

## **Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

### **Staffordshire Sustainability Board Communication Plan 2023**

#### **Recommendations**

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Note the progress of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in developing a unified 2023 programme of activity across the county and eight district and borough councils, to tackle climate change and work towards our net zero targets.
- b. Review and make comments on the draft Staffordshire Sustainability Board joint communications plan (attached as Appendix 1), which sets out our 12-month (2023) programme of climate change awareness-raising and behaviour change activity.

**Local Member Interest:** N/A

#### **Report of Councillor Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change**

#### **Summary**

##### **What the Committee is being asked to consider:**

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being asked to note the progress of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in developing a unified 2023 programme of activity across the county and eight district and borough councils, to tackle climate change and work towards our net zero targets.
2. It is also being asked to review and comment on the draft Staffordshire Sustainability Board joint communications plan (attached as Appendix 1), which sets out our 12-month programme of climate change awareness-raising and behaviour change activity.

##### **What happens next?**

3. The next steps for the plan to go to Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

4. The outcomes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported to the Cabinet at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023 for them to consider prior to approving the plan.
5. Each district and borough council is also taking the plan through their own individual Cabinet process for approval.

## **Report**

### **Background**

#### **Links to the strategic plan**

6. Mitigating and adapting to climate change and becoming a net zero organisation by 2050 is a key priority for Staffordshire County Council and is a “green thread” throughout our Strategic Plan. It states that we will tackle climate change, enhance our environment, and make Staffordshire more sustainable

#### **Why the recommendation is being proposed?**

7. The Staffordshire Sustainability Board was established in January 2022. The aim of the Board is to encourage and support greater partnership working between the county’s local authorities to tackle climate change and reduce Staffordshire’s carbon emissions towards net zero targets.
8. The Board is comprised of cabinet members with a sustainability/climate change portfolio from the county and eight district and borough councils in Staffordshire. It is chaired by the County Council’s Cabinet member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change.
9. In March 2022 the Board shared its vision alongside 10 commitments for action during 2022/23. (See Appendix 2)
10. Commitment Five focuses on communications, stating that: All Councils will contribute to a countywide communications group, and plan and deliver a countywide Communications Plan, working together to drive our collective net zero visions forward.

#### **Joint Climate Change 2023 Communication Plan**

11. On the 10 October 2022 the Staffordshire Sustainability Board (SSB) considered and agreed a joint climate change communication plan for 2023.
12. Whilst each member of Staffordshire’s Sustainability Board and their respective local authority are responsible for communicating their climate

change responsibilities and actions it was recognised that by working together could have greater reach and impact.

13. The joint communication plan attached as Appendix 1, sets out a calendar of unified and consistent communications activity to be delivered throughout the year to raise awareness, deepen understanding and inspire action on climate change.
14. It details a programme of activity and joint messages on key dates including Valentine's Day, various religious festivals and on high profile climate change focused events such as Earth Day and World Environment Day.
15. Public events will also take place throughout the year to raise awareness of the impact and threat of climate change, and the steps we can all take to reduce carbon emissions and our impact on the environment. Following a successful pilot in Stafford Town Centre in April 2022 a 'Carbon Bubble' roadshow is planned for Summer 2023.
16. The roadshow will feature a one-day event in each of our eight district and boroughs, to engage with residents and increase carbon literacy. A 10mx10m sphere will be inflated in central locations, representing the equivalent size of 'one tonne of carbon dioxide'. The events themselves will be low carbon, using hydrogenated vegetable oil to inflate the balloon and transportation via electric vehicles. At the events, staff will talk to Staffordshire residents, businesses and visitors about climate change and encouraging them to pledge to do their bit to be greener. Pledges will be captured on a board that will then be hosted in libraries as part of a climate change display.
17. A formal consultation is planned for Summer 2023 to understand residents' perceptions about climate change, what the barriers are for them to be greener and what would inspire them to change their behaviour. This information will enable us to gain insight into public views on climate change and provide an evidence bank and base line for campaign planning going forward.
18. The joint communication plan lays a strong foundation for more joined up working between councils. Working together in this way makes the best use of resources and makes sure we promote consistent messages countywide.

## **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Communications Plan 2023

Appendix 2: Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Vision and Commitments 2022-23

Appendix 3: Cabinet Report – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 - Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Communications Plan 2023

## **Contact Details**

**Assistant Director:** Clive Thomson, Assistant Director for Connectivity and Sustainability

**Report Author:** Rose Hampton  
**Job Title:** Senior Communications Officer

**Telephone No.:** 01785 276006

**E-Mail Address:** [Rose.hampton@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Rose.hampton@staffordshire.gov.uk)

