

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director
(Neighbourhood & Environment)

To

Cabinet

On

14th January 2021

Agenda
Item No.

Report prepared by: Rob Dawson, Energy and Sustainability
Project Pipeline Manager

Green City Action Plan

Cabinet Member: Councillor C Mulroney

1. Purpose of Report

To present the Green City Action Plan and to update on the activities and projects currently being undertaken in respect to Climate Change and how we propose Southend -on-Sea becomes a 'Green City' and towards achieving Net -Zero emissions by 2030.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet notes the work that is being undertaken to tackle Climate Change and that is being used to affect this Green City Action Plan.

2.2 That the Council endorses the Green City Action Plan.

2.3 That Cabinet continues to lobby Government via (LGA) with other Local Authorities to ensure that funds and resources are made available to increase the work towards carbon neutral status.

2.4 That Cabinet continues to support Adapting to Climate Change to deal with the impacts of embedded emissions is required to take equal priority with Climate Change Mitigation such as achieving Net Zero emissions.

3. Background

3.1 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published its Report on Global warming in October 2018 describing the damage that warming at 2°C would inflict compared with 1.5°C and recommending that net-zero emissions be reached by 2030.

- 3.2 In September 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency.
- 3.3 A paper was presented to Council on 5th November 2019 outlining the work proposed and being undertaken towards the Climate Change agenda, and the preparation of work towards this Green City Action Plan.
- 3.4 Most parts of the Council and 2050 Outcomes have become involved in delivering and encouraging others to deliver the changes in behaviour and actions required from all parts of the community and are committed to delivering the outcomes listed in the Green City Action Plan.
- 3.5 During the development of the Southend 2050 Outcomes it was clear that local businesses and residents, including young people, wanted to see improvements to our environment, with tackling climate change being high on their agenda.
- 3.6 With the aspiration of becoming a net-zero emissions borough by 2030, it is vital that the Council works with all of its partners, including businesses and residents, who themselves will be required to show leadership. Through the actions contained in the Action Plan, we will continue to engage with these groups.
- 3.7 Significant progress has now been made in establishing 5 focus areas of priority namely,
- Climate Leadership and Strategic Approach
 - Establishing a Pathway to Net Zero Carbon
 - Building Climate Resilience across Southend
 - Future Generations
 - Building Partnerships
- 3.8 Included in the Action Plan are a number of projects and initiatives that are ongoing, demonstrating the progress made already, as well as plans for developing other initiatives towards 2030, including:
- Existing projects have shown that between 2005-2018 Southend Borough has seen a reduction in overall CO₂ Emissions by a total of 39%
 - 73% has been saved in CO₂ emissions in the Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme since 2012/13
 - £2m of funding has been obtained to build climate resilience across Southend
 - £1m secured to help tackle plastic pollution in Southend
 - £600,000 won to help our residents benefit from solar and battery schemes
 - £223,566 of energy saving grants provided to businesses across Southend
- 3.9 In addition to achieving net-zero emissions through the Action Plan, the Council is undertaking work to ensure that climate change mitigation is also achieved through adaptation to the impacts of embedded emissions including:
- Work with Trees for Cities to identify suitable locations on Council owned land to deliver a carbon offsetting programme to support the delivery of net zero carbon targets for use by local developments, businesses and residents.

- Implement a carbon offset trial for new developments with funds going to deliver energy saving projects in other parts of the Borough.
- Undertake a feasibility study on a school to establish the concept of a 'healthy building' programme that combines energy efficiency projects with other benefits e.g. clean air quality and ventilation.
- Become a founding member of Better Planet Schools to provide primary schools in the Borough with free educational materials and resources on climate change and continue to deliver education to primary schools on environmental issues.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Major reductions in emissions are required across the world to mitigate climate change and hold global warming to less than 2°C, preferably 1.5°C.
- 4.2 To lead by example and reduce emissions across our own estate, provide opportunity for lowering energy bills, drive economic regeneration and new jobs, improve health and opportunities to tackle social inequalities, increase resilience to climate change and generally improve wellbeing.
- 4.3 To introduce circular economy principles into the Council's decision-making framework and encourage greater collaboration

5. Corporate Implications

- 5.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map:

The primary 2050 outcome that the Green City Action Plan will affect will be **Safe and Well**; *We act as a green city with outstanding examples of energy efficient and carbon neutral buildings , green open spaces,, streets, transport and recycling.*

- 5.2 Financial Implications

The work in the Plan is already funded, is subject to grant applications already submitted or other identified Government funding programmes.

- 5.3 Legal Implications

None at this time.

- 6.4 People Implications

Constant review needs to be maintained to ensure the Council has adequate resource dedicated to delivering the outcomes of the Green City Plan, both in quantity of staff needed as well as the appropriate skill sets needed.

- 6.5 Property Implications

Some of the future actions to reduce emissions and generate electricity will have property implications and the usual assessment process will be followed as appropriate.

6.6 Consultation

The following service areas have been consulted and have contributed towards the Green City Action Plan.

- Energy and Sustainability,
- Strategic Planning,
- Waste,
- Transport,
- Communications,
- Property,
- Schools,
- Better Queensway,
- Housing,
- South Essex Homes,
- Economic Development,
- Facilities Management,
- Parks,
- Coastal Defence and
- Consultation and Engagement.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

An Equalities assessment has not been undertaken on the totality of this report but individual assessments are being undertaken for the various projects.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are undertaken for each project and recorded in the relevant risk logs.

6.9 Environmental Impact

The Green City Action Plan outcomes will have some immediate effect upon Climate Change mitigation.

To achieve the requirements of the Climate Change Declaration further commitment and investment will be needed.

8. Appendices

- A. Final Draft Green City Action Plan December 2020
- B. 2018/19 Sustainability Annual report detailing our achievements to date
- C. Minutes of Cabinet 5th November 2019