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| <b>REPORT TO:</b>                  | <b>ENVIRONMENTAL AND<br/>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES<br/>COMMITTEE</b>  | <b>AGENDA ITEM: 10</b>               |
| <b>DATE OF<br/>MEETING:</b>        | <b>15<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019</b>   | <b>CATEGORY:<br/>RECOMMENDED</b>     |
| <b>REPORT FROM:</b>                | <b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR<br/>(SERVICE DELIVERY)</b>   | <b>OPEN</b>                          |
| <b>MEMBERS'<br/>CONTACT POINT:</b> | <b>ALLISON THOMAS,<br/><a href="mailto:allison.thomas@south-derbys.gov.uk">allison.thomas@south-<br/>derbys.gov.uk</a>, 01283 595775</b> | <b>DOC:</b>                          |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                    | <b>CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL<br/>SUSTAINABILITY GROUP</b>  |                                      |
| <b>WARD(S)<br/>AFFECTED:</b>       | <b>ALL</b>   | <b>TERMS OF<br/>REFERENCE: EDS01</b> |

## **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1. That the Committee notes the progress made in improving the Council's environmental performance further to this Committee establishing a Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group in August 2018.
- 1.2. That the Committee notes the content of this report having regard to the Council's decision to declare a Climate Emergency at full Council on 27 June 2019.
- 1.3. That the Committee approve the proposed installation of a publically available electric recharge point in the Bus Station car park, Civic Way, Swadlincote.

## **2. Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1. To provide members with details on the progress made by the Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group to co-ordinate the Council's work on improving its environmental credentials and performance.
- 2.2. To provide members with an understanding of the existing work being undertaken by officers in relation to mitigating climate change.

## **3. Detail**

### **Background**

- 3.1. At a meeting of this Committee on 16 August 2018, approval was given to the establishment of a Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group (CESG). The purpose of the Group is to develop and implement measures that demonstrably improve the Council's environmental performance and support the delivery of the Council's strategic environmental objectives through a collaborative corporate approach.
- 3.2. Committee approved the terms of reference of the Group and agreed to receive further reports on the Group's work programme.

### **Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group Activity**

- 3.3. The inaugural meeting of the Group was in November 2018. Based on the terms of reference approved by Committee the Group has been given six work streams to improve the Council's performance, namely:
- To address issues arising from the **ISO140001 external accreditation** process;
  - To reduce the Council's **Energy Consumption**;
  - To improve the Council's **Water Management**;
  - To focus on reducing **Staff Travel** – core (miles driven by Council vehicles) and grey fleet miles (miles driven on Council business using employee's own transport);
  - Internal **Waste Management**;
  - Reducing environmental impacts through greening the **Procurement** process.
- 3.4. Two further work streams have also been brought to the Group over the spring and summer period:
- 3.5. At Full Council on 27 June 2019 a motion from Councillor Dr Robert Pearson was approved which pledged the Council to declaring a **Climate Emergency**.
- 3.6. A request from members to explore opportunities to enhance **biodiversity** across the District.

### **ISO 14001 External Accreditation**

- 3.7. On 24 October 2018, after a rigorous three-day audit, the Council's external auditors confirmed that the Council had been approved for recertification to the ISO14001 standard for the 10th successive year.
- 3.8. The auditors identified five 'minor' non-conformities and made a further seven observations. The Council must either address these or show to the auditors how the relevant issues have been otherwise dealt with.
- 3.9. Since the audit the Council has recruited a new Environmental Protection Officer who is leading the co-ordination of corporate environmental sustainability.
- 3.10. The Council has invested in a new online system "My Compliance" to enable the Council to better record and capture all environmental actions on issues such as legal compliance, audit schedules, risks and opportunities, audit reports and overall understanding of trends. This will enable continual improvement and communication between all departments as well as ownership of relevant environmental issues by Heads of Service across the organisation.
- 3.11. All five minor non-conformities have now been addressed and the Council is well placed for the next recertification audit in autumn 2019. This audit will include management and repair of the Council's housing stock for the first time.

### **Staff Travel**

3.12. The outcomes of a recent staff travel survey in late 2018 were reported to Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The headlines of this survey were:

- 50% of staff live within five miles of work;
- 90% of staff travel to work by car;
- 63% of staff do below two and half hours exercise a week;
- 60% indicated that they would utilise alternative options than a car with appropriate support

3.13. A Travel Plan Working Group was formed in February 2019 and the Group have been working on developing an understanding current employee travel habits, what practices and policies are already in place to support improvements and to explore a range of measures to inform and implement a Travel Plan for the Council.

3.14. The Team's objective is to produce a travel plan for the Council that:

- Supports a reduction in local air pollution;
- Improves staff health and wellbeing;
- Reduces staff travel miles using own vehicles (grey travel) and miles travelled by Council vehicles;
- Improves access to Council sites for visitors;
- Reduces staff demand for on-site parking;

3.15. The Travel Plan Working Group is currently in the process of developing a draft Council Travel Plan in preparation for consultation with the Senior Leadership Team in September. It is proposed to present a final version of the Council Travel Plan to Committee for approval in November 2019.

3.16. The Travel Plan Working Group supported World Environmental Day (5th June), in which the 2019 theme was "Air Pollution". World Environment Day was supported in South Derbyshire through a local "Environment Week" from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2019. The activities during the week were specifically developed to support the objectives of the Travel Plan Working Group. Activities during the week included:

- Publication of a Travel Survey Results Report to all South Derbyshire and Derbyshire County Council staff through email, intranet and printable option (this was limited to sites where access to the internet is not possible to reduce our impact on paper).
- A schedule of events and initiatives were organised, supported by a communication strategy, to raise awareness amongst staff and members of the public about a range of sustainable transport opportunities.
- An internal "In Work Travel" survey commissioned to understand the "buy-in" from the original Travel Survey in December 2018 – to June 2019 (6 month baseline)

3.17. Further to the Environment week;

- Thirteen members of staff signed up to walk to work.
- Lunchtime walks to further encourage staff to walk to work were a success with 44 members of staff attended over the three days
- The Sustainable Travel Delph Day showcased various low emissions vehicles and local businesses who offer these products. The public response to the Day was excellent and the Council has been asked to host another similar event in the future.

- “In Work Travel Survey” Result Highlights:
  - 10% response rate from staff
  - 75% said they had seen the travel results report
  - Severn people said they had already changed their mode of transport to get to work
  - 70% said they would use a pool car if offered
  - 30% said they would use an electric bike if offered

## **Energy and Waste**

- 3.18 An initial review of the Council's current electricity and gas supply framework has revealed a complex picture of energy consumption across the Council's estate of public and commercial buildings. The Council's electricity is sourced from a low carbon tariff regime comprising a combination of renewable and nuclear. The Council remain a major customer for Natural Gas. The expiry of the Council's current contract in 2020 offers an opportunity to explore procuring a 100% renewable Electricity supply. Any cost implications in pursuing this aspiration will be investigated as part of the tender process.
- 3.19 The Council has also undertaken an initial baseline carbon review across all the Council's assets and activities (linked to paragraph 3.18). This work has involved capturing data relating to all carbon sources, not just energy use (e.g. other sources of fuel, car mileage) to help understand the Council's overall Energy and Carbon Management. Current sources have been calculated as CO<sub>2</sub>e, Carbon Equivalent.
- 3.20 An analysis of the way that waste from the Civic Way offices is managed indicates that changes could significantly improve recycling rates. Improvements are being developed in conjunction with the Cleaning team and will be presented to the staff forum for their views. Early consultations indicate that to succeed the new system must be practical, comprehensible and supported by staff and therefore will require promotion to all users of the Civic Way offices during implementation.
- 3.21 The Housing Team is in the process of commissioning further research into the energy efficiency of the Housing Stock. The recent stock condition survey indicated that this position has not improved since 2012 when the last stock condition survey was completed. The Council is engaging the assistance of the Local Authority Energy partnership (LAEP) to complete this work. This assessment will provide some further detailed analysis of the type of works required to improve the energy efficiency of council homes. This could range from the provision of additional loft and wall insulation to the installation of alternative sources of heating or power, including solar power. Progress in this area will be reported to the Housing and Community Services Committee.

## **Biodiversity**

- 3.22 Biodiversity was introduced as a new work area for CESG in May 2019. The brief was to look at natural capital, linked with the enhancement of biodiversity (part of ISO 14001 – Environmental Management System). A Biodiversity Working Group has been set up to collaborate and progress biodiversity opportunities within the district.
- 3.23 Further to the first Biodiversity Working Group meeting in June 2019, two biodiversity Committee reports have been prepared which are the subject of spare items on this Committee's agenda to support the Biodiversity Working Groups aims:
- Develop an “Action Plan for Nature” across the District

- Report to pilot wildflower planting on highway verges and on some Council owned land.

## **Climate Emergency**

- 3.24 Following a motion by Cllr Dr Robert Pearson, on 27 June 2019 a Climate Emergency was declared by South Derbyshire District Council and the meeting minutes from this will be ratified at September's Council Meeting.
- 3.25 The Council pledge was to:
- Strive to make South Derbyshire District Council carbon neutral by 2030 and achieve Carbon Neutrality before the Government target of 2050;
  - Call on the UK Government to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target realistic;
  - Work with partners across the District and region to deliver this goal through all relevant strategies.
- 3.26 The Council has committed to publish a Climate Emergency Action within six-months.
- 3.27 Work is already well underway to understand the Council's carbon emissions (see section 3.19). The Council has also recently updated terms & conditions for tenders and quotes for services to enable procurement processes to have a further environmental focus.
- 3.28 The Council is already a member of the Local Authority Energy Partnership (LAEP) along with other Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Authorities. Through the Partnership, in addition to the Housing work referenced above at 3.21 the following work is already taking place:
- Officers attended a Derbyshire County Council Carbon Literacy Approved 1 day course in June and July 2019
  - The Council is exploring carbon framework training with Nottingham City Council on a standardised approach across Derbyshire Districts on action planning for climate change emergencies
  - The Council is exploring the delivery of future Internal environmental training to include a specific carbon reduction focus.
- 3.29 The Council recently applied to a government funded project being sponsored through Nottingham City Council for the provision of electric vehicle (EV) recharge points in public car parks. The Bus Station Car Park on Civic way meets the criteria for the bid and therefore with Committee approval the Council proposes to accept the offer for the installation of the first public EV recharge point on Council land.

## **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Beneficial impacts - Improved environmental performance could lead to potential cost savings e.g. in reducing the cost of staff mileage claims and waste disposal. Any spend to save opportunities which are identified will need to be the subject of a business case and will need to meet the financial procedural rules of the Council.
- 4.2 Adverse impacts – Improvements in both carbon equivalent emissions and biodiversity are both likely to require capital and revenue investment in equipment, training and staffing resources. Further detailed assessments of costs will become clearer as the action plans around both projects develop further.

## **5 Corporate Implications**

### **Employment Implications**

- 5.1 Beneficial. The proposals will improve the reputation of the Council and make South Derbyshire District Council an even more desirable employer to work for.

### **Legal Implications**

- 5.2 None.

### **Corporate Plan Implications**

- 5.3 The proposals align with the 'Outcomes' Corporate Plan theme and in particular Action O3 "Enhance environmental standards"; the 'People' Corporate Plan theme and in particular Action PE5 "Send less waste to landfill" and the 'Place' theme and in particular Action PL6 "Deliver services that keep the district clean and healthy".

### **Risk Impact**

- 5.4 The proposals will have a beneficial mitigating action against the corporate risk of "Managing the environmental impact of incidents across the District".

## **6 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

- 6.1 Staff travel planning has already been the subject of extensive staff consultation.
- 6.2 Proposed changes to waste collection in the Civic Way offices will be the subject of staff consultation.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 6.3 None.

### **Social Value Impact**

- 6.4 Beneficial.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.5 Beneficial.

## **7 Conclusions**

- 7.1 The retention of ISO14001 certification and the creation of the CESG has signalled the clear commitment of the Council to build and improve on its previous environmental performance.
- 7.2 Staff involvement with the staff travel survey showed that there is a high level of interest in sustainable transport. A Council Travel Plan will come to this Committee later in 2019
- 7.3 The declaration of a Climate Emergency on 27 June 2019 has provided further impetus behind the work of the CESG and has led to a specific focus on the Council's carbon footprint in addition to the environmental aspects already being

considered by the Group described in paragraph 3.3. A Climate Emergency Action Plan will be developed over the next 6 months.

- 7.4 The approval of the installation of an electric recharge point into the Bus Station car park on Civic Way offers an early opportunity to provide a signal of the Councils positive intentions to reduce carbon emissions and improve local air quality.
- 7.5 Specific actions and targets relating to the key environmental aspects being considered by the CESG will be developed for proposed inclusion in the 2019-24 Corporate Action Plan.

## **8 Background Papers**

Environment and Development Services Committee, 16 August 2018.

Environment and Development Services Committee, 25 April 2019.