



CABINET

Tuesday, 06 September 2022

Subject	Environment Task Group - Quarterly Update
Report by	Councillor James Mallinder Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment
Supporting Officer	Paul Mackie Lead Officer, Environment & Climate Change paul.mackie@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet on the work of the cross-party Environment Task, chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment, since its last report on 1 February 2022. Confirmation is also sought that the Group is continuing to deliver on the task it was set to investigate ways to cut East Suffolk Council's carbon and other harmful emissions

Options:

Not applicable

Recommendation/s:

1. That Cabinet note the report from the Environment Task Group.
2. That Cabinet confirm that the Group is to continue to deliver the task it was set to investigate ways to cut East Suffolk Council's carbon and other harmful emissions.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

The Environment Task Group is a cross-party group chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment and reports direct to Cabinet.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

The work of the Environment Task Group directly supports the Council's Strategic Plan and delivering on the corporate commitment to "put the environment at the heart of everything we do" is progressively influencing all the Council's policies and strategies.

Environmental:

The Environment Task Group through the issues it is considering and monitoring is having a direct and far-reaching effect on the Council's environmental agenda and priorities.

Equalities and Diversity:

There are no specific equalities or diversity impacts arising from this report. The work of the Environment Task Group directly and through its influence the work of the Council to respond to the Climate Emergency will however impact on all those who live and work in East Suffolk or visit the area.

Financial:

There are no specific Financial impacts arising from this update report.

Human Resources:

There are no Human Resources impacts arising from this update report.

ICT:

There are no ICT impacts arising from this update report.

Legal:

There are no Legal impacts arising from this update report.

Risk:

There are no new Risks arising from this update report.

External Consultees:	None
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

How does this proposal support the priorities selected?

The Environment Task Group continues to be a valuable forum in which to consider and debate environmental issues and to help deliver on the Council's commitment to put the environment at the heart of everything we do. The environmental work done by Council and the resultant spending is directly impacting on the local economy and the Council is increasingly engaging with businesses engaged in renewable and low carbon energy, sustainable development and wider environmental protection work. Several initiatives the Task Group has worked on or has supported have involved community groups, for example environmental promotion, biodiversity projects, tree planting, action on plastic and as further projects are delivered it is confidently predicted that there will be an increasing feeling of community pride in what has been delivered. Financial Sustainability is a key consideration in the work of the Task Group, some carbon saving changes requires investment but many also result in coincidental cost savings, for example, energy cost savings/income from solar power generation on council buildings and savings on chemical and grass cutting costs. The Group have been supportive of the role digital technology can play in reducing carbon emission savings, for example, through the wider enablement of home working and video conferencing and the consequent reduction in travel. It is suggested that the Environment Task Group is good example of collaborative working and that in the comparatively short time it has been working it has helped the delivery of the Council environment priorities significantly. This is expected to continue as further significant challenges arise, for example in helping to formulate the Council's response to the nation Resources and Waste Strategy.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	<p>FORMATION</p> <p>On 24 July 2019 (Full Council agenda item 9(a)), the Council resolved unanimously to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Declare a climate emergency• Set up a Cross Party Task Group, commencing by October 2019, to investigate ways to cut East Suffolk Council's carbon and harmful emissions on a spend to save basis, with ambition to make East Suffolk Council (including all buildings and services) carbon neutral by 2030.• To work with Suffolk County Council and other partners across the county and region, including the LEP and the Public Sector Leaders, towards the aspiration of making the county of Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030.• To work with the government to:• a) deliver its 25-year Environmental Plan, and• b) increase the powers and resources available to local authorities in order to make the 2030 target easier to achieve. <p>656 The Environment Task Group was formed as a cross-party Task Group</p>

2 In context of the East Suffolk Council Strategic Plan	
2.1	The Council's Strategic Plan sets out its vision to deliver the highest possible quality of life for everyone who lives, works in or visits the district. The five themes of the Strategic Plan are: Growing our Economy; Enabling our Communities; Remaining Financially Sustainable; Delivering Digital Transformation; and Caring for our Environment.
2.2	Within the theme of Caring for our Environment, the Council is committed to lead by example, seeking environmental benefit in everything we do, working with communities for biodiversity and optimising the use digital solutions to reduce environmental impacts; to minimise waste, promote reuse and maximise recycling; to explore opportunities to invest in renewable energy solutions as a council and encourage others to do the same; and to use our influence and regulatory functions to protect our natural environment and coastline.
2.3	The Strategic Plan recognises the interconnectivity between the five Themes of the Plan, with actions arising under each theme having the potential to contribute towards any or all of the other themes.

3 Summary of Environment Task Group activity since last report	
3.1	<p>The ETG has met twice (7 April & 13 July 2022) since its last report to Cabinet when it discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ESC procurement strategy ▪ ESC's air quality work ▪ Motion for the Ocean ▪ Climate Action Plan update ▪ HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) roll out ▪ The Environment KPI dashboard & annual greenhouse gas report (AGHG)
3.2	<p>Alternative Vehicle fuel – an interim fuel solution to reduce fleet emissions</p> <p>ESC and East Suffolk Norse (ESN) is now operating around 50% of the total vehicle fleet on HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) fuel – reaching a key milestone. The first delivery of HVO took place at Ufford and Waveney Depot in June.</p> <p>This is an important step on our journey to use a more sustainable and renewable diesel alternative for our fleet, in addition to our fleet of electric vehicles.</p> <p>HVO offers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to 90% reduction to net CO2 emissions. ▪ 'Drop-in' functionality – HVO is compliant with key standards and is approved for use by a wide range of manufacturers. ▪ Cleaner burning properties – HVO improves engine cleanliness, reducing build-up during combustion and lowering the risk of engine issues.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended shelf life – HVO lasts for up to 10 years in storage compared to just 1 for mineral diesel, significantly reducing the need for regular testing and standing stock replacement. <p>A procurement of 14 refuse collection vehicles (RCV's) was carried out to replace older vehicles that cannot take HVO fuel. These are now in service and the RCV fleet has been using HVO fuel since June 6th.</p> <p>The fuel is currently being procured via Norse, due to issues with new supply of HVO, as Ukraine/Russia are one of the main suppliers of biofuel. A new procurement process is currently underway to secure a future supply of HVO.</p>
3.3	<p>Biodiversity and nature</p> <p>Greenprint Forum update</p> <p>Greenprint small grants scheme 'Nature First' Greenprint's small grants scheme, Nature First, launched in summer 2021, remains open to further applications to support community-based projects that enhance and/or biodiversity. Following the most recent Grant Panel meeting in April 2022, three more projects have received grants so far in 2022:</p> <p>Saxmundham & District Litter Pickers and Saxmundham Green Team have been awarded £285 to purchase equipment to enable volunteers to enhance the area for residents and visitors to the town and improve the areas of green spaces for wildlife by removing hazardous litter.</p> <p>Leiston Community Land Trust have been awarded £1000 for the Church Square Community Garden, creating a new inclusive oasis to enhance biodiversity in the centre of town with planting and provisions for pollinators and birds along with education uses of the area including workshops to enhance habitats in garden through making bird boxes and bug hotels.</p> <p>Greener Waldringfield & Waldringfield Gardeners have been awarded £871.75 for their project to offer to every resident of the parish a free tree to be registered as part of the Queen's Green Canopy.</p> <p>The full list of projects that have been awarded grants since the scheme launched can be found here: Nature-First-projects-funded-2021-2022.pdf (eastsuffolk.gov.uk)</p> <p>Greenprint visit to Deben Community Farm, Melton, 9 April This visit, arranged by ESC on behalf of the Greenprint Forum, was attended by 20 members delegates who received a guided tour of the farm to hear about the combination of therapeutic care farm provision, forest school, home education support, and community volunteering at this community agriculture scheme.</p> <p>The event secured positive media coverage for both Greenprint Forum and Deben Community Farm: Suffolk: Deben Community Farm at Melton gives guided tour </p>

	<p>East Anglian Daily Times (eadt.co.uk)</p> <p>The full event report is available via: Deben-Community-Farm-Guided-Tour-9.4.2022-event-report.pdf (eastsuffolk.gov.uk)</p> <p>Shovel it Yourself Day, Leiston, 6 May</p> <p>Held as part of Compost Awareness Week, this event provided an opportunity for members of the community to help themselves to free soil improver made from East Suffolk residents' garden waste.</p> <p>Led by ESC, the event was supported by Leiston Town Council and Net Zero Leiston along with a Suffolk Master Composter, and was attended by approximately 96 people.</p> <p>The event received a very positive response from community who would welcome repeats of the event. However resource capacity would limit ESC to organising and delivering a maximum of 1 such event per year in the district and would be dependent on support from local communities to help run the event. The full event report is available via: Leiston-Shovel-it-Yourself-Day-6.5.2022-event-report.pdf (eastsuffolk.gov.uk)</p>
3.4	<p>Planning</p> <p>The Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by East Suffolk Council on 5th April 2022. The SPD provides guidance on the implementation of policies relating to sustainable construction in the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan policies. The SPD provides information on a range of topics including energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, and use of materials. The SPD is available to view online here: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/supplementary-planning-documents/</p> <p>The Net Zero Carbon Toolkit was signed off by Public Sector Leaders and is now available on the Green Suffolk website here: www.greensuffolk.org/net-zero-carbon-toolkit-housing/.</p>
3.5	<p>Deben redevelopment PassivHaus project</p> <p>The project at the Former Deben High School site in Felixstowe has moved into Phase 3 – Housing delivery. The demolition phase completed in December 2021. At the last update we advised a proposed start on site is scheduled for summer 2022 with homes being delivered in phases between 2023/24. The proposed start on site has been postponed to early 2023 as a reaction to market constraints and the proposed procurement strategy for the appointment of a main contractor. The project continues to be environmentally focused on all aspects of its delivery.</p>
3.6	<p>Resource and Waste Strategy (RAWS)</p> <p>The SWP RAWS working group have narrowed down the options for future collection regimes under the new legislation. These proposals have been</p>

	<p>presented to SCOLT etc. All Suffolk councils are agreed that a fleet of single chamber vehicles collecting single stream recycling on alternative weeks (one week fibres, next week containers and glass), with fortnightly refuse collections. There will also be a weekly food waste collection, but this will be serviced by a separate fleet of smaller vehicles. We are also exploring the possibility of three-weekly collections.</p> <p>These options require the fewest number of collection receptacles, offer the greatest operational flexibility and are the most efficient and cost-effective solutions.</p>
3.7	<p>Delivering a sustainable Housing Portfolio</p> <p>The Council have undertaken some surveys to our current HRA stock on certain archetypes and this has provided us with an insight into the technologies we need to put in place to work towards the zero carbon agenda. We are currently looking at two pilot schemes and are finalising the data collecting for these two pilot projects which will enable us to produce a project timeline for delivery. In addition to this we are also going to be creating a standard for any refurbishment works to the HRA stock so that it is bought to the appropriate standard when being refurbished.</p> <p>Due to competing priorities in the Housing team at present we have produced a roadmap for completion of the project overall. In the coming months our next stage to this is to consolidate the data we hold and see what other information we require to make an informed decision on funding, budgetary and resource requirements to enable delivery of the project.</p>
3.8	<p>Assets</p> <p>The Council has updated the EPC certificates of its built assets. All EPCs displayed in those assets that are open to the public are now up to date. A further 15 in non-public facing buildings have been renewed.</p> <p>In the course of updating the EPC certificates the assets team are identifying those assets where opportunities for energy efficiency improvements exist and generate the business case for measures to reduce energy consumption and related emissions and improve the future EPC ratings of those assets.</p>
3.9	<p>Woodbridge Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)</p> <p>Defra are recommending that the AQMA in Woodbridge be revoked and ESC are currently carrying out a public consultation on the proposed revocation of this AQMA which closed on 11 July. Once results are available the matter will be referred to Cabinet for consideration.</p>
3.10	<p>Procurement Strategy</p> <p>The new ESC Procurement Strategy has been developed and is expected to be presented to Cabinet in the autumn. The new strategy will include aspects around social value and carbon reduction and, once implemented, all tenders would ask</p>

	for information on these aspects to be considered as part of the selection criteria.
3.11	<p>Environmental output from the communities partnerships (CPs)</p> <p>The Kesgrave, Martlesham, Rushmere, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership are the only Partnership currently looking at the theme of Environmental Care, and have been doing so since its inception in 2019. Working alongside partners in Town/Parish Councils and local organisations we have made significant progress against the aim of taking practical action against local issues.</p> <p>Our Rewilding sub-group provided every household in Martlesham with a calendar in January 2022, with each month giving tips and information that enables residents to make small but beneficial changes to their recycling, energy consumption and wildlife friendly use of their property. They currently focus on increasing the amount of rewilding taking place, creating a route between Martlesham, Kesgrave and Rushmere that acts as a green corridor for residents and wildlife alike.</p> <p>2021 saw the successful launch of the Martlesham Advice and Repair Hub in conjunction with the Parish Councils working group, Martlesham Climate Action. Following a small grant to cover start up costs, the volunteers run weekly sessions where people receive impartial and factual advice about a range of environmental issues.</p> <p>The offer soon expanded to provide a repair hub – completing small repairs on items that prevent them from being sent to landfill. The service continues to develop and has become financially self sufficient within 9 months of launch.</p> <p>Our most ambitious project to date was the ‘Green Communities Toolkit’. The Partnership wanted to have a practical impact on the environment and also share it’s learning so that other places can duplicate the work with minimal issue. The Toolkit provides key information and learning about four different environmental projects that could be replicated elsewhere. The Toolkit is now available on the East Suffolk Website and will be shared directly with all Parishes across the district. The work couldn’t have been completed without the close Partnership working with the following projects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bredfield Village Hall – financially supporting the installation of solar panels that reduce the environmental impact of the hall and adjoining village shop, whilst also making the business more financially sustainable. ▪ Grundisburgh Playing Field Committee – including the development of climate resilient and stimulating planting within the newly installed play equipment, increasing biodiversity and bringing residents and wildlife closer together. ▪ Bealings Borrowers – led by Lightwave, a weekly conservation session for young families within the grounds of Little Bealings Church, increasing awareness and knowledge of wildlife and biodiversity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Westerfield Station Volunteers – increasing the habitat for wildlife of all types in unused areas adjoining the train station platform and educating commuters at the same time <p>We would now like to invite groups and organisations from beyond our Community Partnership boundaries to share their projects for inclusion in the Green Communities Toolkit. This can be done by contacting Andy Jolliffe direct at communities@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p>
3.12	<p>Communication of wider activities of the Council with regards to the environment</p> <p>The ETG regularly hears from internal and external speakers on environmental projects that the council is leading on or contributing towards.</p> <p>To help communicate progress on the environmental agenda to a wider audience, even where the ETG itself has not played a central role in driving particular projects, in order to raise the profile of these wider activities, this progress is being collated and publicised on the ETG’s webpage Work so far » East Suffolk Council.</p>

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	It has been agreed that the Environment Task Group would provide quarterly updates on its work to Cabinet. The Group has been performing well and considers it is fulfilling the role set and the tasks allocated.
4.2	As the need to react further and faster to the climate emergency becomes increasingly apparent the Group will continue to have a significant role considering and supporting initiatives and providing opinions to Cabinet on any matters referred to it. For this reason, Cabinet is invited to confirm it is delivering the task it was set and to give any further guidance it considers appropriate.

Appendices

Appendices:

None.

Background reference papers:

None.