

Extract from Joint Strategic Committee - 1 December 2020

JSC/088/20-21 Carbon Neutral 2030 - Developing opportunities for solar

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 16.

The councils had committed under the Climate Emergency Declaration, to work towards being carbon neutral by 2030. A Carbon Neutral Plan set out pathways for the Councils to achieve the target.

Installing renewable energy technologies such as solar photovoltaics (PV) and the potential investment in large scale renewable energy generation were an important strand in the Carbon Neutral Plan to provide zero carbon power and to offset Council emissions.

A full review of solar investment opportunities had been undertaken on Council owned sites and a solar investment strategy developed. The study identified potential for up to 5MW of local renewable electricity generation, equivalent to a reduction of **one third of the Councils' carbon emissions**, (or enough to power 1,500 homes).

Subject to full business cases this would be made up of proposals for roof mounted solar on council buildings, solar carports, and a 3MW solar farm locally. Further work would also be undertaken to investigate the benefits of investing out of area in large solar schemes, in consultation with the Executive Members for Resources, and with the support of the Major Projects team, with the aim of offsetting residual council carbon emissions, while delivering an acceptable financial return.

Members expressed their support for the proposals and encouraged officers to look at all opportunities in relation to the Councils' buildings.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Angus Dunn, seconded by Councillor Ed Crouch and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

1. approved the direction of travel proposed within the Solar Investment Strategy for investment in small, medium and large scale solar opportunities as set out at paragraph 8.1 in relation to rooftop solar PV and solar carports, to:
 - a. note that a report would be presented to the Executive Members for Resources early in the New Year, with a post procurement business case to proceed with a first phase of rooftop solar PV installations;
 - b. noted that a viability study for a solar carport at Pond Road car park would be produced; and that subject to a successful business case, a report would be brought before the Executive Members for Resources to approve proceeding with installation;
 - c. **recommended that Adur District Council create an invest-to-save budget within the HRA Investment Programme of £100,000 for carbon reduction schemes funded through borrowing which could be released on the submission of a business case to the Executive Member of Resources.**

2. In relation to a 3MW solar farm on council land, to:
 - a. approved the development of a feasibility study and business case from existing budgets;
 - b. noted that a report would be presented to the Joint Strategic Committee in 2021, if a viable business case was identified.

3. In relation to the potential purchase of large scale commercial solar farm outside the Adur & Worthing area, to:
 - a. acknowledged the strategic intention to explore potential projects for offsetting Council emissions in this way; and noted that if identified, a solar investment proposal and business case would be brought to the Joint Strategic Committee for consideration.