

ASSESSMENT OF A SELECT COMMITTEE TOPIC REVIEW

* - sections to be filled in by the proposer of the topic

***Subject of Proposed Review:-**

Energy security

***Reason for the Review:-**

(see Note 1 below)

loss of spare capacity in energy production
Failure to replace Dungeness C with a new nuclear power station
Rush to cover farmland with solar panels
Excessive subsidies for renewable energy
Construction of inefficient unreliable wind turbines and their damage to wild life
Danger of power cuts and their economic impact

***Issues to be covered by the Terms of Reference:-**

All the above

***Scope of the review:-**

County wide

***Purpose and objectives of the Review:-**

To ensure we have sufficient energy supply for our needs we avoid power cuts provide cheap energy and have sensible ways of reducing c02 emissions.

Proposer of the review - (Please print name and sign)

.....Jim Wedgbury

03.11.1.

To be completed by the Directorate/Cabinet Member(s)

Are there any reasons why this review should not be put forward for inclusion in the work programme for 2014/16? (see Note 2 below)

This work would serve to consolidate existing related KCC policy and strategies into an objective review on energy, energy security and energy generation. This will build on the earlier Renewable Energy Select Committee. Increasing energy prices across public, business and domestic sectors and limited spare energy capacity are making this an important agenda item both nationally and locally. In addition, in Kent and Medway with expected increase in both population and housing numbers together with economic growth the demand for energy will continue to increase.

The topic is frequently in the press and can be an emotive area of discussion – ‘will the lights go out!’, debate around wind turbines and solar farms, depletion in traditional fossil fuel supplies, the challenges of delivering new nuclear capacity and the recent debate around ‘fracking’ for shale gas.

The solution lies with no one technology but a balanced mix of low carbon energy generation. Kent already has a diverse energy mix and whilst new renewable solutions have come forward other energy plant is nearing the end of its life. For example Dungeness B is scheduled for decommissioning from 2018. The local impact of lost capacity, the implications for energy security and the opportunities for new generation solutions are issues worthy of consideration.

Energy supply and the operation of generation plant have a vital role in the well being of the Kent economy and support many jobs. New markets are also being created for the supply of low carbon and renewable technologies and associated services. The low carbon sector already has a strong foothold in the County and there is recognition nationally that Kent is an important location from which to support offshore renewables. The designation of key ports on the North Kent coast as part of a South East Centre for Offshore Renewables (CORE) recognises the County’s capability to support the operation and manufacture of offshore wind turbines.

Having regard to the above, the review would provide an informative and objective basis for the development of a cross Kent and Medway energy security strategy, one which could form part of a revised Kent Environment Strategy and which encompasses both supply and demand issues.

Will the review support the achievement of “Facing the Challenge”? If yes, please identify aim(s) and give details:- YES:

- Assess security of supply issues for KCC and Kent and the measures that can be taken to mitigate and build resilience
- Assess alternative/local energy generation opportunities to tackle energy security issues, and the potential to provide cheaper energy and a reduction in carbon emissions for:

- The KCC and schools estate, including the potential to use KCC owned land for community energy generation to generate an income and provide lower cost supplies.
- Residents with the view to reduce fuel poverty related negative health impacts which often result in an increase in the demand for KCC's services
- Businesses to increase competitiveness in the Kent economy and support the low carbon industry in Kent.
- Develop an energy strategy and appropriate energy policies for Kent to build future resilience and support the development of new appropriate energy generation whilst also protecting Kent's natural and historic environment.

How will the review contribute to corporate objectives and priorities?

As above

How will this review have an impact on KCC policy development and/or help to influence national policy?

It will inform the development of an energy strategy for Kent (incorporated in the Kent Environment Strategy) and the need for any related energy policies, as well as enable KCC to play a more effective role in lobbying on national energy policy and influence local planning and developments.

How will this review add value to the County Council and residents of Kent?

The review will add value to the County Council, local residents and businesses through:

- Increased energy security
- Opportunities for lower energy bills as a result of local energy generation
- Opportunities for community ownership and new incomes streams to support local services
- Opportunities for economic growth in the low carbon sector
- Reduced harmful emissions
- Reduction of negative health impacts due to fuel poverty
- Local leadership on the planning and development of new utility infrastructure
- Harnessing local resources
- Sustainable development and growth

Does the review need to be completed within a specific timeframe? If yes, please give details:

No, but rising energy prices and energy security is a growing issue and solutions often have a long lead in time and therefore the sooner action is taken, the better.

Any additional comments from the Portfolio Holder/Corporate Director:-

Portfolio Holder's Signature:-



Strategic Director's Signature:-

Contact Officer:-

Date:-

