

Body: Cabinet

Date: 29 May 2013

Subject: Environment and Natural Resources Strategies

Report Of: Jefferson Collard, Senior Head of Development

Ward(s) All

Purpose To provide an update on the action plans of the Environment and Natural Resources Strategies, and to outline the future development of a 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway.

Decision Type:

Recommendation: Cabinet is recommended to

- i. Consider the progress made with the Environment and Natural Resources Strategies;
- ii. Consider the 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway objectives;
- iii. Delegate authority to approve the action plan for the 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway to the Senior Head of Infrastructure in consultation with the Carbon Reduction Board.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Eastbourne Borough Council is committed to robust environmental leadership and to moving the town towards a sustainable future. This is reflected by the creation of the Community Environment Partnership for Eastbourne (CEPE) set up in 2009 to address a wide range of key environmental issues including the urgent concern of tackling climate change, and delivery of the town-wide Environment Strategy which was approved by Cabinet in 2010. The Partnership includes representatives from a number of organisations and community groups within the town to ensure that all issues affecting the environment are brought together in a single place. Meetings take place on a quarterly basis.
- 1.2 In addition to the over-arching Environment Strategy which has town wide relevance, the Council recognised that it needed to address environmental issues within its operations and estate. For this reason a Natural Resources Strategy was developed and endorsed by Cabinet in March 2011. Alongside this, the Council adopted a motion in February 2011 to commit to reducing CO2 emissions by 40% within the town by the year 2020.

- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the two Strategies, building on the progress report that was considered by Cabinet in March 2012. Progress against the two action plans is highlighted, including any new actions that have been identified in order to further progress the objectives. It is worth remembering that both action plans contain short term actions and longer term aspirations.
- 1.4 This report also gives an outline of the future work that is still required for Eastbourne to address climate change and to move towards a sustainable future. The 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway set out aims and objectives for neighbourhood-wide clean energy programmes, locally grown food and resilience to extreme weather events.
- 1.5 To deliver these objectives significant changes to the town's current infrastructure will be required, which the Council is ideally placed to shape and take forward. The first step is to carry out feasibility work on the various areas being considered to fully explore all relevant issues and develop and test business models, and the direction in which this will be taken forward is presently being developed.

2.0 Key areas of activity within the Environment Strategy

- 2.1 The Environment Strategy identified the following 8 themes for collective action:
- Creating a low carbon town
 - Reducing and managing our waste responsibly
 - Protecting our green spaces and biodiversity
 - Ensuring the quality of the air we breathe
 - Adapting to a warmer world
 - Ensuring we use water sensibly
 - Protecting our marine and historic environment
 - Developing a network of community champions

The Council is not always the lead as actions can fall to other partners such as East Sussex County Council, the Environment Agency, 3VA and indeed the local community.

3.0 Key achievements delivered through the Environment Strategy

- 3.1 The key achievements delivered through the Environment Strategy in the past year are:
- Working with West Sussex County Council on Sussex wide procurement, using the combined buying power of local authorities, to get the best value for residents under the Green Deal;
 - Worked in partnership with suppliers to install 608 energy saving measures, such as cavity wall and loft insulation, with an annual CO2 saving of 443 tonnes and a financial saving for residents of £83,000 per annum;
 - Supplementary Planning Document produced to assist developers with designing sustainable buildings;
 - Publication of the town-wide cycle strategy;
 - Completion of two new cycle routes;

- 2nd Cycling Festival held in 2012 and next one planned in June 2013;
- Set up a new community-based web site that has all of the town's environment issues in one place www.cepe.org.uk
- Weekly town centre market introduced;
- Delivered the joint waste contract which will increase the range of items that can be recycled when the service change takes place w/c 22nd July 2013 with an aim of achieving an average level of 50% recycling across the partnership;
- Twenty of our open spaces protected in perpetuity through the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge (one of the highest number of sites submitted by a local authority);
- 290 additional allotment plots created
- Princes Park awarded Green Flag for second year in succession;
- Open downland accepted onto Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship scheme (scheme replaces the Environmentally Sensitive Area agreements) with grant income of £50,000 annum;
- Adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document for Eastbourne Park to conserve and enhance the Park, and sensitively manage the area for appropriate leisure and recreational use;
- Reducing vehicle emissions in hot spots – pollution levels are monitored and have not been exceeded;
- 3 Conservation Area appraisals completed;
- As part of the Council's beach management strategy, works took place in March 2012 and April/May 2013 to replenish shingle beaches;
- Three community champions are members of CEPE.

4.0 Key areas of activity within the Natural Resources Strategy

4.1 As with the town-wide strategy the Natural Resources Strategy has 8 themes which covers:

- Reducing our carbon emissions
- Reducing and managing our waste responsibly
- Protecting our land and habitats
- Ensuring good air quality
- Adapting to climate change
- Ensuring we use water sensibly
- Protecting our marine environment
- Developing a network of Green champions

5.0 Key achievements delivered through the Natural Resources Strategy

5.1 Notable achievements for 2012/13 include:

- Solarbourne has been in operation for one year, and the income to the Council from the feed in tariff is expected to be at least £100,000. This will be confirmed once the final quarterly payment for 2012/13 is received from Ofgem;
- Carbon audits have been carried out across all council buildings and some community centres. 59 buildings were inspected to assess what measures could be installed to reduce the Council's

carbon footprint and energy bills. Overall there are some cost-effective energy savings that can be made to our larger buildings; it is suggested that with a £1.9m investment the Council could make annual savings of just under £250,000. Investments would be a mixture of renewable technologies as well as improving the efficiency of heating and equipment. Options are presently being considered and would be subject to feasibility studies and business case approval;

- Reduction in vehicle emissions from council owned/leased vehicles reduced from 114 to 34 tonnes – 70% reduction. (based on 2011 figures);
- Reduction in carbon emissions from council buildings fell from 2939 to 2408 tonnes – 18% reduction, (based on 2011 figures);
- The number of corporate vehicles owned/leased has been reduced following a rationalisation exercise;
- 10 out of 14 buildings have a Display Energy certificates (DEC) rating of B or above. DECs are assessed on an annual basis and have seven grades A-G, with A being the most energy efficient;
- Motion passed at Council in September 2012 to support the Friends' of the Earth Bee Cause Initiative and continue to ensure where possible that planting undertaken in the Council's parks and gardens will support the lifestyle of bees and other pollinating insects;
- Bee walks took place in Hampden Park and Gildredge Park;
- Bee friendly beds planted in Hampden Park, Gildredge Park, Canary Quay, Rockhurst Drive, Shinewater Park, Sorrell Drive and Crown St;
- Planted wildflower meadows in Hampden Park and Old Town Rec to increase biodiversity;
- As part of the Council's beach management strategy, works took place in March 2012 and April/May 2013 to replenish shingle beaches

6.0 Reducing Carbon Emissions

6.1 Both strategies have a long term target of reducing carbon emissions by 40% by 2020. In terms of measuring this target, it is necessary to establish baseline figures for both Strategies. The Council is able to collect and collate information about its own carbon emissions to assist the delivery of the Natural Resources Strategy and this is done on an annual basis, and reported to Government. This was formerly measured by National Indicator 185 as the CO₂ reduction from local authority operations and the same criteria are now used even though the indicator has been abolished. With regard to town wide data, this is collected and collated by Government and is published with a two year time lag. It was formerly measured by NI 186 as the per capita emissions in the local authority area, and again the same criteria are used to assist the delivery of the Environment Strategy.

6.2 With regard to the baseline for the Natural Resources Strategy, data is available for 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12. The data for 2012/13 is being collated and must be submitted to Government in July for each financial

year. The figures are given below:

- For 2009/10 the baseline figure for carbon emission is 3054 tonnes;
- For 2010/11 the figure for carbon emissions is 2907 tonnes which equates to a reduction of 5% in the carbon emissions from the Council's own buildings and operations.
- For 2011/12 the figure for carbon emissions is 2443 tonnes, a reduction from the baseline of 20%.

It is worth noting that the initiatives which commenced during 2011/12 have had a significant impact on carbon emissions, namely the closure of 68 Grove Rd, and capital investment in replacement windows, and the solar panel installation at 1 Grove Rd which were completed in March 2011 and 2012 respectively.

- 6.3 With regard to the Environment Strategy, as this was developed in 2009 and approved by Cabinet in 2010, the baseline year for data that is being used is 2009. The Government publishes the annual data by calendar year and not financial year. The baseline data is collated by Government from the town-wide energy consumption figures published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change. The baseline figure for total carbon emission is 446,600 tonnes for the whole town, and this equates to a figure of 4.5 tonnes per capita. The most current figures are for 2010 as there is a time lag, and these are 4.7 tonnes per head, which is a marginal increase, due to the cold weather conditions in recent years and consequent increased fuel use.

It should be noted that this data only covers building and road energy use, it does not cover air travel, food and consumption habits. There is another data set we will use to monitor these additional elements but there is a longer data lag for this information so it will be some time before the 2009 data is available and can be used to complete the picture.

7.0 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway objectives

- 7.1 The Eastbourne Environment Strategy and Natural Resources Strategy have helped to lay the foundations for change, raised the profile of important issues, brought together key partners, and initiated projects that the community can benefit from. This has been a successful start but there is still much more to do because:

- Eastbourne's carbon emissions have risen (as did other areas due to the cold and often prolonged adverse weather conditions in recent years);
- Energy bills have doubled in less than seven years and they are going to increase further. We also now import most of our gas;
- Climate change is already happening and at rate that is much faster than predicted;
- Forecourt prices (petrol and diesel) have nearly doubled in the last eight years, and this is largely down to increasing oil prices. As with gas and electricity, oil prices are set to increase as global production hits its peak;
- Food prices have risen by a third in the last five years. This has been

caused by increases in energy prices, and droughts and floods that have damaged crops – which will continue as global warming makes chaotic weather a regular reality.

7.2 To address these future challenges the Council proposes to develop a 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway. This will be a seven year action plan which will build on the framework of the Environment Strategy, to achieve the 2020 target of reducing carbon emissions by 40%, and this approach will:

- give a clear vision to the community;
- enable the Council and the town to create a planned programme of investment over the next seven years;
- give stability and control over work that needs to be done;
- help to create a green economy with the establishment of local companies who assist delivery of energy efficiency and clean energy technology;

- align with our target date to reduce our emissions by 40% from a baseline date of 2009;

- provide a reasonable timeline to make significant investment which will lead to change.

The draft objectives for the 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway are set out in Appendix 1, and have been developed by CEPE.

7.3 Given that both strategies have the same aim of reducing carbon emissions by 40% by 2020, it is proposed that they both be incorporated into one action plan for the 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway. There will be a section within the action plan to represent the work that the Council will be taking forward to address environmental issues within its own estate and operations, to retain the accountability previously provided by the Natural Resources Strategy. The action plan will be finalised by the end of 2013.

8.0 Consultation

8.1 The draft objectives in Appendix 1 will be used as the platform to consult with the wider community and to develop specific actions to achieve the 2020 target. This will assist the Council to engage with the community and assess the level of support for initiatives and partnership delivery. The consultation will be done interactively and carried out with community groups and residents over a 12-week period. Once the consultation has completed, an action plan will be developed to enable delivery of the objectives.

9.0 Resource Implications

9.1 **Financial** – Actions remaining in the Natural Resources Strategy are already being delivered or being developed and/or can be contained within existing resources.

An initial feasibility study will be undertaken to assess the viability of future

environmental schemes suitable for Eastbourne to achieve the 2020 Carbon Reduction target. This initial feasibility study can be carried out within existing resources. Recommendations, supported by an appropriate business case, will be subject to a future Cabinet Report.

9.2 **Staffing** – at present, existing staffing resources will be used to deliver projects. However, this will be kept under regular review to ensure that there is sufficient capacity for delivery of projects.

10.0 Other Implications - Environmental, Equalities, Human Rights, Community Safety, Youth, Anti-poverty.

10.1 The Environment and Natural Resources Strategies, and the 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway have clear links with the Council's Corporate Plan. The Council has made a commitment in both strategies to reduce carbon emissions across the town and in its own estate and operations by 40% by 2020 as measured from 2009.

10.2 An Equality and Fairness analysis will be carried out in conjunction with the consultation on the action plan to deliver the 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway.

11.0 Summary

11.1 The report demonstrates the progress made both within the town and the Council's own operations, to achieve the 2020 target of a 40% reduction in carbon emissions. It also sets out an indication of the next steps and the significant developments that will be required in the shape of a 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway.

Sue Oliver
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Background Papers:

The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

Environment Strategy

Natural Resources Strategy

To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.

APPENDIX 1 – Draft Objectives for 2020 Carbon Reduction Pathway

Energy

- Reduce carbon emissions from homes, schools and businesses by 40%
- Develop long term plans for energy self-sufficiency
- Have at least one neighbourhood that is off-grid
- Set up renewable community energy schemes across the town
- Make buildings more energy efficient so they use less energy
- Have a thriving green economy

Transport

- Reduce carbon emissions by 40%
- Make Eastbourne a cycle town and deliver the planned cycle path network
- Have an energy network to support cleaner vehicles
- Have a car sharing scheme – so people can share the cost of transport
- Have a quality bus partnership to ensure people have access to affordable and good public transport

Food

- Ensure Eastbourne has a resilient food supply chain, especially for those on low incomes
- Ensure every household has access to locally grown food
- Have multiple community food growing areas
- Develop community orchards
- Have a town-wide garden food share scheme

Waste

- Utilise waste as an asset – for its energy, organic matter for growing, and capture of useful materials
- Have thriving enterprises that convert unwanted items into usable consumables
- Have a community recycling hub
- Have a commercial waste collection service
- Reduce the overall amount of waste collected

Green Spaces

- Have Eastbourne Park as the largest public green space in the town, supported by good cycle and walking access
- Have dedicated 'green corridors' that promote biodiversity
- Ensure that the character of our downland is maintained but flexible to the needs of the town
- Parks are community hubs for activity and leisure

Climate Change and Extreme Weather

- Reduce our carbon emissions by 40% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 to help to limit the temperature increase to 2 degrees

- Have a dedicated community resource to plan, coordinate and take forward how our adaption to the changing climate will be developed

Water

- To reduce our water consumption so we consume no more than 100 litres a day per capita
- Identify any issues for local water supply to ensure water supplies are not put at risk e.g. fracking
- Increase awareness on how to use water sensibly
- Ensure the water resources management plan is delivered