

STAFFORDSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Cabinet member for Housing, Ecology and Climate Change

Date: 7 March 2023
Agenda Item: 3
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Key Decision? NO
Local Ward N/A
Members

Lichfield
district council

CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Lichfield District Council has pledged to become a net zero organisation by 2035, and help Lichfield as a District become net zero by 2050. The Staffordshire Sustainability Board was established in January 2022. The aim of the Board is to encourage and support greater partnership working between the county's local authorities to tackle climate change and reduce Staffordshire's carbon emissions towards net zero targets. The plan proposes a joint and, aligned calendar of communications and behaviour change activity throughout the year, to be delivered in partnership with the other district, borough, and County councils in Staffordshire.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Note the progress of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in developing a unified 2023 programme of activity across the county and eight district and borough councils, to tackle climate change and work towards our net zero targets.
- 2.2 Approve the Staffordshire Sustainability Board joint communications plan (attached as Appendix 1), which sets out our 12-month programme of climate change awareness-raising and behaviour change activity.

3. Background

- 3.1 Whilst each member of Staffordshire's Sustainability Board and their respective local authority are responsible for communicating their climate change responsibilities and actions it was recognised that by working together could have greater reach and impact.

The joint communication plan attached as Appendix 1, sets out a calendar of unified and consistent communications activity to be delivered throughout the year to raise awareness, deepen understanding and inspire action on climate change.

It details a programme of activity and joint messages on key dates including Valentine's Day, various religious festivals and on high profile climate change focused events such as Earth Day and World Environment Day. It was noted at the Staffordshire Sustainability Board that some more diverse holiday messages should be included in the plan. This will be incorporated into the plan following further research.

Public events will also take place throughout the year to raise awareness of the impact and threat of climate change, and the steps we can all take to reduce carbon emissions and our impact on the environment. Following a successful pilot in Stafford Town Centre in April 2022 a 'Carbon Bubble' roadshow is planned for Summer 2023.

The roadshow will feature a one-day event in each district and borough, to engage with residents and increase carbon literacy. It is scheduled to take place in Lichfield city in Market Square on Wednesday 5th July. A 10 m x 10m sphere will be inflated in central locations, representing the equivalent size of 'one tonne of carbon dioxide'. The events themselves will be low carbon, using hydrogenated vegetable oil to inflate the balloon. At the events, staff will talk to Staffordshire residents, businesses and visitors about climate change and encouraging them to pledge to do their bit to be greener. Pledges will be captured on a board that will then be hosted in libraries as part of a climate change display.

A formal consultation is planned for Summer 2023 to understand residents' perceptions about climate change, what the barriers are for them to be greener and what would inspire them to change their behaviour. This information will enable us to gain insight into public views on climate change and provide an evidence bank and base line for campaign planning going forward.

The joint communication plan lays a strong foundation for more joined up working between councils.

Alternative Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lichfield District Council could not deliver the joint countywide communications plan to pursue, create and share its own messages separately. It was decided that a joint approach with the rest of the county makes the best use of resources and makes sure we promote consistent messages countywide.
Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The communications plan was shared in draft stage with the communications team of the council. 2. It was also shared through the Staffordshire Sustainability Board which the Ecology and Climate Change Manager attends alongside the Cabinet member for Housing, Ecology and Climate Change who were able to provide comment.
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is intended that the joint communication activity will be co-funded, with a £25,000 contribution from the county council budget for climate change, and a £3,000 contribution from each of the district and borough councils. 2. It has since been announced that this £3,000 contribution will not be needed. Each authority of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board provided £5,000 for a shared officer post for which there was an underspend following delays recruiting. This underspend is being used to fund the communications plan.
Approved by Section 151 Officer	Yes
Legal Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Climate Change Act commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. This includes reducing emissions from the devolve administrations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), which currently account for about 20% of the UK's emissions. 2. The Council has made a commitment to become net carbon zero by 2035.
Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<p>Relevant themes and aims of the strategic plan 2020-2024 the communications plan attribute to are listed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable people to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. help themselves and others

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. collaborate and engage with us c. live healthy and active lives <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Shape place to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. keep it clean, green and safe b. preserve the characteristics c. make sure sustainability and infrastructure needs are balanced 3. Develop prosperity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. enhance the district for all 4. Be a good council that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. responsive and customer focussed
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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	N/A
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EIA logged by Equalities Officer	Equalities Officer confirmed not required.
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Crime & Safety Issues	N/A
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Environmental Impact (including Climate Change and Biodiversity).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The delivery of the communications strategy should have a positive impact on the environment, and the council and districts net zero ambitions. 2. The communications and engagement activity has been designed to help make Staffordshire sustainable. Every effort will be made to make activity associated with delivering the plan as green or low carbon as possible. 3. It is important to work with partner councils and Staffordshire’s residents and businesses to make them aware of their carbon emissions and to the reduction of our collective carbon footprint.
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GDPR / Privacy Impact Assessment	N/A
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	Risk Description & Risk Owner	Original Score (RYG)	How We Manage It	Current Score (RYG)
A	Not delivering the joint countywide communications plan. The council is not taking responsibility to send messages to residents to help reduce carbon emissions. The council has difficulty in achieving net zero ambitions for the District.	Yellow	Deliver the joint countywide communications plan to spread consistent messages countywide and assist in achieving net zero targets.	Green
E	Not delivering the joint countywide communications plan. The council may need to use more funding and resource to deliver the same outcomes.	Yellow	Deliver the joint countywide communications plan to make better use of resource.	Green

	Background documents
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	Staffordshire Sustainability Board Communications Plan 2023 (Appendix 1).
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	Relevant web links
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