

Subject:	Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel Update		
Date of Meeting:	14 July 2020		
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel		
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LA(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 As reported at previous Board meetings, recent analysis projects that the population of Greater Brighton is set to grow by 97,000 between now and 2030. To be able to meet the increased level of demand for energy and water, the City Region needs to understand what the associated infrastructure requirements are going to be. To that end the Greater Brighton Economic Board “the Board”, chose to develop proposals on the two linked themes of energy and water with the aim of unlocking sustainable growth. Updates of the progress of these plans has been provided at previous Board meetings. These plans are now complete, and this paper provides a breakdown of the projects and proposals for delivery.
- 1.2 The coronavirus pandemic is affecting the UK economy in a number of different ways: from enforced closures of many businesses and unemployment, to supply chain disruption, and uncertainty over how long it will all last. The economic impact of COVID-19 is still being understood, but we know it will be felt for many years. Stakeholders and political parties are calling for us to “grow back greener” and the Local Government Association estimates nearly 700,000 jobs could be created in a green recovery by 2030, with a fifth of those in retrofitting existing homes. While the majority of the work to develop the energy and water plans was carried out before the crisis, the actions within it will help alleviate its economic impact – while addressing the longer-term climate challenge and setting a strong foundation to for a resilient future.
- 1.3 In April 2018, the Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel was established comprising senior representatives from key stakeholders across the public and private sectors to oversee the delivery of the Greater Brighton Energy Plan and Water Plan. The Panel must report progress back to the Board. This paper presents the final plans to the Board.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the final Energy and Water Plan documents, which are based on detailed research, modelling and stakeholder engagement, are approved by the Board.
- 2.2 That the Board supports the projects arising from the plans and is committed to securing funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and National Government and supporting delivery.

- 2.3 That the Board notes that progress with the projects are reported back on an annual basis (with any exceptional items being raised on an ad-hoc basis)
- 2.4 That the Board supports the Greater Brighton 10 pledges and film as part of a communications package to raise the profile of the work planned and commits to the launch and the signing of the pledges at the next Board meeting in October.
- 2.5 That the Board agreed that the Greater Brighton Infrastructure panel continues, both to oversee implementation of the Energy and Water Plans (via the working groups) and to consider other Infrastructure areas.
- 2.6 That the Board agrees that the Greater Brighton Energy Group (*and Water Group if wished*) continues to implement and deliver the Energy Plan, including potential development of collaborative multi-stakeholder projects, a Local Energy Fund, and a special purpose delivery partnership

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Officer working groups were established for both the Energy and Water Plans and comprise of stakeholders from public, private and third sector organisations. The Water Plan working group is chaired by Ben Earl, Southern Water, and the Energy Plan working group is chaired by Ollie Pendered, Community Energy South.
- 3.2 In April 2018, the Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel was established. The Panel is chaired by Ian McAulay, CEO Southern Water, and supported by vice chairs James Humphreys, Regional Director Environment Agency, and Geoff Raw, CEO Brighton & Hove City Council.
- 3.3 The Panel's remit includes:
 - Increase infrastructure security and resilience; health and wellbeing; clean growth; and the affordability of energy and water in the City Region
 - Ensure the Energy and Water Plans fulfil the requirements of the Greater Brighton Economic Board, as referred to in the Board's Operational Arrangements
 - Bring professional knowledge and insights pertinent to the development of the plans
 - Produce plans which are highly practical in application and which provide a clear indication of priorities, investment opportunities and potential financial mechanisms and sources for delivery.

The panel has met four times since its inception and provides a sounding board for progress on both plans as well as providing conceptual ideas for the related communications activity which is paramount to the success of the plans moving forward.

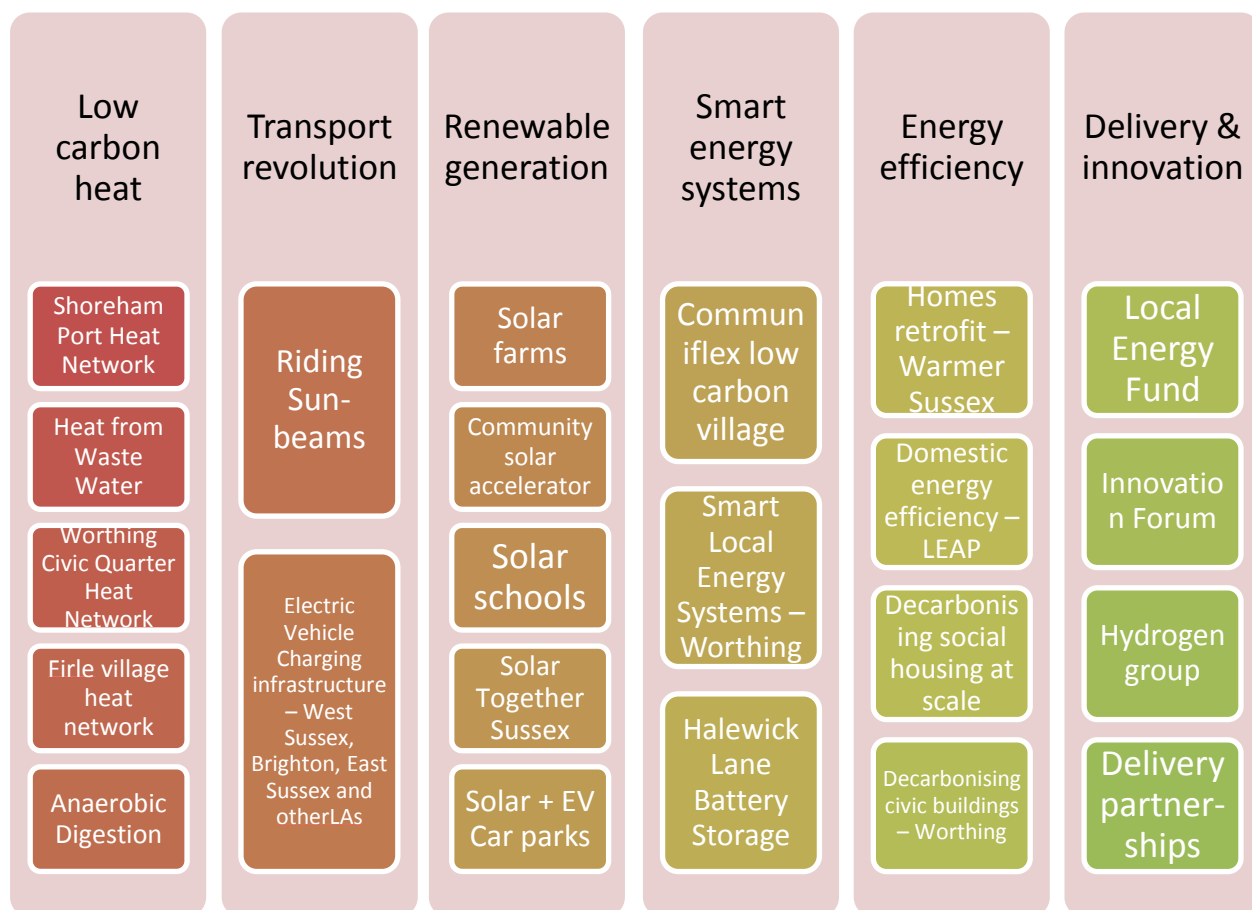
Energy Plan

- 3.4 The Energy Plan is practical and focused on delivery. It includes:

- An assessment of renewable energy technologies, their applicability in the Greater Brighton area, an assessment of constraints and benefits, and readiness for implementation
- A pipeline of over 30 project opportunities which will transform our energy systems, and scale up and coordinate existing activity.
- Models for ownership, delivery and funding which have been proven successful and could be utilised
- Local case studies which demonstrate innovation in design and deployment of renewable energy and smart integration of different types of energy within a project.
- Established partnerships with gas and electricity suppliers which will enhance forward planning capability and enable collaboration on future energy projects
- Proposals to identify and prioritise clusters of projects, to enhance local supply chain options for delivery, to investigate the feasibility of a local energy fund and a special purpose vehicle to attract grant funding and external investment and make the most of Greater Brighton economic and housing growth ambitions to create opportunities for low carbon energy.

3.5 The Energy Plan identifies proposals to accelerate the delivery of energy projects that will boost resilience and security and at the same time reduce carbon emissions. The plan was commissioned with a target seeking zero carbon by 2050, but things have moved on and partners have set their own dates, so the plan is led by what partners want to do in their own localities.

3.6 The energy projects are as follows:



Water Plan

3.7 The Water Plan builds on work around the water environment that's already in progress across a number of organisations to set out a range of opportunities to address ongoing challenges in new, innovative ways, yielding much increased benefits for the local area, compared to current, 'conventional' approaches.

3.8 The proposed projects are as follows:

Water neutrality – offsetting demand from new developments with water efficiency visits for surrounding residents, reducing water consumption and improving affordability

Enhanced home visits – combining existing water efficiency home visit programmes with energy efficiency to reduce carbon emissions, energy use and improve affordability

Carbon capture projects and kelp restoration – supporting the Sussex IFCA's kelp forest restoration project and identifying additional opportunities for blue / green infrastructure to improve natural capital and capture carbon

Water recycling – supporting water recycling at the Northern Arc development in Burgess Hill and providing a policy foundation for wider uptake across Greater Brighton in the future

Rain garden campaign – a communications campaign, led by The Aquifer Partnership, to encourage Greater Brighton residents and businesses to increase the uptake of rain gardens and sustainable drainage to improve natural capital and protect groundwater quality

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 4.1 There has been consultation and engagement with both sets of working group members and wider stakeholders from public, private and third sector organisations, gas and electricity suppliers, universities and consultancies.
- 4.2 The final Water and Energy Plan proposals were shared with the Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel on 10th March 2020 for feedback and were shared with Greater Brighton Economic Board Members at a workshop on 23rd March 2020.
- 4.3 The Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board have been consulted and will continue to be consulted and updated on progress as and when required.

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

- 4.4 Communication on both the ambitions of the Board and the potential projects arising from the Energy and Water plans is crucial to gain support to help facilitate delivery. The Greater Brighton Communications Team have prepared the Greater Brighton Ten Pledges – highlighting five energy and five water plan projects which are priorities for the Board to meet the objectives set out in the plans. The pledges are accompanied by a promotional video and a series of press releases to support the launch of the plans.
- 4.5 Board members will be asked to sign the ‘pledge’ at the Board meeting in October (subject to social distancing rules) committing to supporting the 10 projects through to delivery.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This update from the Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel presents the final Energy and Water Plans to the Board setting out ambitious projects to help to meet the future energy and water demands of the region. Now the focus must be on securing new and additional funding and delivery.

Due to the impact of COVID 19, the plans are flexible. The uncertainty – both economic and social – means competing pressures have to be managed and certain activities necessarily be prioritised over others. Stakeholders have called for the UK to ‘grow back greener after lockdown’ and the projects and ambitions contained in both the energy and water plans will allow Greater Brighton to do that.

6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 6.1 The Greater Brighton Energy Plan and Greater Brighton Water Plan are detailed in Appendix 1 and 2 respectively. Indicative costs of the Energy Plans have been included at this early stage where appropriate. Further work will be required to be undertaken to identify and secure funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and National Government to support delivery of these projects. Funding was identified within the Greater Brighton Operation Arrangements budget in 2018/29 to support the final Water and Energy Plans.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen, Principal Accountant
Date: 05/07/20*

Legal Implications:

- 6.2 None.

*Lawyer Consulted: Joanne Dougnaglo, Senior Property Lawyer
Date: 03/07/20*

Equalities Implications:

- 6.3 The Water and Energy Plans will seek to ensure that the benefits are shared across the City Region. In addition, one of the key aims of both plans is to address inequalities by looking at how access to energy and water can be made affordable for all Greater Brighton residents.

Sustainability Implications

- 6.4 Delivering sustainable growth is a priority for the Board, and this has become increasingly important as the City Region looks to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Growing economic, cultural and demographic constraints within the city region require us to be more resourceful with our amenities. To be able to meet the increased level of demand for energy and water, and benefit from technological change, the City Region needs to understand what the associated infrastructure requirements are going to be.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Greater Brighton Energy Plan Summary
Appendix 2 Greater Brighton Water Plan