

Sustainability

Community Energy

Local Government Perceptive

8th May 2024



Buzz COMMUNITY ENERGY



Cutting the carbon
cost for the community



Greensand Community Energy



Sustainability Plan

Our Commitment to be Net Zero by 2030

- 2019: Full Council passed a LGA motion to reach net-zero by 2030
- 2020: The Council endorsed a new Sustainability Plan
- Annual Progress Report
- Framed around SDG's
- Themes: leading, invest, enabling
- Co-benefits of sustainability and climate actions
- 2021-present day delivering actions
- 2022 – launched Community Energy
- 2024 – Sustainability Plan Refresh

Section 1

1.2 Embedding Sustainability

Overall Objective
Embed CO₂ emissions reduction and sustainability within all our operations and decision-making processes. Work towards being carbon neutral in our own operations by 2030.

Milestone 1.2.1: Map pathways to carbon neutrality and establish monitoring and evaluation processes
Target Outcome: The Council produces a route map to carbon neutrality and publishes an annual Sustainability Plan Progress Report.
Services Responsible: Sustainability Lead.

Actions:

1. Map out the possible route and options for the Council and Central Bedfordshire area to move towards carbon neutrality to steer what is achievable and by when.
2. Determine key metrics to monitor and on which Council performance will be monitored: CO₂ and additional sustainability metrics.
3. Produce an annual Sustainability Plan Progress Report in April/May to inform the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process. Report to include latest carbon footprint data, performance against the SDGs, overview of progress so far, and detailed actions for the following year.
4. Research opportunities and develop projects to be included in later stages of the Sustainability Plan.

Milestone 1.2.2: Strengthen sustainability in project development and reporting
Target Outcome: The Council ensures sustainability outcomes are optimised for all projects.
Services Responsible: Portfolio Office/Sustainability Lead.

Actions:

1. Develop a simple Sustainability Policy that sets out clearly and concisely the Council's commitment and ambitions with regards to sustainability, the environment and climate change.
2. Add prompts and questions for sustainability on the Council's enterprise project management system for project initiation and delivery gateways.
3. Improve monitoring and reporting of sustainability benefits realisation for all projects.

Milestone 1.2.3: Include sustainability considerations within key governance documents
Target Outcome: Sustainability considerations are embedded within Council governance.
Services Responsible: Committee Services/Sustainability Lead.

Actions:

1. Add a sustainability section on committee agendas, reports and other key governance documents.
2. Produce guidance for officers on inclusion of sustainability in committee reports.
3. Consider sustainability and July 2019 climate change motion goals into the Council's next five year plan.

Milestone 1.2.4: Adopt Whole Life Costing (WLC)
Target Outcome: The Council uses whole life cost and benefit analysis to support decision making on investment and operational decisions.
Services Responsible: Finance/Sustainability Lead.

Actions:

1. Develop WLC toolkit with a single scoring system to quantify CO₂ reduction potential, cost and co-benefits of Council projects.
2. Start using WLC and cost-benefit analysis for business case development and MTFP decision making processes, site selection and initial project briefs.
3. Provide guidance and training on WLC toolkit.

Milestone 1.2.5: Embed sustainability and social value in procurement processes
Target Outcome: Reduce CO₂ and maximise sustainability and social value from the Council's supply chain.
Services Responsible: Procurement/Equalities Lead.

Actions:

1. Embed sustainable procurement policies into the Procurement Strategy update and strengthen social value requirements.
2. Conduct hotspot analysis of procurement pipeline and existing Council spend to identify 'high-carbon' items.
3. Produce a sustainable procurement toolkit that provides guidance on specifications and tender weightings and questions for 'high-carbon' items.
4. Embed sustainability into supplier relationship and contract management.
5. Procurement Team completes sustainable procurement training.

Co-benefits

- Support education, positive behavioural change and upskilling
- Health and well-being improvements
- Support low-carbon economy, local supply chains, and job creation
- Biodiversity increase, water resilience, clean environment, pollution reduction
- Climate and flood resilience with future-proofed infrastructure
- Waste reduction, sustainable food and supporting the circular economy
- Energy resilience with reduction of energy bills and fuel poverty
- Support low-carbon mobility and improved connectivity
- Creation of high-quality, safe, and accessible public realms
- Innovation potential

Carbon Reduction Potential

Low Medium High

- Changing procurement policies can save up to 47,600 tCO₂e per year. This has cascading effects through the Council's supply chain.
- Additional CO₂ savings can be achieved by strengthening sustainability requirements for all projects.
- Council is better equipped to make decisions that can drive sustainability forward.

Financial Considerations

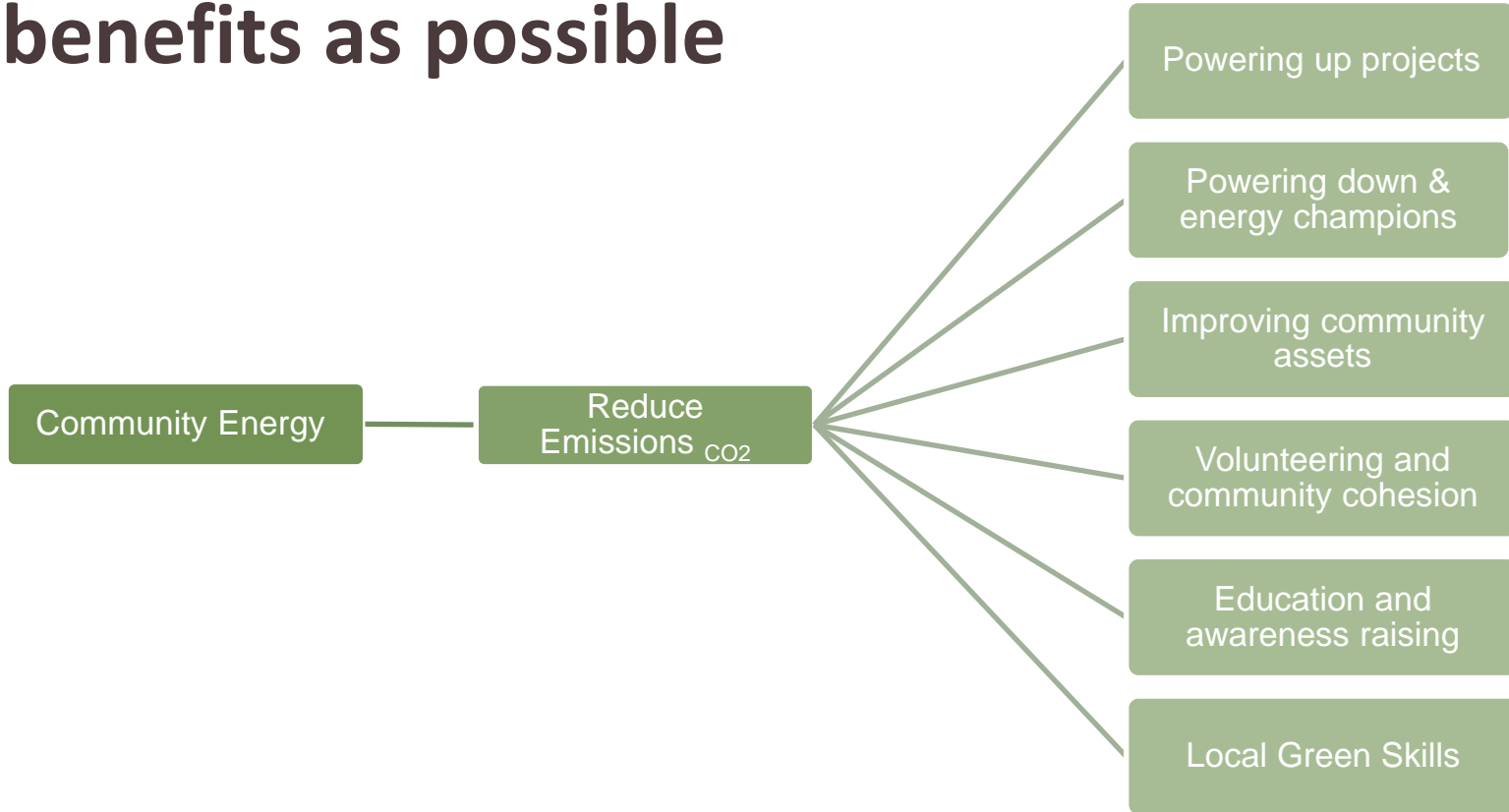
- Consider upskilling officers to engage with suppliers and monitor performance.
- Use WLC to balance CAPEX with OPEX.
- Apply for Government funding supporting traineeships and apprenticeships.
- Better engagement and cooperation with supply chains delivers efficiencies and cost-savings.
- Central Buying Consortium to act as a knowledge-sharing hub.

Programme and Aspirational Targets

Alignment with SDGs



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Aim to deliver in a way that realises as many benefits as possible



Supporting communities

What we are doing

COMMUNITY ENERGY SOUTH  Central Bedfordshire Council  Working in partnership

Making Local Action on Climate Change Happen in Central Bedfordshire

COMMUNITY ENERGY PATHWAYS



Carbon Literacy Knowledge E-learning

Solar Together

Are you thinking about getting solar panels, but not sure where to start?

Register today at solartogether.co.uk/central-bedfordshire



Funded by UK Government

NET-ZERO RETROFIT COURSES

TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE TODAY!

Eco-Schools
Green Flag Award

SuperHomes

About Community Energy Pathways



A step-by-step approach to develop an area community energy movement



Supporting local leadership towards Net Zero targets – supporting existing groups and building new groups



Communities can build and invest in their own renewable energy and energy saving projects



Growing community led local energy awareness



Enable our community to reduce local area carbon emissions, improve energy, and support local green skills



The 3 year Pathways Process



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

**LEVELLING
UP**

COMMUNITY
ENERGY
SOUTH 

COMMUNITY ENERGY
PATHWAYS

Step 1

Assessment & Strategy

Review LA
Net Zero
plans

Identify &
engage
stakeholders

Local SWOT

Outreach

Produce a
plan

Step 2

'First Steps' Capacity Building

Launch events

Gather ideas

Investigate
groups

High-level
project
feasibility

Prompt
collaboration

Step 3

Tools & Training

Governance,
roles, business
planning,
energy tech
guides, energy
champion
management,
share offers,
fundraising,
policies, legal

Two face to
face events

One online
session

Step 4

'Next Steps' Capacity Building

Create network
for shortlisted
groups

In-depth
mentoring

Incorporation

Feasibility
assessments

Project pipeline

Business dev
plan

Step 5

Review & Adjust

Review CE
sector

Modify
support as
needed

Outcome/out
put reporting

Case studies

Step 5b

Accelerate & Develop

Administer
and access
grants to
accelerate
groups to
cover core
costs and
feasibility
studies.

Step 6

Review & Adjust

Undertake a
review
process at the
end of the
second and
third year to
help improve
support work
in the
following year



Central
Bedfordshire
Council
Working in partnership



Emerging Community Energy Groups

Group	Area	Status	Number of people
Greensand Community Energy	Amphill & Flitwick & 4 surrounding parishes	Incorporated 2023	12
Buzz Community Energy	Leighton Linlade	Incorporated 2024	6
Potton/Biggleswade	East area of Bedfordshire	Interest building following relaunch	15
Houghton Regis	South area of Bedfordshire	Paused	4

Community Energy Group

Their perspective

What LA's can do to help support community energy start ups?

Support is invaluable

Pathways programme brought individuals together

Communciations support has also been really helpful

This there anything Pathways could do better?

Support in actually getting the LA itself to use community energy would be good.

Long time to get established – looking past 3 years

Top tip for an LA in another area looking to do something similar?

“Get as many people involved as possible and spread the workload. We're all volunteers with limited time so the more people are involved the easier it will be to be in it for the long haul.”



Further information

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