

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**22 February 2024**

**COUNCILLOR MICHAEL de WHALLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY**

For the period 26 January 2024 to 10 February 2024

### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

#### **Norfolk Net Zero Communities**

The local launch at Marshland St. James held on 12 February 2024 included a range of agencies including Lily, Beat your Bills Roadshow, County Council Family Support Hub, The Wellness on Wheels Bus and Norfolk Constabulary. Marshland St. James Parish Council was awarded a certificate to mark their selection and the start of the Fast Followers project.

#### **Norfolk Climate Change Partnership**

The Partnership Portfolio Group met in February 2024. At the Regional Climate Change Forum advocacy themes were discussed to take back to the Government. We are advocating the need for clear messaging and actions to be taken around the decarbonisation of agriculture and associated land use. We have also advocated for the equity of the emerging wind industry in the North Sea so that Norfolk's communities receive commensurate benefit for hosting the infrastructure including cable corridors.

The partnership received an update on the progress towards an Energy Plan which is being progressed by partners at Norfolk County Council. The Partnership is taking an active role in the development of community energy in the county working closely with the Greater South East Net Zero Hub to ensure more communities in Norfolk are successful in securing funding through the Government's Community Energy Fund and the partnership will be organising a webinar at the end of March for interested communities.

A thermal imaging loan scheme for community groups to help people assess the heat loss of buildings in their community and connect them to advice and information to address any issues identified is being piloted.

Community Climate Literacy training is going to be provided to create a network of engaged communities for the partnership and its partners.

#### **Climate**

January 2024 was the warmest January on record globally, the eighth such consecutive month, with an average surface air temperature of 13.14°C, 0.12°C above the temperature of the previous warmest January, in 2020.

January was about 1.52°C warmer than an estimate of the January average for 1850-1900, the designated pre-industrial reference period.

The average global sea surface temperature (SST) for January 2024 over 60°S–60°N reached a record 20.97°C, 0.26°C warmer than the previous warmest January, in 2016, and second highest value for any month, within 0.01°C of the record from August 2023 (20.98°C). Since 31 January, the daily SST for 60°S–60°N has reached new absolute records, surpassing the previous highest values from 23–24 August 2023.

In early February 2024, a record high was set with the 180-day running mean for the global surface temperature crossing 1.7°C above the pre-industrial 1850-1900 IPCC baseline.

*Data source: European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts - ERA5.*

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

### **Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan**

We intend to update the Environment and Community Panel on the Action Plan, latest Council Carbon Footprint and Climate Change Reserve Fund on the meeting scheduled for 9 April 2024.

### **Re:Fit 2**

With the support of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding, eleven sites were retrofitted with energy efficiency measures. Ground and air source heat pumps were installed across nine sites; other measures included insulation upgrades, timer/clock controls (hot water) and solar photovoltaics.

Performance monitoring has revealed that the heat pumps are not achieving the anticipated savings, although officers are working with our contractor to resolve identified issues. Other measures are shown to be performing as expected.

### **Further Decarbonisation**

Following the conclusion of two major retrofit exercises, under Re:Fit 1 & 2, much of the low hanging fruit has already been had in terms of energy savings. BCKLWN officers continue, however, to explore options for further decarbonisation and cost savings. In the current climate of elevated energy costs, measures previously discounted due to excessive payback may now be considered viable. Additional grant funding may also become available in future (i.e. Swimming Pool Support Fund).

Works have recently been instructed to replace external and stairwell lighting at Old Cattle Market Car Park with LED lighting.

Outline proposals to expand LED lighting for the external pitches at Lynnsport are being investigated. New Electric Vehicle charge points are under consideration at the BCKLWN Depot, with a view to maximising the use of on-site solar generation.

Officers are also investigating the possibility of more solar photovoltaic installations, as well as a Power Purchase Agreement, as a means of directly procuring renewably generated energy.

### **Further solar PV**

As per below, based initially on the figures from the Ameresco High Level Assessment, officers have identified three sites which could achieve payback within/around ten years, based on the latest price projections for 24-25 and assessments of the half-hourly consumption data at each site.

Site	Size of Array	Annual Generation	kWh Used on Site	kWh Exported to Grid	Capex	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Annual Savings (import)	Payback Period (years)
Corn Exchange	30.3kWp	26583	26583	0	£61,306.98	24.185	£6,429.03	9.54
Downham Leisure	39.75kWp	34873	30228	4646	£74,651.69	24.185	£7,310.60	10.21
Oasis	90kWp	81012	63322	17690	£136,489.68	24.185	£15,314.34	8.91

Please note that energy prices are predicted to fall over the medium term, but remain elevated compared with historical (i.e. 19-20) levels.

### **Beat Your Bills Roadshow**

**Hunstanton (Town Hall)** – 27/02/2024 10:00-14:00

**Wereham (Village Hall)** – 05/03/2024 10:45-13:00 (Pop Up Café)

**Emneth (Central Hall)** – 13/03/2024 10:00-12:00

**Brancaster (Village Hall)** – 16/03/2024 10:30-15:30 (Green Day)

**Downham Market (Town Hall)** – 26/03/2024 10:00-14:00

**Stow Bardolph (Church Farm)** – 02/04/2024 09:00-15:00

**Downham Market (Primary School)** – 20/04/2024 10:00-15:00 (Earth Day)

**Feltwell (Village Fete)** – 15/06/2024 10:00-15:00

**Downham Market (Marketplace)** – 26/07/2024 09:00-14:00

**King's Lynn (Boots)** – 02/08/2024 10:00-14:00

### **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

Mayor's Business Awards - Environmental Champion  
 Forestry Commission & Norfolk County Council - Trees  
 Beuys' Acorns Project  
 West Norfolk Transport and Infrastructure Steering Group  
 Wild Downham Market  
 Biodiversity Task Group

Town Deal Board Active and Clean Connectivity Project Board  
Cabinet - Non-Budget Items  
Cabinet Budget  
Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Portfolio Holders Group  
Apprentice Celebration Event

**Portfolio Holder Briefings and updates:**

Climate Change Weekly Updates

**Meetings Scheduled:**

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Portfolio Holders meeting 10 April 2024.