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Report for September 2021 to Parish Councils Peninsula Division from Simon Harley (SCC Councillor)

Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan

This document was released in June by the 'Suffolk Leaders Group' (County, District and Borough Council leaders) as a follow up to the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership report of 2019. This sets out broad goals for change in behaviours and technology to achieve zero carbon by 2030 by means of measures of: 'transitioning to a fully decarbonised heat supply for homes; improving energy efficiency; behavioural change to use less energy; low carbon travel; reducing car use; more efficient freight transport; reductions in commercial and industrial carbon use; improvements in renewable energy production and a flexible grid' among others.

The Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group on Council will be putting a motion forward to the next Council Meeting to require the Council to set specific benchmarks and targets each year up to 2030 to encourage the modal shift in behaviour and technology required as without this we believe that the targets set out, laudable though they are, are unlikely to be achieved in practice.

For example:

In July 2020 the Government's Gear Change paper called for a doubling in the amount of journeys walked or cycled. This spring, Suffolk Conservative's County Council election manifesto said "we have identified over £20m of upgrades for our cycle network"

We will ask for this money to be allocated to specific projects to improve our cycle network, such as across our Peninsula where the current state is pitiable and completely unfit for purpose.

Review of SEND provision

Suffolk County Council commissioned an independent review into Special Educational Needs and Disability provision which has now been completed.

The report, with any recommendations, is due to be published this month on Suffolk County Council's website, shared with those who contributed to it, and also scrutinised, in public, by the council's Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee. We await it with interest.

Suffolk's expression of interest in discussions with Government on Devolution for Suffolk

A 'levelling up' white paper is to be produced by Government. Robert Jenrick MP (Sec of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) has invited Councils to express interest in involvement in this. The aim appears to be to allow local 'leaders groups' to have more power in local decision making including 'greater financial efficiency, administrative streamlining and/or more joined up services'. It is not necessary to be a unitary authority although Government want evidence of working together.

It is not clear yet what the benefits and draw backs or any details of these proposals are yet.

The 'Suffolk Leader's Group' (Leaders of County Council, District Councils, Ipswich Borough Council, and Police and Crime Commissioner) have written to the Government expressing interest in this proposal.

Excerpts from some recent SCC press releases:

Zero Carbon battle bus visiting Suffolk

The purpose of the Zero Carbon Tour is to discuss the concept of net zero carbon and why it is critical for businesses. Suffolk's businesses, organisations and community groups will share their stories about how they have started their journeys to net zero. This will inspire and give confidence to those considering how to reduce their carbon emissions.

Steve Malkin, Founder and CEO, Planet Mark, said:

"There is no doubt, we are living in a seminal and historic moment in time. 2020 – 2030 has been coined the Decade of Action, a period in which we need to tackle the climate crisis and halt biodiversity loss. The global pursuit of net zero carbon emissions is a huge undertaking, and only possible with help from businesses and communities alike.

"We are excited to bring the net zero message to Ipswich, and share the 'carbon stories' of organisations, community groups and individuals playing their part in creating a sustainable future for Suffolk, the United Kingdom and beyond."

This event and others are taking place across Suffolk in the lead up to COP26, as part of Suffolk's collective campaign of Creating The Greenest County, and be net zero by 2030. As part of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan, these events look to encourage collaborative action by educating and engaging with residents and businesses to develop net zero journey.

Other events which are being planned in Suffolk in the lead up to COP26 include:

- 1 September – Zero Carbon Tour visits Ipswich
- 12 October – Ten Steps to Net Zero (Suffolk Chamber of Commerce)
- 21-22 October – Local Energy Showcase (Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council)
- TBC October - A Greener NHS day
- 12 November – Greenest County Awards (Suffolk County Council)
- 23-25 November – Low Carbon Homes

All events are subject to change, visit www.greensuffolk.org for the latest details and information about starting your journey to net zero.

'Katch' – a new electric taxi-bus service

The Katch service provides a travel solution for local residents and visitors in Wickham Market and Framlingham, as well as for those who need to meet their rail connections at Wickham Market train station in Campsea Ashe.

Suffolk County Council, with support from East Suffolk Council, Framlingham Town Council, East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership, the Department for Transport Community Rail Development Fund, Community Rail Network, Greater Anglia and Cars Smart, launched the Katch service earlier this year in May. The service, which is a pilot scheme, delivers on the commitment Suffolk councils have made to grow the region's passenger transport in a sustainable way. It also plays a part in cutting carbon to help reach the Government's ambition of zero emissions by 2050 and Suffolk County Council's own target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

The service is available seven days a week from 06.30 to 22.30 Monday to Saturday and 09.00 to 19.00 on Sunday. All journeys must be booked in advance via the Katch App or telephone by calling 01728 55 44 55. The cost of a return journey is £7 and a single journey is £4.

If the service proves a success and is regularly used by local people in addition to commuters and rail passengers, Suffolk County Council is keen to facilitate further schemes across the county.

(would there be interest for a similar scheme for the Peninsula to Manningtree and/or Ipswich stations?)

Simon Harley

County Councillor for Peninsula Division

Green, Liberal Democrat, and Independent Group Spokesperson for Public Health & Biodiversity