**Meeting of the Council on 13 September 2021**

**Green Energy Community Initiatives**

Introduction

At the June meeting, Council discussed the local churches’ project to move to zero carbon energy usage in their buildings. Consultants have now produced a report for the churches and this is being followed up, with input from councillors. An oral report on this work will be provided at the meeting.

Council also expressed interest in considering green energy initiatives for the local community as a whole. In July, the Clerk attended a YLCA briefing session, led by a firm of consultants, Giki, which offers advice and carbon usage assessment tools for possible use within the local council sector. Slides from the Giki presentation, together with further information on their toolkit and pledge agreement, have been circulated to members.

In the light of the recent IPCC report on Climate Change, this paper now summarises the position as regards possible options for the Council to pursue at this stage.

General guidance and advice

Advice to parish councils considering potential local responses to the impact of climate change is provided by NALC in a series of case studies which may be accessed using the following link: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/climate-change/3297-climate-change-case-studies/file>

NALC has put forward a list of actions (below) which councils can take:

* Declare a climate emergency
* Create a task force to establish a green agenda that includes developing a resilience policy and engaging in flood defence measures
* Develop and promote green transport plans including safe routes to school
* Ensure that all council buildings are as energy-efficient as possible and that energy is not wasted through unnecessary heating and lighting
* Use green energy sources and environmentally friendly products
* Plan for a green community in a neighbourhood plan
* Limit the use of plastics, especially single-use plastics in your council
* Reduce waste and recycle as much as possible
* Protect important open spaces and carbon sinks and consider creating a community orchard and/or wildflower meadow and/or allotments
* Use existing statutory powers (list attached as appendix)

Possible Actions

Clearly, our community is so small that only some of the NALC actions will be relevant or possible for us.

Using the suggestions as a checklist, however, and taking account of the services offered by the likes of Giki, it may be possible for us to build on some of them.

For example, Council may wish to consider whether to take the lead in promoting green energy initiatives for individual residents to implement, using the (free) carbon assessment toolkit to monitor the village’s carbon footprint and work on ways of reducing it.

To do this, we could take the following practical steps:

* Set up a working group, chaired by a member of the Council, to coordinate activities for the village
* Sign-up to the Giki pledge for use of the toolkit
* Start to draw up a plan for a green(er) community, working towards the adoption of green behaviours eg in energy usage, travel and waste disposal
* Investigate bio-diversity options in more detail (NALC event to be held on 27 October)
* Publicise and promote the plan using the next newsletter and use it to encourage individual householder assessment of carbon footprint
* Using collated data from the footprint assessment tool, continue to monitor progress and inform residents on a regular basis.

Recommendation

This report is for discussion.

JCM September 2021