



## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY PANEL – 5TH NOVEMBER 2015**

**SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & LIVING ENVIRONMENT TEAM  
ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To make Members of the Sustainable Development Advisory Panel aware of the progress achieved by the Sustainable Development & Living Environment Team against the priorities for 2014/15.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Sustainable Development & Living Environment (SD & LE) Team continues to raise awareness of the key sustainable development issues, which affect the Authority, and to implement projects designed to improve the sustainability of the Authority. This report summarises some of the main achievements, the full Annual Report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Team continues to co-ordinate the work of the Greener Caerphilly Outcome Group to ensure that we maximise the benefits of working in partnership on environmental issues. In 2014/15 this has included co-ordinating the work funded by the Authority's Community Scheme Funded, Greener Caerphilly Small Grants programme.
- 2.3 The Team continued to deliver the Sustainable Energy element of the Rural Development Plan (RDP) up until 31st December when the programme closed. Work completed up until this time included raising awareness of sustainable energy and climate change issues with farms and rural businesses in the eligible rural wards.
- 2.4 Some specific achievements in 2014/15 include:
- Assessing the Authority's ability to adapt to climate change which involved interviews and consultation with 43 senior officers from across all 18 of the Authority's Services.
  - 71% of our schools have achieved a Green Flag (the highest award) under the Eco Schools programme. Ten schools have achieved their second Eco School green flag award, with twenty-two schools also achieving their third flag and working towards their platinum award. Sixteen schools have achieved the coveted Eco Schools Platinum Award.
  - Sustainable Energy advice was given to 51 farms and rural businesses in 2014/15
  - The SD & LE Team secured a total of £126,037 of funding for projects in 2014/15.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The work of the SD & LE Team supports the following strategies:

- Living Better, Using Less, the Sustainable Development Strategy (2008).
- Caerphilly Delivers - Caerphilly Single Integrated Plan, 2013 - 2017
- CCBC Corporate Plan
- Education for Sustainable Development & Global Citizenship Strategy, 2009
- One Wales, One Planet (2009), the Sustainable Development Strategy for Wales.
- Carbon Reduction Strategy
- Waste Management Strategy
- Corporate Travel Plan.

### 4. THE REPORT

4.1 The SD & LE Team Annual Report highlights the work of Team, including the work in partnership with the Sustainable Development Core Group, the Sustainable Development Advisory Panel (SDAP), and the Greener Caerphilly Outcome Group. It should be noted that this report does not seek to identify all sustainable projects throughout the Authority, but identifies areas where the SD & LE Team, Core Group or SDAP have been involved. It is part of the role of these 3 groups to provide support, and to promote a culture where sustainable projects can develop with or without their direct involvement.

4.2 The Annual Report is structured to reflect the 4 areas of work of the Team:

- Sustainable Council
- Education for Sustainable Development
- Greener Caerphilly
- Rural Development Programme, Sustainable Energy

#### **Sustainable Council**

4.3 The Council has had a long commitment to sustainability and approved its first sustainable development policy in 1997. It has successively built on this foundation. In 2008 the Council published its Sustainable Development Strategy, *Living Better, Using Less*, which sets out the approach that the Authority is taking to sustainable development and our vision for a sustainable county borough. It sets out our strategy for tackling the issues and explains how we will manage and monitor the process and how we will report on progress.

4.4 2014/15 was an important year for sustainable development in Wales with the preparation and consultation on legislation to require public bodies in Wales, including local authorities, to make decisions that leave a positive legacy for our children, and children's children, and to report on how we are complying with the Duty from 2015/16. The SD & LE Team has been heavily involved in contributing to the development of the Bill and assessing the implications on the Authority.

#### **Staff SD, health and wellbeing survey**

4.5 A staff SD, health and wellbeing survey was developed by the SD and Health Improvement Teams to update indicators that both teams use to monitor understanding and progress in their areas. Questionnaires were sent electronically to all staff with access to the intranet. Additional work was done to ensure that employees in depots, canteens and in service where they did not have access to the intranet were engaged in the process. In total 1,014 responses to the 2014/15 survey were received.

4.6 Overall the average level of understanding of sustainable development from the 14/15 survey was 2.37. This was down from 2.5 in 2008 and further down from 2.6 in October 2007.

## **Sustainable Travel**

- 4.7 Six events promoting sustainable travel, and highlighting the support and initiatives available to staff to enable them to travel more sustainably were run in 2014/15. Cycle to work salary sacrifice road shows were held at the main council offices throughout the year and a selection of events were held to promote National Bike Week.
- 4.8 In line with our commitment to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from vehicles, the Council has established a Salary Sacrifice Car Scheme as part of a government-sponsored initiative to provide a leasing arrangement for low emission cars. During 2014/15, 116 cars were delivered with a further 46 awaiting delivery. This gives a total of 303 cars delivered since the scheme began. They cover a wide range of manufacturers. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the vehicles being replaced by the lease cars has resulted in an average saving of 35%. The best individual saving is 62%.

## **Pedometer Challenge**

- 4.9 The SD Team worked with Let's Walk Cymru to help them develop the Let's Walk Cymru Pedometer Challenge Wales website, which is now free for any organisation or individual in Wales to use as part of their own pedometer challenge. The team provided advice and feedback on the website using evaluation data from previous CCBC Pedometer Challenge events. The Let's Walk Cymru Pedometer Challenge Wales website was then used as part of the 2015 CCBC Pedometer Challenge, which enabled us to provide additional feedback during the challenge period.
- 4.10 CCBC's 4th Annual Pedometer Challenge was held over 4 weeks from February 2nd to 28th 2015, catering for all CCBC employees.. The challenge attracted 45 teams. Teams consisted of between 1 and 25 people, with a total of 338 people participating in the challenge.

## **Supporting Services**

- 4.11 A key element of the work of the SD & LE Team is to support individual services within the Authority to address sustainability issues. In 2014/15 specific projects were undertaken with five services on sustainable development looking at their individual service areas and how they could influence others.

The SD & LE Team has been working closely with the ICT Services, Energy Management Team and Carbon Reduction Group in reviewing sustainability issues with regard to the use of ICT equipment, and looking at the ways in which ICT can support the sustainability agenda.

## **Climate Change Adaptation**

- 4.12 The SD & LE Team has completed the process of producing a Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP) for Caerphilly county borough. A database of extreme weather events, between 2003 and 2013, has been collated by reviewing local media reports and interviewing key stakeholders.
- 4.13 Meetings were undertaken with 43 senior officers covering each of the 18 Services within the Authority. One hundred and twenty eight impacts were identified, of which 33 were rated as a high priority for further assessment.

## **Education for Sustainable Development**

- 4.14 Education for sustainable development (ESD) has been a priority within the Authority since October 2004, when a dedicated ESD Officer was appointed to drive forward the agenda in the county borough. Embedding an understanding of sustainable development within schools, early years settings and young people is seen as a vital element of achieving a sustainable county borough. The ESD Officer role is currently split 60/40 (ESD/ SD) to

support the areas of work covered by the SD Team.

### **Eco Schools**

- 4.15 All 90 schools in the Caerphilly county borough have achieved an Eco School award, these are broken down into 7 bronze, 19 silver and 64 green flag awards. The schools holding a green flag award are currently working towards their 2nd, 3rd and 4th green flag awards. Support has been provided to schools on Eco Schools and ESDGC via individual support visits, training days, developing relevant resources and undertaking green flag assessments.

### **Solar Schools**

- 4.16 In partnership with United Welsh Housing Association, solar photovoltaic panels have been installed on 16 schools and 1 education centre in the Heads of the Valley area through the Solar Schools Project, supporting the energy efficiency topic of the eco school programme, as well as supporting the authority's commitment to reducing carbon emissions.

### **Literacy & Numeracy Framework**

- 4.17 To support schools embedding the requirements of the new Literacy and Numeracy Framework within their curriculum planning, ESDGC/ LNF resources have been developed to help teachers include ESDGC as a theme for classroom teaching. The resources cater for years 2, 6 and 9 but include activities, lesson plans and resources that can also be tweaked for other year groups.

### **Greener Caerphilly**

- 4.18 The Sustainable Development & Living Environment Team co-ordinate the "Greener Caerphilly" outcome theme of the Caerphilly Single Integrated Plan. The work is based on the 3 themes:
- G1: Improve local environmental quality
  - G2: Reduce the causes and adapting to the effects of climate change
  - G3: Maximise the use of the environment for health benefits
- 4.19 The Greener Caerphilly Group was successful in securing an allocation of funding from the Authority's Community Schemes Fund for the Group to undertake priority projects during 2014/15. The Group operates a small grants scheme, which requires at least a £1 for £1 match funding to encourage maximum partner input. In 2014/15 the Community Scheme provided funding worth £12,431 to support 6 projects.

### **Rural Development Plan (RDP)**

- 4.20 In 2011 two Sustainable Energy Officers joined the SD & LE Team. They are funded through the RDP programme to deliver the sustainable energy element of the programme. The main aim of their project is to engage with farm households and rural businesses to reduce energy use, promote the uptake of renewable energy, and help them to adapt to climate change. RDP funding came to an end at the end of December 2014.

The officers provided 3 levels of support. Level 1 covers information and advice, and includes:

- Telephone and email advice on energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Information on grants/loans, signposting to external organisations
- Desktop solar power assessments
- Factsheets

The factsheets cover the different renewable energy technologies, including biomass, heat pumps, micro hydro, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal and wind. The factsheets are aimed specifically at rural businesses.

## Energy Surveys

- 4.21 Level 2 included surveys and support. As part of the process of promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy to businesses, the RDP Sustainable Energy Team were able to offer free energy surveys to businesses whose bills are under £30,000 per year. The energy survey included a site visit, during which a questionnaire is completed. Following this a report is generated that provides advice and recommendations on how the owner can improve the energy efficiency of the site, look at suitable renewable energy technologies (if any) and provide approximate costs and paybacks.

## Maes Yr Onn Off Grid Farmhouse

- 4.22 Level 3 support included mentoring and exemplar projects. The first exemplar is the development of a new farmhouse in a completely off grid setting, near Manmoel. The design is inspired by the traditional Welsh longhouse and compliments the upland setting of the rural area. Maes Yr Onn Farm lacks mains connection of electricity, gas, water or sewage services. This provided some difficult challenges in integrating and balancing energy production and use within the property, but also some opportunities to promote sustainable solutions to energy/resource use and energy generation issues. A partnership between the RDP Sustainable Energy team, Building Research Establishment (BRE), SSE and Constructing Excellence in Wales (CEW) worked with the Davies family to provide a solution that balances resource efficiency with renewable technologies.

## Monitoring and Measuring Progress

- 4.23 The SD & LE Team reports to a number of groups and against the indicators in several strategies within the Authority. The table below highlights progress against selected indicators:

Indicator	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual
Number of Services supported	4	5	5	7	5	5	5	5
The number of staff on the 'Cycle to Work Scheme'	New PI	New PI	104	221	291	360	375	390
The percentage of schools with a Green Flag award under the Eco Schools programme	32%	39.5%	51.6%	58%	62%	67%	70%	71%
The number of education for sustainable development training with schools	New PI	New PI	128	102	89	89	100	91
Number of staff on our "Car share database"	New PI	New PI	293	321	342	354	380	384
Number of sustainable travel events held	New PI	New PI	10	13	11	9	9	6
Number of Climate Change Woodlands created	New PI	New PI	1	3	3	5	2	1

Farms and rural businesses advised on sustainable energy issues	New PI	New PI	New PI	28	28	37	40	51
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## **Funding**

4.24 The Sustainable Development & Living Environment Team secured an additional £126,037 to contribute to our work in 2014/15.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report is for information purposes only.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 See list below.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the Panel notes the achievements against the priorities set for 2014/15.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 For the reasons set out in the report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 There are no statutory powers.

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Tracy Evans – Education for Sustainable Development Officer

Consultees: Cllr Ken James - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development  
Cllr Derek Havard - Vice Chair, Sustainable Development Advisory Panel  
Chris Burns – Interim Chief Executive  
Christina Harry Corporate Director - Communities  
Pauline Elliott – Head of Regeneration & Planning  
Paul Rossiter – Energy & Water Conservation Officer  
Alison Palmer – Community Planning Co-ordinator  
Natasha Ford, – Supplier Relationship Officer  
Wayne Turner – Network Development Officer.  
Steve Martin - Principal Contracts Officer (Energy)

Appendices:  
Appendix 1: SD&LE Team Annual Report 2014/15