

By: Mr Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Ms Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

To: County Council meeting – 19 May 2016

Subject: Select Committee: Energy Security

Past Pathway of

Paper: Cabinet – 25 April 2016

Summary: To comment on and endorse the report of the Select Committee on Energy Security.

1. Introduction

Kent County Council has significant existing commitments to supporting energy generation and security, as exemplified in the work of the previous Renewable Energy Select Committee and outlined in the Kent Environment Strategy. Increasing energy prices, limited spare energy capacity and the ongoing effects of climate change make energy security a pressing issue.

The establishment of the Energy Security Select Committee demonstrates Kent County Council's ongoing commitment to furthering a balanced mix of low carbon energy generation measures, reflecting a national shift from a domination of solid fuel and petroleum in the 1970s, to an increase of natural gas from the North Sea in the 1980s, to the current growth of renewable fuels and a decline in coal.

The review also demonstrates KCC's intention to ensure that Kent has as resilient and sustainable an energy supply as possible. This should reflect an awareness of Kent's environmental opportunities as well as a consideration of matters such as landscape, historical and agricultural impacts.

The work of the Committee aimed to provide an informative and objective basis for the further development of a joint Kent and Medway energy security strategy and inform the updating of the Kent Environment Strategy, which is led by KCC's Sustainable Business and Communities team.

The supply and generation of energy, as well as the reduction of energy consumption, is of significant national importance to citizens, businesses and local government alike, as are the related social, environmental, and economic impacts of such measures. This review reflects a commitment on the behalf of Kent County Council to securing the future energy needs of Kent, and ensuring that this is done in a sustainable, affordable and secure way.

2. Select Committee

2.1 Membership

The Chairman of the Select Committee was Mr Jim Wedgbury (Conservative). Other members of the Committee were Mr David Brazier (Conservative), Mr Brian Clark (Lib Dem), Mr Adrian Crowther (UKIP), Mr Christopher Hoare (UKIP), Mr Peter Homewood (Conservative), Mrs Eileen Rowbotham (Labour), Mr Chris Smith (Conservative) and Mrs Carole Waters (Conservative). In addition, Mr Martin Whybrow (Green) was co-opted onto the Committee.

2.2 Terms of Reference

The agreed terms of reference were:

- To clarify the meaning of “Energy Security” and the responsibilities of KCC in ensuring this security.
- To examine and assess a range of energy issues so as to best secure the future energy needs of Kent.
- To identify existing best practice across the UK and abroad on how best to strengthen a sustainable, reliable energy infrastructure for Kent.
- For the Energy Security Select Committee to make recommendations after having gathered evidence and information throughout the review.

2.3 Evidence

The Energy Security Select Committee conducted a programme of hearings and visits between October 2015 and January 2016. The Select Committee held fourteen hearings, from which it gathered a wealth of information and evidence from a variety of sources, including:

- Academics
- Energy generators and suppliers
- Community energy groups
- Consultants
- Other local authorities
- KCC officers

Full details of all the oral evidence received by the committee is available [online](#)

This oral evidence was complemented by written evidence which was submitted to the Committee by a variety of sources. Literature stemming from desktop research was also used to inform the review.

Four official visits also took place during the review. The visits included Islington London Borough Council’s district heat network, a range of community energy generation measures carried out by the Sustainable Sheppey project, Dungeness B nuclear power plant, and an anaerobic digester and solar farm at St Nicholas-at-Wade farm in Kent. A list of the

witnesses who provided oral and written evidence, as well as details of the visits, can be found in Appendix 1.

3. The Report

The Select Committee approved its report at a formal meeting on 22 March 2016. This report was submitted to [Cabinet](#) on 25 April 2015 for comment.

The executive summary of the report is attached in Appendix 2. A copy of the full report is available online

(https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/55933/Energy-Security-Select-Committee-report-March-2016.pdf) or via the Select Committee Research Officer (details below).

4. Conclusion

We welcome the report and would like to congratulate the Select Committee on completing this piece of work.

We would also like to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence to the Select Committee and the officers who supported it.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Select Committee be thanked for its work and for producing a relevant and balanced document.

5.2 The witnesses and others who provided evidence and made valuable contributions to the Select Committee be thanked.

5.3 County Council's comments on the report be noted and the report endorsed. .

Select Committee Research Officer:

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Evidence

Oral Evidence

A summary of the key topics discussed between witnesses and Members has been provided underneath each session.

Friday 13 November 2015

- **Carolyn McKenzie, Neil Hilkene, Steve Baggs**, Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate, KCC

Tuesday 17 November 2015

- **Robert Jeffery and Cian Fitzgerald**, OVO Energy
- **Chris Jelly**, Elham Going Green

Thursday 26 November 2015

- **Mary Thorogood and Mel Rogers**, Vattenfall
- **Phillip Jackson**, Daedalus Environmental/E3
- **Nick Swinford**, University of Kent

Friday 4 December 2015

- **Prof. Gordon MacKerron and Emily Cox**, Sussex Energy Group/University of Sussex
- **Dr Wim Melis**, University of Greenwich
- **Stephanie Karpetas**, Sustainability Connections

Tuesday 15 December 2015

- **Jeremy Martin**, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
- **Matthew Morris**, Kent Downs AONB
- **Joseph Grice**, London Borough of Islington

Wednesday 16 December 2015

- **Andy Morgan**, LASER
- **Carolyn McKenzie, Neil Hilkene, Steve Baggs**, Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate, KCC

Written Evidence

- **James Diggle**, External Communications Manager, EDF Energy
- **Chris Jelly**, Elham Going Green
- **Professor Gordon MacKerron and Miss Emily Cox**, Sussex Energy Group/University of Sussex
- **Dr Wim Melis**, University of Greenwich

Visits

Wednesday, 4 November 2015

- Islington LB District Heat Network

Monday, 30 November 2015

- St Nicholas-at-Wade Farm, St Nicholas-at-Wade

Tuesday 8 December 2015

- Sustainable Sheppey, Isle of Sheppey

Monday, 14 December 2015

- Dungeness B Nuclear Power Station, Dungeness