Sefton Climate Emergency Communications Plan/Strategy

## Phase 1 2020 - 2023

Version.03 April 2021

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14. **Background**
    1. Climate change represents a major threat to our planet, its people and its wildlife and the vast majority of the scientific community agree that urgent action must be taken to halt this change.
    2. The climate of the planet has always been changing and until recently, this change was a natural process. The change in the climate occurred at a rate that allowed for natural adaptation.
    3. The rate at which we burn fossil fuels results in a damaging build-up of greenhouse gases, so much so, that in just over 200 years, there has been a significant increase in the levels of greenhouse gases.
    4. This has resulted in anthropogenic (man-made) climate change which is not a natural process and must be eliminated.
    5. There are opportunities to do this in energy reduction, green infrastructure and off-setting. The tools and expertise to make significant, positive progress already exist, we simply need to use them.
    6. Climate change represents a very complicated and interdependent problem that requires significant changes to the way we all live and work, there is no single action that will tackle this problem alone.
    7. Sefton is particularly vulnerable to climate change; we have a 22-mile coastline and areas of deprivation; these populations are less resilient to climate related problems.
    8. Sefton Council is part of Merseyside and has agreed to co-operate with the Combined Authority and Liverpool City Region on issues which includes energy. Additionally, waste is dealt with on a wider city region level. Due to this, we are taking action on a local authority level but also on a regional level.
    9. This communication plan will outline our approach to the climate emergency declaration and how we can engage a range of different audiences across a wide range of communications channels.
15. **Situational Analysis and Context** 
    1. A ‘climate emergency’ represents a political commitment to take urgent action to limit greenhouse gas emissions and address the severity of the climate change challenge.
    2. Sefton Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 following a motion put forward by Cllr Lappin.
    3. Around 60% of local authorities have declared a Climate Emergency including all local authorities that make up the Liverpool City Region.
    4. Despite the consensus around the climate emergency, there is not an agreed brand or logo to pull the declarations together.
    5. Language, imagery and tone around climate change is also mixed; both negative and positive approaches exist and there is no ‘agreed upon’ approach across all organisations declaring a climate emergency.
    6. There is a fair degree of uncertainty over the future of the climate change agenda, nationally and globally; not least because of COVID-19. This presents challenges and opportunities for the climate agenda. National programmes have been delayed, however the pandemic has introduced new ways of working and living.
16. **Communications – Aims and objectives**

**3.1** **Internal Aims**

* + 1. Ensure every Sefton employee knows what they are expected to do to support the Climate emergency declaration targets and why.
  1. **Internal Objectives** 
     1. To signpost employees to general information on CC and the Sefton Climate Emergency
     2. To provide employees with specific actions they can undertake to support the Climate Emergency
     3. To provide a dedicated online resource as a central point of contact for any staff enquiries
     4. To provide specific information to key employees responsible for key areas of work e.g. vehicle procurement
     5. To provide regular updates & reports to staff and members on the progress of the Climate Emergency
     6. To effectively monitor performance against set criteria.
  2. **External Aims**
     1. Ensure the Sefton public are aware of the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration/ targets.
     2. Ensure that the public know why we are acting and what they can do to help.
     3. Engage specific elements of the community to provide comment on our actions and help formulate future plans.
  3. **External Objectives** 
     1. To provide a dedicated online resource as a central point of contact for the public to access
     2. To provide the public with specific actions they can undertake to support the Climate Emergency, linked to COP26 actions.
     3. To engage Youth sector via SYMBOL, ensuring that young people are fully engaged with the Climate Emergency.
     4. To conduct a general survey to identify key areas of priority among our residents for our Climate Emergency action.
     5. To keep the public informed on our progress against our baseline emissions data, through the annual report.

1. **Strategic Approach**
   1. To achieve its objectives, the council will
      1. Identify an appropriate member of senior management to oversee the project.
      2. Appoint an appropriate officer to manage the project and to liaise with the Corporate Communications Team.
      3. Work with other departments to reduce our emissions on an organisational level.
      4. Work with external partners to reduce our emissions across the borough.
      5. Effectively communicate with all partners, public and staff to reduce emissions across the borough.

**5** **Branding and Campaign Values**

* 1. The campaign brand and message is essentially how the campaign will be remembered by the audience. A powerful and memorable identity is the cornerstone of any successful campaign.
  2. The re is no ‘agreed upon’ brand for Climate Emergency. Even the language to describe the issue is fraught with issues; whether it be climate change, global warming, global heating, etc.
  3. Sefton have developed some branding for the publication of the strategy, using weather iconography and imagery along with pictures of our borough and our coastline. We will continue the use of this imagery in further material; this will make our communications ‘Sefton specific’ and prompt engagement from our community.
  4. We will use the COP26 branding for climate change - #togetherforourplanet to link our materials on social media; this avoids the potentially alarmist tone of an ‘emergency’ and is intended to encourage collective, achievable actions rather than making the problem seem insurmountable. It also links us up to the global effort around climate change though the COP26 following and provides a big audience base.
  5. There is already a wealth of information available to the community, we do not want to replicate this for our campaign, instead we will signpost to this information.
  6. To encourage real change, we will focus on some specific actions that are achievable and will help Sefton to meet its climate emergency targets; both for internal and external audiences.
  7. In this campaign we want people to feel empowered to act, not put off by the solution being too hard to accomplish.

1. **Target Audience**
   1. The target audience can be spilt into two distinct groups – internal staff and the wider Sefton Community.
   2. We will need to provide basic information on why Sefton have acted as well as more specific advice and support. This will be done in segments as part of a rolling programme – Three phases 2020 – 2030.
   3. Within the internal audience, there will be specialist groups – Members, DMT, One Council, Officers with responsibility for specific areas e.g. energy procurement.
   4. Within external audiences, there will be specialist audiences; businesses, volunteers, activists, young people, people with additional needs, etc.
2. **Communications Mix**
   1. This is the combination of the communication tools that will be used. To enable us to effectively target our chosen audience within our budget and timescales.
   2. A successful campaign needs a strong unifying elements that link all communication elements together. Each element will reinforce the message and enhance the overall impact of the campaign.
   3. Communication methods are divided into two main areas
      1. Broad brush awareness and information provision aimed at a wide audience
      2. Targeted communication aimed at specific audiences.
   4. Communication tools at our disposal include;

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Communication tool | Broad brush | Targeted |
| Website | Y | Y |
| Yammer (Internal) | Y | N |
| Social media | Y | N |
| Posters (internal) | Y  Email signatures could also be used to reach a vast array of staff with one key message. | N |
| Posters (buses, billboards, local information boards) | Case for spend would need to be made, Climate Emergency currently has no specific budget | Case for spend would need to be made, Climate Emergency currently has no specific budget |
| Pick-up leaflets | Case for spend would need to be made, Climate Emergency currently has no specific budget | Case for spend would need to be made, Climate Emergency currently has no specific budget |
| Press releases | Y | Y |
| Editorial pieces (council newsletters) | Y | Y |
| General email (Partner & Council service leaflets and newsletters) | Y | Y |
| Events and Exhibitions (shows and events?) | Case for spend would need to be made, Climate Emergency currently has no specific budget.  Options exist to use other events to push the climate agenda e.g. business conferences, council events, events by external partners, etc. | Case for spend would need to be made, Climate Emergency currently has no specific budget  Options exist to use other events to push the climate agenda e.g. business conferences, council events, events by external partners, etc. |
| DMT O&S meetings | Y | Y |
| Other SYMBOL, Accessible Information Group, Equality and Diversity group, partnership meetings etc. | Y | Y |
| Schools | Y | Y |
| Staff training sessions | Y | Y |

7.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

7.5.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

*Refer to the CE motion/strategy e.g. net zero carbon target*

7.5.2 We should also monitor our activities including;

* Number of people visiting the website
* Social media engagements
* Number of leaflets or posters distributed
* Number of articles published from press releases

**8 Campaign Elements**

* 1. **Website (Internal)**
     1. **Aims**
     2. Provide a dedicated online resource (intranet) as a central information repository and point of contact for any staff enquiries
     3. **Objectives**
* To utilise the existing Sefton council intranet site and work with Communications officer to develop and then regularly update the relevant pages.
* Develop materials for the web page(s)
* Liaise with comms. staff to advise them of the need for regular and prompt updates.
* Provide comms staff with monthly information to post on the web site regular pages and news articles
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Number of ‘hits’ to CE/ subsequent comments via email/Yammer.
  1. **Poster/ Crib sheet/ FAQ Sheet**
     1. **Aims**
* To provide staff with an easy to understand/act upon guide showing general actions they can undertake to support Climate Emergency
  + 1. **Objectives**
* To develop a Poster / crib sheet showing 3-5 easy steps they can take – in the office / at home.
* From our carbon footprint calculations, establish key focus areas for action and translate these into 3-5 clear actions many staff may be able to undertake.
* Estimate the impact this could equate to.
* Liaise with comms to develop template that follows branding and to determine location on Intranet.
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Number of posters displayed /opportunities to see / carbon footprint.
  1. **Website (External)**
     1. **Aims**
     2. Provide a dedicated online resource as a central information repository and point of contact for any staff enquiries
     3. **Objectives**
* To utilise the existing Sefton council site and work with Communications officer to develop and then regularly update the relevant pages.
* To develop materials for the web page(s)
* To signpost to relevant resources to prompt positive community
* To liaise with comms. staff to advise them of the need for regular and prompt updates.
* To provide comms staff with monthly information to post on the web site regular pages and news articles
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Number of ‘hits’ to Climate Emergency pages
  1. **Social media**
     1. **Aims**
     2. Produce engaging social media content to prompt positive climate action in our community
     3. Provide information on Climate Emergency progress
     4. Signpost to dedicated online resources
     5. **Objectives**
* To tailor social media messages to targeted audiences
* To produce content in a variety of forms, images, videos, animations, text, etc
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Number of ‘hits’ to Climate Emergency pages from social media
* Number of engagements on social media posts
  1. **Press Releases**
     1. **Aims**
     2. Engage the community in our climate emergency progress
     3. **Objectives**
* To engage with press to raise awareness of the climate emergency agenda at the Council
* To use the press to help us to encourage community action.
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Number of press engagements with our releases
  1. **One Council Newsletters / Dwayne’s Blog/Yammer**
     1. **Aims**
     2. Engage staff in our climate emergency progress
     3. **Objectives**
* To update staff on climate emergency progress
* To encourage participation in good climate behaviour
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Number of views
  1. **Council Wide Climate Representatives** 
     1. **Aims**
     2. Engage staff in our climate emergency progress
     3. **Objectives**
* To update staff on climate emergency progress
* To encourage participation in good climate behaviour
* To encourage participation in the fulfilment of our strategy and implementation plan commitments
* To ensure active participation in the climate emergency work across all areas of the council.
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Participation in projects and work plans that fall out of the implementation plan
* Progress against out carbon baseline

1. **Eco Centre** 
   1. **Aims**
      1. Engage directly with schools and community groups to encourage good climate behaviour
      2. Educate our community on climate issues
      3. **Objectives**
      4. To utilise eco centre channels to connect with community, and in particular, schools on this issue
   2. To assist in delivering climate related campaigns
   3. To develop education programmes and training for staff and community on good climate behaviour.
2. **Governance**

Members will be kept fully updated on progress on the climate emergency. This will be a two way channel of communication to allow members to oversee our actions and provide steer and identify opportunities for future actions.

* 1. **O&S**
     1. **Aims**
     2. Engage members in our climate emergency progress
     3. **Objectives**
* To update members on climate emergency progress
* To encourage participation in good climate behaviour
* To get steer on the fulfilment of our strategy and implementation plan commitments
  + 1. **Monitoring mechanism**
* Progress against out carbon baseline

1. **Budget**
   1. At present, the climate emergency has no specific budget.
   2. Communications will therefore focus on maximising the use of internal, existing resources and channels.
2. **Timeframe**
   1. This communications plan covers the first phase of our implementation plan from 2020-2023.
   2. Much of the detail outlined in this document will be ongoing work and will develop over the period of the first implementation plan.

**13. Action plan**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Communication** | **Audience** | **Goal** | **Schedule** | **Format** | **Responsibility** |
| Positive Tweets showcasing our work  -Clean Air Crew website  -Staff training  -LED street lighting  -Retrofit of townhalls | Sefton Residents and wider COP26 community | Show the public the positive work Sefton are doing in this area | May (ongoing) | Tweet using the hashtag  #togetherforourplanet | EEMT/ Comms |
| [Count on us campaign](https://www.count-us-in.org/16-steps/) | Sefton Residents and Staff | Encourage climate change action and involvement in international event | November | Tweets, Yammer, Eco-centre website | EEMT/ Comms |
| Host climate change session with   * Symbol * One Council * Sefton CVS | Key groups within sefton | To make them aware of the work we are doing now and shape future action |  | MSTeams or physical meeting | EEMT/ Comms |
| Promote LCR carbon literacy projects | Sefton schools and community groups | Promote awareness of climate change in the community |  | Tweets | EEMT/ Comms |
| Chief exec video – mini relaunch   * What has been done * What we are doing * What’s on the horizon | Sefton Residents and Staff | Show high level management commitment and information sharing | May | Short video shared on Yammer and external sites. | EEMT/ Comms |
| Improve and add content to the Climate Emergency Internet page | Residents, business, suppliers | Make aware of our policies, where to go for more info. | June | Internet | EEMT/ Comms |
| Run Climate Emergency training sessions for   * Report authors * All staff | Internal | To start to embed climate change into everything we do | Ongoing | MSTeams and eLearning | EEMT/ Comms |
| Poster campaigns   * Working from home messages (winter) * Project development (March – when new budget comes in) | Internal/ staff | To keep climate change front of mind | Winter/March | Yammer/  DMT group/  One Council | EEMT/ Comms |
| Introduce corporate energy dashboards. | Internal | To raise the profile of energy use in buildings and pave the way for introduction of carbon targets. |  |  | EEMT |