

South Lakeland District Council
Council
17 December 2019

Portfolio: Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio

Report from: Cllr Dyan Jones

To lead on the Council's policies around Climate change and sustainable growth, to develop a policy on bio-diversity, raising community awareness and working collaboratively on policy objectives.

To take the lead on Strategic Waste Management/Recycling and relevant Council Plan measures under the environment objectives.

To drive our Localism agenda.

Policies, Plans and Strategies

- Waste Management Strategy (environmental impacts)
- Air Quality Strategy and action plan
- Active Travel Strategy and action plan
- Council Policy on Climate Change

Key Areas

- Waste Management and Recycling Strategy
- Community micro-energy schemes
- Carbon/Greenhouse gas Reduction
- Green agenda – Carbon reduction
- Active Travel
- Localism
- Devolution
- Water Quality
- Bio-Diversity

Waste Management and Recycling Strategy

The Climate Emergency and Localism and Customer and Commercial Services Portfolios together support the Waste Management and Street Scene department within this authority.

A communications plan has been developed to promote recycling and waste minimisation, supporting our green initiative. This includes content in South Lakeland News and posts on social media platforms.

The next issue of South Lakeland News is scheduled for distribution in December, and will include significant content about waste and recycling.

The street cleansing service has trialled 2 electric vehicles. In both cases the daily operational mileage exceeded the range of the vehicle. The service continues to monitor new vehicle technologies, particularly with regard to alternative fuels.

Officers attended local events including Cartmel, Hawkshead, Ulverston and Westmorland County Shows where they spoke directly to customers, providing recycling and waste management advice. An annual figure shows that in 2018/19 44.4% of household waste in South Lakeland was reused, recycled or composted and the Council has reassured residents that the plastic recycling collected is processed into recycled products. During recent months officers have also attended other local events, including the Eco fair at the Coronation Hall, Ulverston.

Council will continue to work with partners to investigate practical ways to reducing its carbon emissions and will continue to look at all areas of policy and delivery, as part of the action plan designed to tackle climate change the council will investigate ways to access 'Tetra Pack' recycling and plastic film recycling.

Air Quality Strategy/ Action Plan and Carbon Reduction

The Council has been offering parking permits at a reduced rate for cleaner vehicles. Since January 2019 a total of 40 discounted permits have been registered.

Council is required to report on air quality management to Defra every year (statistics for 2019 yet to be reported). Since 2011 Council has reduced the number of air quality management areas that do not meet quality standards from 4 to 1. The Council is regularly monitoring the only remaining site at Lowther Street, Kendal and is continuing to undertake promotional activities to reduce idling and promotes cycle ways throughout the district, especially to schools. As outlined in the action plan to tackle climate change the Council will be investigating ways to discourage vehicle idling.

Council is introducing ways of improving air quality within the district by ensuring all developers in its Local Planning Authority area are required to submit the appropriate information as part of their planning application in order for the council to assess the development's impact on air quality. The Council is also planning to promote energy efficiency in homes to residents such as the use of low energy lightbulbs.

Community micro-energy schemes and Carbon/Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Council's Climate Change Policy provides continuing focus on how South Lakeland District Council can lead and encourage others to take action around climate change.

The policy recognises the significance of climate change whilst identifying economic and other opportunities offered by addressing and adapting to meet the challenges ahead.

Council acknowledges the importance of climate change both in how we manage ourselves as an organisation and how we work with partners at a local, regional and national level, ensuring sustainable growth is a priority.

Green Agenda – Activity

The Green Team comprises of several officers who have been evaluating the actions of the Council, making energy efficiencies, promoting sustainable travel and informing/influencing communities on how to proactively 'Think globally, act locally'...

In July 2019, cabinet members hosted 'Climate Change Conversations' with communities throughout the district. These offered an opportunity to update communities on the actions that Council has undertaken following last year's meetings, to gather further ideas and to understand the communities' concerns. Following these sessions the Council generated an updated list of actions which has become the focus of the Green Team, to mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss with partners and stakeholders.

The council is continuing to partner with Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS) to provide support for communities across the district exploring and introducing renewable energy schemes and other projects and topics. Continued funding support from the Council enables CAfS to undertake a comprehensive programme of low carbon initiatives targeted at communities across South Lakeland.

Other initiatives that the Council is supporting include funding a zero carbon project in Ambleside, approved the installation of solar panels on council buildings and agreement on an enhanced scheme of tree planting.

The 'Fill-up' scheme has been introduced across the district which offers free water refills at council offices and participating businesses. The scheme is to encourage the public to drink more water, reduce their use of single use plastics and explore local businesses. Supporting reduction of reliance on single-use plastic water bottles. In total 52 businesses have signed up to the initiative.

With support from the Cumbria Leaders Board and Cumbria Chief Executives Group a Climate Change Sub Group has been established. The aim of the Climate Change 'Sub Group' is to identify mitigating actions which can be introduced across the county to reduce the risks and impacts of climate change. Delegates from authorities across Cumbria are supporting this group in the creation, introduction and implementation of a Climate Change Strategy.

Green Agenda – Active Travel

The Active Travel Group are continuing to meet internally on a quarterly basis. The group has been engaging with key partners to introduce additional cycle routes and safer routes to school. SLDC website now also includes cycling maps for routes across the district ([Click here](#)).

Encouraging cycling is very important in any future reduction of carbon emissions and with support from Defra a Cycling Hub was installed at the Westmorland Shopping Centre in September 2019. The hub provides dedicated changing rooms, cycle parking, maintenance stand and lockers which is free for public use.

The facility provides space for 10 bikes and encourages commuters and visitors to support the council's initiative to reducing carbon emissions.

Localism

So far this year cabinet members have met with a number of town and parish councils to discuss the benefits of localism and listen to the views of the parish. Following these successful meetings the councils were able to establish a comprehensive list of community development opportunities of which SLDC could review where support mechanisms could be put in place.

Devolution

There is minimal update in relation to Devolution however the Council continues to closely monitor updates in partnership with the other Cumbrian district authorities regarding devolution deals to prepare for any changes or mitigations that may be required from Cumbria County Council. However, following the Devolution Framework from Central Government, the Leader of the Council has been engaged in discussions with the Northern Powerhouse Partnership on a devolution deal for Cumbria and its districts have taken place. Work is continually being undertaken through the Joint Districts Board and Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region to progress key relationships with other authorities in health, housing and economic growth.

Water Quality

Four sites on the lake at Windermere received the top rating for the 2019 bathing season and every designated bathing water location in South Lakeland has been rated as excellent for the fifth consecutive year.

The Council undertakes a statutory function to carry out private water tests at various locations across the district to ensure the safety of communities, implemented by the Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016. The Council has been continuing to undertake risk assessments and monitoring across all private water supplies. Where required, the Council is continuing to investigate any failures to meet standards and take the necessary enforcement action to ensure communities are protected.

Since 1 January 2019 the Council has undertaken 645 sets of private water samples. When undertaking a set of samples officers are sampling for multiple parameters, i.e. bacteriological parameters (E.coli, Enterococci, Clostridia, Coliforms, etc.), metals (copper, lead, nickel, iron, manganese, antimony, arsenic, cadmium, mercury, etc.), chemicals (cyanide, benzene, chloride, fluoride, hydrocarbons, nitrate, nitrite, pesticides, etc.) and other parameters including pH, colour, turbidity, taste and odour and radioactive substances.

The Public Protection Service has completed risk assessments at 58 Regulation 9 supplies (large and/or commercial) and 7 Regulation 10 supplies (small shared domestic) since 1 Jan 2019.

Bio-Diversity

The Council has been raising the importance of biodiversity across the district whilst supporting mitigating climate change actions. Representatives from Cabinet recently met with the Lake District National Park authority to discuss how to increase biodiversity across the district through partnership working.

The Council's Biodiversity Policy is also included on this Council agenda for consideration. The policy has been designed to recognise the Councils commitment to protecting and enhancing local and global biodiversity, by setting out a number actions as to how it will be achieved.

The policy recognises the importance of plant and insect species and works with contractors to implement different forms of management for open spaces and areas of traditional parks, supporting and enhancing biodiversity.

The principles behind this are:

- To reduce the carbon emissions created by regular grass cuttings, from decomposition (both those collected and those left on-site) and emissions from the vehicles and machinery.
- To increase the diversity of plant species found in the green spaces, benefitting local wildlife and the wider environment to diversify local landscape value.