

## Annual Report of the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Action 2021-22

### Introduction

Lancaster City Council have made great strides in implementing our Corporate Plan goal of reducing the carbon emissions from our own estate to net zero by 2030. Mark Davies and his team and officers in other departments, including Finance, Planning, Leisure, Procurement, Legal and Property, have worked together to achieve the following:

- **Digital Co2 Dashboard** - this monitors emissions in every area of the council's activities. The Dashboard was key in identifying Salt Ayre as the biggest emitter of all the council's properties, and in identifying and reducing staff travel emissions.
- **Salt Ayre Leisure Centre** is now the UK's first fully off gas Leisure Centre, thanks to a successful £6.8m funding bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. The existing gas boilers have been replaced with air source heat pumps; External LED lighting has been installed and glazing upgraded to reduce energy consumption. A solar farm has also been built on the adjacent disused landfill site at Salt Ayre to generate electricity, which is provided to the Centre using a direct wire.
- **Heat Decarbonisation** We were awarded £150,000 from SALIX to produce a fully appraised/costed heating decarbonisation plan incl. technologies and fabric upgrades needed across the corporate estate to get us to 2030.
- **Building Decarbonisation Projects** across up to 10 sites using >£1m of the underspend from Salt Ayre are to be completed by 30 June 2022.
- **Electric Refuse Vehicles** We have taken delivery of our first electric refuse vehicle and a second is due for delivery shortly.- These will be deployed on our business refuse collections, but can also be used to assess their suitability to replace diesel vehicles on other rounds.
- **EV Fleet Replacement** Council approved a capital replacement programme to 2030 that assumes changing almost every vehicle in our fleet, including refuse trucks, to electric (or hydrogen). Some of our newly acquired electric pool cars have also been made available to the public through the Co-wheels car club.
- **Staff Travel** Our staff travel emissions have gone down from around 35 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/pa to 9.7 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/pa this year. Although much of this reduction was due to staff working from home, the introduction of electric vehicles for staff use has also played a part.
- **Heat Networks** We were successful in obtaining a £91,000 Government Heat Networks Delivery Unit grant for a Heat Networks feasibility study. The study will investigate a number of heat network options for several clusters in the Lancaster District, connecting a wide range of potential heat and power consumers and a range of baseload supply technologies.
- **Heysham Gateway:** We are modelling options for roof-mounted solar, sales to tenants and options to use surplus to feed an e-RCV fleet inc. relocations from White Lund Depot
- **Local Area Energy Plan** We have applied for funding to create a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP), in collaboration and consultation with Electricity North West and Energy Systems Catapult. A LAEP establishes a basis for assessing or contesting energy developments in local spatial planning applications. It will also provide a framework for targeting investment

and funded programmes directed at fuel poverty and improving building energy performance; a compelling and locally specific narrative for meaningful engagement with local citizens and businesses in the national effort to decarbonise, adding a democratic element to the significant changes ahead; a framework for local areas to achieve local decarbonisation ambitions and assessing and setting local carbon emissions reduction targets; a clear plan to drive local clean growth and job creation and to provide confidence to invest in new energy products, services and infrastructure.

## District Wide Engagement

Our Climate Emergency Motion passed in January 2019 also agreed to work towards making the Lancaster District Zero Carbon within the same timescale;

- **Local Climate Engagement (LCE)** “is a new programme to support local authorities in England to plan, commission and deliver high quality public engagement in their climate decision-making, in a way that benefits both them and their local population”. We have been successful in achieving a place in the Project Group, and will be supported by Shared Futures in delivering a local public engagement project in climate decision-making, building on our experience with the People’s Jury, and to start to embed the approaches and skills needed for future participation work. The programme content includes training for council officers, up to £45,000 of expert time (pro-bono) to support us to plan and deliver a piece of public engagement work, and peer learning sessions.
- **Climate Change Community hub** [This online hub](#) has been set up for residents and others with local connections to share ideas , discuss important topics and contribute to the future of the district.
- **Partnerships:** We’ve asked Exeter City Futures CIC to put together a proposal for their support in establishing our own expression of a local partnership (i.e. learning the lessons from elsewhere while not necessarily lifting the Exeter model wholesale).
- **District Climate Strategy Development:** We’re currently working on the next draft of this, ready to start consultation with members, stakeholders, other potential partners and the wider community.
- **Array Festival 19 May** [The Festival](#) is “a celebration of the incredible enterprise taking place in the Lancaster City region.” Councillor Kevin Frea & Dianne Neville (Principal Planning Officer) gave presentations live at this event held at White Cross alongside Henrik Johansson, Environmental Co-Ordinator at Växjö, our twin city in Sweden.
- **Online Youth Engagement Event 14 July.** Community Connector Carlyne Walsh helped local young people to host this event online with Anita Okunde (former member of the Youth Parliament) and Scarlett Knowles (Youth Mayor for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham). The webinar focused on targeting young people and educating them about big, small and governmental action that can change their future.
- **Walk2Cop26 22 October.** We collaborated with Marketing Lancashire, EDF, Morecambe BID, Morecambe Town Council, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, Eden North and a number of other partners to host a public [Walk2Cop26](#) networking event at the Winter Gardens in Morecambe. Speakers included Andy Brown

from the Environment Agency, Martyn Butlin from EDF and Shaun Turner from Lancashire County Council, as well as Councillor Frea.

- **COP26 at Lancaster Festival 25 October** This event 'People Power: Involving Citizens in Climate Policymaking' was hosted at the Storey, with speakers Prof. Rebecca Willis, Councillor Shaun Turner from Lancashire County Council and Councillor Kevin Frea.

## External

- **Municipal Journal Awards 2021** Lancaster City Council was commended for leadership in responding to the climate emergency.
- **The Transport Decarbonisation team at the Department for Transport** included our EV fleet expansion, including Co-Wheels, as a case study in forthcoming government guidance for local authorities on decarbonising transport.
- **APSE Energy** held a site visit and Network meeting at Salt Ayre in March 2022. This was an opportunity to showcase our decarbonised Leisure Centre to more than 30 officers and Councillors from across the UK.
- **EU Climate Neutral Smart Cities:** The EU Commission received 377 Expression of Interests (for 100 places) from EU and other European cities that are aspiring to be climate neutral and smart by 2030. We are awaiting a final decision this month having been shortlisted along with Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, and Newcastle.
- **Net Zero Local Leadership Summit 13 July** We were mentioned by Alok Sharma MP, COP26 President who said *"Whether that is Lancaster City Council electrifying its vehicles, Swansea retrofitting housing stock, or tree planting in the West Midlands. It has been a real pleasure to learn about the work going on around the UK at the meetings of the COP26 UK Mayors and Regions Advisory Council, which we have established to help COP reach every corner of the UK."*
- **UK100 Countryside Climate Network** We are members of this and have participated in a number of meetings throughout the year.
- **Planet Mark zero carbon electric 'battle bus' 13 October.** Councillor Gina Dowding and Councillor Kevin Frea were both interviewed, along with Susanna Dart and Diane Neville from Planning, during the [bus visit to Lancaster University](#) for video presentations that were displayed in the Green Zone at COP26 in Glasgow.
- **Northern Real Farming Conference 2-3 December 2021** Lancaster City Council hosted this [live event at the Storey Institute](#). Sessions included 'Local Food Growing', 'Reimagining our Northern Farming Landscape', 'The Role of Large Scale Grant Funding in Shifting Food Systems', 'Mapping Local Supply Chain Infrastructure' as well as a number of networking sessions and local visits.
- **LGA Climate Leadership Essentials Course 27 April & 17 September** Councillor Kevin Frea was invited to present a session on Lancaster City Councils achievements on this online course for Councillors.
- **LGA/Key Cities Urban Summit March 9 2022** Councillor Kevin Frea was invited to join a panel on 'Decarbonising Our Cities' at the LGA in London.

- Mark Davies met with the Director and Climate Change officer from Blackburn with Darwen on March 4th 2022. They are impressed with our approach to addressing Climate change.

### **Rural Areas**

- Community Connectors have organised regular online meetings throughout the year, to bring together Parish Councils, Community Organisations, Health and other organisations to discuss issues affecting rural areas of the District. These have included our new Grassland Management Strategy, the Local Plan as well as Covid, fly tipping and rural transport.
- **AONB.** Councillor Kevin Frea has been invited to participate in the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' Local Assessment Panel.

### **Cllr Kevin Frea**

**Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Climate Action**