : electricity, gas, staff car mileage whilst at work, leased vehicle mileage, waste collection service carbon etc., Dartford Borough Council set an interim target to reduce the CO2 emissions from its activities by 35% from the 2007 baseline by 2012. This target was met.

4.2 The Council along with several other Kent LAs were successful in a joint bid to Government and received funding in January 2020 to work with BRE to obtain different sets of housing, benefit, energy performance certificate data to be used in the new private sector housing policy. This information helps with the targeting of energy efficiency measures and private sector/HMO works

4.3 The Council was the lead authority in a joint bid for seven Kent LAs to the Warm Homes Fund to obtain additional funding towards first time gas central heating systems. Dartford had already secured funding with SGN towards the first time gas central heating, along with agreement for free gas connections for vulnerable residents in receipt of benefits, on low income and residents with a health condition impacted by living in a cold home. The Council is currently in contract with Scottish & South Eastern Utilities (SSE) to provide first time central heating systems and to assess whole house energy efficiency measures.

4.4 The Council is promoting the Solar Together Kent scheme and as its close had received 113 registrations for Solar PV and battery storage. Social media posts and press releases were issued for the scheme, which recently closed for applications.

4.5 The Council is also part of Kent Energy Deal a collective energy switching scheme which it has been involved in for a number of years and has achieved thousands of pounds in savings on residents energy bills.

4.6 The Council uses its Better Care Funding to support through the Safe and Secure Grant additional top up for boiler works and other essential energy efficiency measures to elderly residents and residents with long term health conditions living in cold homes.

4.7 The Council recently submitted a successful funding application to BEIS on behalf of other Kent LAs involved in the Warm Homes Fund project for the Green Home Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LADS). The application submitted works alongside the current Warm Homes project and in addition offers external wall insulation and air source heat pumps to owner occupied and 10% privately rented properties. The application supports 70 properties across the seven participating Kent LAs and the energy efficiency works under this project have to be delivered by 31 March 2021.

CABINET
29 OCTOBER 2020

- 4.8 The Council has signed a contract with BP Chargemaster to install electric vehicle (EV) charging points in some Council car parks. The Council had previously obtained Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) funding for electric vehicle (EV) charging points in Westgate Car Park these will be upgraded and maintained under the new contract. Eight EV charging points are being installed in the Acacia Hall site, slightly delayed due to COVID but will be in place by 31 March 2021. Ducting is in place for additional EV charging points if required in the future.
- 4.9 The Council's housing stock has had a programme of different energy efficiency measures in place for a number of years upgrading boilers, cavity wall and loft insulation works undertaken. A number of properties have Solar PV installed which is monitored. Through a successful Government Green Communities funding application, an external wall insulation programme was started and external wall insulation (EWI) works continue to take place as part of the ongoing maintenance of Council properties. An Expression of Interest for xxx has been submitted to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Technical Fund.
- 4.10 The Council was the first Kent LA to write its Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent. This has helped many low income residents whose health is impacted by living in a cold home to have free cavity wall and loft insulation and ECO funding towards replacement gas boilers. The Council continues to offer and promote energy efficiency schemes to owner occupied properties, rented sector etc.
- 4.11 Environment, carbon emissions and housing standards have featured as part of the Corporate Plan for a number of years. The Corporate Plan is currently being updated and green recovery is at the heart of the new plan and an action plan will be developed to progress the green recovery throughout the Borough
- 4.12 A cross party climate change Member working group meets to discuss activities they would like to develop around community action and climate change – this includes tree planting, edible gardens – this campaign was due to launch as Planet Dartford just days before Lockdown. An Officer working group will be also be established.
- 4.13 Two climate change audits have been undertaken across the different services in the Council over the last year to monitor activity that impacts on climate change and to provide an overall picture of our climate change activity.
- 4.14 The recently launched Green Home Grant Vouchers will be promoted to Dartford residents to ensure our residents get the necessary support they require – our energy efficiency scheme details have been updated on the Simple Energy website and the Council has already received a large number of enquiries about the scheme.
- 4.15 The Kent and Medway Warm Homes Framework, supporting energy efficiency schemes, is under discussion at present, as the current contract expires in March 2021. The Council, along with a number of other Kent LAs, have recommended that the way forward is to focus on Domestic Home Energy Procurement in Kent in the future, so that Kent LAs are in a stronger position to bid when funding opportunities arise.
- 4.16 A new Air Quality Action Plan for the Borough is currently being prepared.

CABINET
29 OCTOBER 2020

5. Existing Council endorsement and aspirations

- 5.1 To support its commitment to positively contribute and combat climate change and reduce carbon, the Council resolved at the General Assembly of the Council 7th October 2019 [Min.No.50(2)]:

“That this Council recognises the serious impact of climate change and accepts that rising global temperatures presents a clear and present threat to our world. We are facing a climate emergency”.

- 5.2 The Council further recognised that *“all governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to act but feels that progress in Dartford should not be constrained by the actions of the slowest. “Our town and its people have a part to play in securing a sustainable future and this Council must not only be a force for change in itself, but must inspire and encourage change in others”*

The statement welcomes the Government’s commitment to meet the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change target to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. The Council aspires to see the effects of climate change tackled earlier than either the 2050 national target or the 2030 date proposed by some.

- 5.3 The Council commits to pursuing measures that are deliverable, measureable and practical and will aim to inspire and promote efforts - small and large – to address climate change throughout its local community. It recognises that the interests of the environment are served not by empty promises or by setting one legitimate interest against another but by securing collaboration and a genuine commitment to change throughout the Borough and amongst its residents, neighbourhoods, businesses and wider partners. The Council will aim to co-operate with other local authorities to deliver on its commitments.
- 5.4 The Council is aware of the particular challenges posed by rising traffic volumes and the impact on local air quality. It will aim to increase its efforts to work with highway partners to reduce car use, resolve traffic issues in pollution hotspots and create workable, popular solutions within residential communities to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and calmer, safer traffic. The Council will also aim to make enlightened choices in its own supply chain and encourage other organisations to do the same with the aim of safeguarding resources and reducing pollution. The Council acknowledges the input of the cross-party Member working group on climate change and commits to developing this group to include informed and representative local voices.
- 5.5 The Council aims to contribute to tackling climate change to match any comparable local authority. This is considered a sound basis on which to further endorse the ELES.

6. The Way Forward.

- 6.1 It is proposed that a further report be submitted to Cabinet in in 6 – 9 months’ time, with a view to presenting an action plan of Council activities and policies to link to the ELES. These can be developed from within existing resources or by obtaining external funding.

CABINET
29 OCTOBER 2020

7. Relationship to the Corporate Plan.

This links to the Corporate Plan target - ET1 -to reduce carbon emissions. Also, and as referenced above, Green Recovery features within the revised Corporate Plan which is currently being developed for future Cabinet & GAC approval.

8. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments*

Financial Implications	None directly in relation to this report.
Legal Implications	The various aspects, initiatives and actions detailed in this report are delivered accordance with one of more of the following; The Climate Change Act 2008 The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 The Clean Growth Strategy 2017 The Clean Air Strategy 2019
Staffing Implications	None directly in relation to this report.
Administrative Implications	None directly in relation to this report.
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties or constraints.

9. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
		Peter Dosad (01322) 343327	STRATEGIC (EXTERNAL SVS).	N/A