



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 4th March 2020

Subject: Climate Change

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 A briefing note to update on City Council activity to positively tackle climate change. Including progress to date and future plans including recruitment, investment, stakeholder engagement and the development of a strategy and programme of actions.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are recommended to:
- 1) Support the approach, how we shape next steps and how we communicate the challenge, the opportunities and broaden our engagement.
 - 2) Identify any recommendations for the Cabinet Members

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 Coventry was one of the first cities to produce a Climate Change Strategy. The Climate Change strategy published in 2012 set a target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 27.5% by the year 2020. Coventry achieved this in 2014 (6 years early). The current Climate Change Strategy for the City ends in 2020 and is now under review.
- 3.2 The City has been recognised as a global leader on climate action and transparency, achieving a place on the CDP's Cities A Listⁱ, which proves our commitment to tackling climate change. To score an A, a city must have a city-wide emissions inventory, have set an emissions reduction target, published a climate action plan and have completed a climate adaptation plan to demonstrate how it will tackle climate hazards now and in the future among other actionsⁱⁱ.

4 Existing and previous activity

Business, Industry & Jobs

- 4.1 Key initiatives include the Green Business Programme which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), where we are helping businesses to reduce their impact on the environment through funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy powered solutions. To date we have supported 213 companies since the Programme launched, saved over 12,349 tonnes of CO₂ emissions and provided over £2 million in grant funding to support these businessesⁱⁱⁱ.
- 4.2 The Green Business Network currently has 905 members. The members consist of businesses, residents, local community groups, charities, universities, schools and training providers who have an appetite to engage with us around climate change. Being part of the Network ensures that as a Council we can engage with key stakeholders as well as share news on the latest green technologies, funding support and the many events covering topics on sustainability we hold within our region.

- 4.3 The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC) is an innovative partnership between Coventry City Council, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Warwick Manufacturing Group. UKBIC is an open access research facility which supports the transition of the UK to become a world leader in the design, development and manufacture of batteries for vehicle electrification.

Energy

- 4.4 For several years, the City has had a district heating system. The Heatline network supplies residual heat from the City's Energy from Waste plant to public buildings including the Council House, Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry Cathedral, 1 Friargate and The Wave. Approximately 8,000 MWh of heat is delivered to these buildings each year with capacity to deliver significantly more. Heatline delivers savings of approximately 1,100 tCO₂ per year compared to the emissions that would result from the connected buildings using conventional gas boilers. An additional benefit is that the remaining emissions are present at a central location which offers greater scope for future mitigation (eg. Carbon Capture and Storage) as new technology becomes available.
- 4.5 The principal basis for the operation of any Energy from Waste plant is that of waste management. Under Coventry's existing waste management strategy, the predominant method for residual municipal waste treatment (i.e. the waste that cannot be re-used, recycled or composted) is incineration. The inclusion of energy recovery (Heatline) is a significant enhancement to incineration and captures additional benefits from the waste management approach. Around 92% of Coventry's residual waste is sent to the Energy from Waste plant, with the remainder going direct to landfill. As a result, Coventry is extremely well positioned with regard to its diversion from landfill. A study by CSWDC in 2019, to understand the impact its Energy from Waste Plant had on reducing UK carbon emissions, highlighted that the plant provided substantial carbon benefits by saving 27,808 tonnes of additional carbon dioxide being emitted to the atmosphere in 2018 compared with landfilling the residual waste and fossil fuel energy generation.
- 4.6 Coventry was the UK's first city with centrally controlled dimming street lighting. 28,700 new PFI lighting columns were installed between 2010 and 2015. All lighting columns are targeted downwards to reduce light pollution, and this has provided 38% energy reduction across the city saving just over 5,000 tonnes of carbon since 2012.
- 4.7 Coventry was recently one of ten cities to be awarded funding for local smart energy projects from an open competition through UKRI^{iv}. The project, working with partners including WMCA and University of Warwick, will design a Regional Energy System Operator which will help the city to decarbonise and keep costs down. The design project has the potential to attract further investment into the city for implementation and reduce the need for expensive infrastructure upgrades.
- 4.8 The Council is currently undertaking a feasibility study on renewable heat recovery systems from the sewer network and historic mine infrastructure within Coventry. This is part of a national Government plan to harness Britain's hidden heating sources.
- 4.9 Through Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the City Council is participating in a power assessment study. The study will identify power constraint 'hotspots' within the LEP area and outline initial solutions to solve constraints including innovative options which enable a more future-proofed power infrastructure to enable our growth potential. The study is due to complete in July 2020, after which the next phase of solutions development can be looked at.
- 4.10 The Council runs Affordable Warmth Programmes which support disabled and low-income householders who are vulnerable to the adverse health effects of cold homes. Insulation and heating measures can be funded to reduce effects and help to alleviate fuel poverty.

Transport

- 4.11 Coventry has 156 charge points (including 35 rapid chargers) for electric vehicles and by April 2020, another 120 will have been added. Coventry is 2nd with the most amount of EV chargers of all UK cities outside of London.
- 4.12 The challenge of future mobility is being addressed by using battery technology to create a new very light rail (VLR) system in Coventry (the first one in the UK) alongside CW LEP, Warwick Manufacturing Group and West Midlands Combined Authority. The first demonstrator vehicle is estimated to be built and ready for testing in Autumn 2020.
- 4.13 In September 2019, Coventry City Council launched the Go Electric Taxi scheme, to encourage drivers to move to electric vehicles. It provides incentives worth £2,768 to taxi drivers interested in making the switch to a cleaner vehicle to reduce air pollution in the City. The initiative is supported by a range of companies including, the Coventry electric taxi maker LEVC, Irish energy company ESB, Siemens and the taxi app Gett.
- 4.14 The Council received £2.2million of Government funding to invest in greener, cleaner buses for the city. 10 fully electric buses in collaboration with National Express will be fully operational by June 2020 on major routes that experience high levels of congestion and have been identified as air quality hotspots.
- 4.15 Coventry City Council is seeking funding to enable businesses and organisations in the city to transport goods and provide services using electric vehicles (vans, cars and cargo bikes). A survey has recently been sent out to local businesses and organisations who are interested in making use of electric vehicles for a trial period.
- 4.16 The Council is also looking for funding to deliver a 'on the move charging' Dynamic Wireless Power Transfer project and a multi-fuel energy centre in Coventry. This is still in its inception stage.

Waste & Recycling

- 4.17 Trials are taking place using recyclable materials in tarmac of local roads significantly reducing energy consumption and a lower carbon footprint. Old vehicle tyres and plastic pellets are the recyclable materials being used in the road surfacing.

Community Engagement

- 4.18 The Council has facilitated the creation of the Coventry & Warwickshire Climate Action Partnership (CWCAP). This is a community-led partnership aiming to harness the community's ideas and resources in relation to climate change. The CWCAP will feed into the bigger discussion on the City's Climate Change Strategy.

5 Next steps and priorities for 2020/21

- 5.1 The Council is very committed to tackling climate change in the City. The main driver to this will be our new Head of Service who will be overseeing and developing our new Climate Change Strategy 2020. This post will bring in new extra high-level capacity to build upon all the great work that is currently happening and to drive the council's contribution going forward. This strategy will ensure that Coventry is at the forefront of low carbon innovation and that decarbonisation benefits the economy and ensures a sustainable, clean and green future for generations to come.
- 5.2 The Climate Change Strategy will require significant engagement with stakeholders in the City, including businesses, residents and community groups. This engagement will build upon the work already started on the Let's Talk Climate Change platform and ensure a high degree of community involvement.
- 5.3 The Council is committed to working with businesses to achieve the City's climate goals. For this reason, there is an intention to extend the Green Business Programme and to make the most of other recent funding opportunities within the sustainable agenda.

- 5.4 Coventry City Council are considering plans for the development of a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) that will serve Coventry, neighbouring authorities and regional businesses. The proposed 175,000 tonne capacity facility will increase recycling and reduce carbon emissions.
- 5.5 The Council has committed additional resource through the 2020/2021 budget process to deliver the Climate Change Strategy and implement actions coming through it.

Name: Andy Williams

Job Title: Director of Business, Investment and Culture

Contact Details: andy.williams@coventry.gov.uk

Endnotes

- i [CDP's Cities A List](#)
- ii [Coventry among 105 cities globally to score an "A" for leading climate action](#)
- iii [Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business Programme](#)
- iv [Local Smart Energy Project](#)