

SCRUTINY BOARD

Agenda Item: 8

Ward: ALL

Portfolio: Strategic Policy and Climate Change

FROM: Cllr Janine Nash Lead
Convenor of Scrutiny
Climate and Ecological
Emergency Working
Group

Date: 16 November 2021

SUBJECT: SCEEG Annual Three Point Plan

Internal Use Only: Please complete sign off boxes below prior to submission to Democratic Services			
Report Sign off	Seen by:	Name	Date
	Chief Executive/ Deputy Chief Executive(s)	Tracy Aarons	03/11/2021
	Legal	Lesley Dolan	03/11/2021
	Finance	Richard Bates	03/11/2021
	Head of Service	Curtis Lakin (On behalf of Claire Malcolmson)	03/11/2021
	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Tom Ronan	03/11/2021
	Ward Member(s)		
Summary:	Part of the remit of SCEEG (Scrutiny Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group) is to develop an annual three-point action plan of core projects to address priority areas in support of the Council's climate change and biodiversity objectives. This report presents the three project areas agreed by SCEEG and the actions recommended.		
Recommendation:	Scrutiny Board is asked to 1. Note the progress made by SCEEG towards its objectives 2. Support the recommendation of the tree project areas to Cabinet for consideration.		
Direct and/or indirect impact on service delivery to our customers and communities:	There should be no initial impact on the services delivered by the Council as a result of the actions recommended in this report. Any areas that require additional resources would be considered via additional business cases to Cabinet		
Contribution to Corporate Priorities:	The actions put forward are to support the Council's climate change and biodiversity objectives and so help to contribute to the delivery on the corporate priority to deliver on our climate and ecological commitment.		
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications arising from this report		

Financial Implications:	Some of the actions suggested would require additional financial resources and would need to be presented as separate business cases in order to receive funding
Climate Change Risks and Opportunities:	This report presents further opportunities that the Council could undertake to deliver on its climate and biodiversity objectives.
Impact on Service Plans:	There is no impact on service plans arising from this report
Crime and Disorder Implications:	There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report
Equalities Implications:	There are no equalities implications arising from this report
Risk Assessment and Adverse Impact on Corporate Actions:	This report suggests further actions the Council could undertake to achieve its corporate objective to deliver on our climate and ecological commitment

INTRODUCTION

The Scrutiny Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group (SCEEG) was formed in April 2021 following on from CEEG (Climate Ecological Emergency Working Group) to help monitor and provide recommendations to assist the Council in following the emissions pathway set out in the Council's Carbon Management Plan

The Group is made up of following Members

Leader Convenor of the Working Group – Cllr Janine Nash
Scrutiny Member – Cllr Adam Boyden
Scrutiny Member – Cllr Michael Dunk
Scrutiny Member – Cllr Michael Gay
Scrutiny Member – Cllr Nicholas Cottle
Scrutiny Member – Cllr Alison Barkshire
Co-opted Member– Cllr Drew Gardner
Co-opted Member – Cllr Shane Collins
Co-opted Member – Cllr Shannon Brooke
Co-opted Member – Cllr Lucie Taylor-Hood

Lead Officer – Jacob Hall (Climate Change and Resilience Officer)

Cllr Kay has, by agreement with Cllr Nash also been working alongside the Group

The remit of the Group is set out below

1. That SCEEG be requested to consider the Future Emissions Pathway Report and make recommendations back to Cabinet, via Scrutiny, on the pathway option to select, given the existing powers of the Council, and suggested suite of actions that would support the Council in bridging the gap towards carbon neutrality.
Status - Completed in the form of the Carbon Management Plan
2. The Climate Change and Resilience Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder evaluate the scope of the Agricultural Emissions report, with support from CEEG Working Group, and to bring the report back to cabinet within 6 months.
Status - Report approved by Cabinet and the project now progressing
3. SCEEG will monitor the progress of the Council to act on its Corporate Priority 'Deliver on our Climate and Ecological Emergency commitment' and its associated actions by reviewing the Quarterly Report and feeding into Scrutiny. *The Group will develop an annual three-point action plan of core projects to address priority areas in support of the Council's climate change and biodiversity objectives. As part of this the Working Group will review specific matters in line with the Corporate Priority commitment and, with the support of key Officers, the Group will make recommendations for improvements to Cabinet, via Scrutiny Board*
Status - Recommendations set out in this report
4. SCEEG will monitor the Council's contribution to the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy.
Status – Currently awaiting renewed governance

5. Review the need and scope for (SPDs) and General (Planning) Guidance Notes, including a timeline for delivery. The new SCEEG be asked to report their findings to Scrutiny, in turn reporting to Cabinet. They are also asked to continue to monitor this programme of work.

Status - In progress

6. To acknowledge the adopted pathway as a “working document” and request that the Scrutiny Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group review the Pathway on an annual basis, in accordance with opportunities that may arise from updated policy, funding frameworks, or other drivers and incentives.

Status - Ongoing action

This report sets out below the three project areas identified by SCEEG as referenced in point 3 above.

THREE-POINT PLAN

Following the approval and publication of the Carbon Management Plan and subsequent work by the Group in evaluating all work currently being done by the Council towards the climate and ecological emergency, SCEEG has been able to identify additional areas of focus for the Council.

The three project areas are set out as below with the actions the Group recommend for each area detailed underneath

Renewables

- Look to launch a Solar Streets campaign across Mendip and support schemes already in place in the district such as “Sunlit Solar” in Glastonbury and “Solar Streets” in Frome
- Explore the feasibility of the installation of solar panels on Mendip owned car parks
- Explore the possibilities of hydropower along the River Frome
- Engage with community energy Groups in Mendip to identify ways in which the Council can offer assistance with renewable projects

Retrofitting

- Identify properties in the district that require certain types of retrofitting such as cavity wall insulation and facilitate a discount scheme and advertising campaign to encourage owners to retrofit their properties.
- Undertake a comparison of retrofitting outcomes across other Councils and see best practice points to adopt
- Promote and assist the ECO Flex scheme to residents in Mendip
- Recommend to Cabinet that they reconsider the options set out in the Fuel Poverty paper of 2nd November 2020 and SCEEG recommends that they approve option B (as below)

Option 2.1 Summary

A. Loft Insulation. 390 households. 6 months prep. + 18 months. Includes optional 100 EPCs Projected cost £184,000.

*B. Loft & Cavity wall insulation. 390 households. 6 months prep. + 18 months.
£379,000 (Could be less with 3rd party funding, grants etc.)*

Transport

- Support the Council's current work with sustainable travel routes and investigate opportunities to install secure bike racks for bikes & e-bikes in town centres across Mendip
- Run trial e-bike days across the district and look to work with local e-bike suppliers to establish a loan or try before you buy period to encourage residents to cycle more
- Look to learn from the Safer Streets project currently going on in Frome with a view to rolling this out further across Mendip

Further to the three project areas, the workstream opportunities identified below are also noted as additional recommendations

Allotments

- Work with local landowners and town Council's to find new allotment facilities including looking at long term leases for possible land

Peat

- SCEEG recognise it is out of the Council's control to stop the extraction of peat but strongly recommend the Council lobby and do everything in its power to bring an end to peat extraction in Mendip

Trees

- The recommendations from SCEEG following the recent presentation on Trees to Scrutiny be approved by Cabinet

RECOMMENDATION

Scrutiny Board is asked to

1. Note the progress made by SCEEG towards its objectives
2. Support the recommendation of the tree project areas to Cabinet for consideration.

Contact Officer: Jacob Hall
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Background Papers

[Mendip District Council Cabinet Report November 2nd 2020 – Enabling domestic energy efficiency improvements to reduce district wide fuel poverty and carbon emissions](#)