

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S  
REPORT TO**

**Economy Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee  
29 September 2021**

**Report Title:** Sustainable Environment Strategy Update

**Submitted by:** Executive Director, Commercial Development and Economic Growth

**Portfolios:** Environment & Recycling

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Purpose of the Report**

To inform Members of the key issues and activities undertaken by the Sustainable Environment Strategy working group.

**Recommendation**

**That Committee receives the report and supports the priorities for the 2021-2022 work plan.**

**Reasons**

To enable Committee to be informed of the nature and extent of Sustainable Environment Strategy working group and endorse the priorities for 2021-2022.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Sustainable Environment Strategy for Newcastle under Lyme was adopted by Council and included an Action Plan containing a range of projects and initiatives that would seek to develop sustainable approaches to how the Council undertakes its own work and actions as well as having a focus on wider, Borough-wide and County-wide initiatives in conjunction with key local partners.
- 1.2 This work is being progressed by a cross-departmental internal Officer working group Chaired by the Executive Director - Commercial Development & Economic Growth and monitored by a Steering Group Chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Recycling, both of which meet on a monthly basis.
- 1.3 The latest Action Plan monitoring update is available upon request.

**2. Key Achievements to Date**

- 2.1 *Renewable Energy* – solar panels have been installed on part of the Knutton Depot roof and are generating electricity which is used at the site.

- 2.2 *Urban Tree Planting* – An Urban Tree Planting Policy has been adopted by Cabinet and a project plan has been prepared.
- 2.3 *Policy* - The Staffordshire Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation Report has been finalised and key policy recommendations will inform policies in the Local Plan to ensure that new development will seek to mitigate the impact on climate change.
- 2.4 *Partnerships* - The Council has begun working collaboratively with Keele University to explore new energy efficient schemes such as district network heating.
- 2.5 *Sustainable Procurement* - The Council has modified its Invitation to Tender (Open Procedure) Part 2 Questionnaire to include the questions linked to provider's carbon reduction plan and officers will monitor and report on responses received as part of any future procurements.
- 2.6 *Transport* – The Councils Environmental Health van fleet has been replaced with electric vehicles and charging stations have been installed at Knutton Lane Depot.
- 2.7 *Transport* - A 'pilot' of a Government funded E-Scooters scheme in collaboration with Staffordshire County Council has been undertaken for a period of 12 months within the Town Centre, ending in September.
- 2.8 *Air Quality* – Cabinet have agreed to progress the eco-bus gate option for the A53 to final business case stage in order to achieve reductions in traffic pollution.
- 2.9 *Air Quality* - As part of the new recycling service, the Council has invested in Routesmart, allowing route optimisation with the new waste service. It is envisaged that once the new service has been embedded and all routes optimised; fuel and emissions reduction will materialise.
- 2.10 *Fossil fuels* - Clough Hall Park Pavilion moving to an all-electric solution (from gas/LPHW system) under ATDF/Parks funding.
- 2.11 *Carbon Reduction* – The Council has switched to a renewable green energy tariff for its electric consumption
- 2.12 *Carbon Reduction* - A new Building Energy Management System has been installed at our main Leisure Centre Jubilee 2.

### 3. **Key Projects Being Planned**

- 3.1 *Renewable Energy* - Feasibility Study for a solar renewable energy farm on land owned by the Borough Council at Keele.
- 3.2 *Urban Tree Planting* - Suitable sites are being sought for the first phase of tree planting over the coming winter and early spring period. There will be linkages to the national The Woodland Trusts Plant a Tree for the Jubilee project to Celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 by being part of The Queen's Green Canopy. Funding will need to be identified for this project which may be a combination of Borough Council and external funding.
- 3.3 *Partnerships* – work collaboratively with the newly established cross county Joint Sustainability Board, with the intention to develop and recommend a joint environmental sustainability strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent.

- 3.4 *Renewable energy* - To explore the feasibility of installing a 30kw array of solar thermal-PV hybrid at south facing roofs of NULBC central Depot. (subject to any potential re-location plans)
- 3.5 *Fossil Fuels* – The Council is planning to switch to a green energy tariff for its gas consumption in 2022
- 3.6 *Transport* – Work with Staffordshire County Council on its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2020-2030 which establishes a programme of improvements for pedestrians and cyclists to include better access and improved cycle routes for the residents of the Borough.
- 3.7 *Transport* - A consortium bid, funded by Low Emission Taxi Infrastructure Scheme, has approved eight rapid electric vehicle charging points to be installed within the Borough on local authority owned car parks and will be rolled out.
- 3.8 *Transport* – Promote the Councils Green Travel Plan, to reduce Co2 from employee commuting, such as encouraging Car Sharing, Cycle Loans, and Annual Bus Travel Card for its employees as well as ongoing agile and home working.

#### 4. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 The service plan and priorities for 2021-22 supports both the objective to become Carbon Neutral.

#### 5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 N/A

#### 6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 Each scheme will have its own implications which will need to be considered at the relevant time.

#### 7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 Activities are in line with the statutory duty of the Council and in accordance with the advice and guidance of the relevant Government bodies.

#### 8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 Each action will be considered as a stand-alone business case prior to implementation.

At the Full Council meeting held on 24 February 2021, approval was given to allocate £100k of the Borough Growth Fund to the “Environmental Sustainability Strategy”. This was to ensure that the Council plays its part in improving air quality, reducing carbon emissions and delivering services in an environmental sustainable way.

#### 9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 N/A

#### 10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

- 10.1



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This is not a key decision.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 None.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 None.

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 Sustainable Environment Strategy Action Plan