

Executive Summary

1.1. Committee Membership

1.1.1. The Committee consists of ten Members of Kent County Council (KCC): five members of the Conservative Party, two members of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), one member of the Labour Party, one member of the Liberal Democrat Party and one (co-opted) member of the Green party<sup>1</sup>.



Mr David Brazier  
Conservative  
Sevenoaks North East



Mr Brian Clark  
Liberal Democrat  
Maidstone South



Mr Adrian Crowther  
UKIP  
Sheppey



Mr Christopher Hoare  
UKIP  
Tunbridge Wells East



Mr Peter Homewood  
Conservative  
Malling Rural North East



Mrs Eileen Rowbotham  
Labour  
Deal



Mr Chris Smith  
Conservative  
Tonbridge



Mrs Carole Waters  
Conservative  
Romney Marsh



Mr Jim Wedgbury

<sup>1</sup> Mr Martin Whybrow (Green Party) participated fully in the evidence gathering meetings, but took no part in the approval of the final report and recommendations.

## **1.2. Scene Setting**

- 1.2.1. Kent County Council has significant existing commitments to 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.
- 1.2.2. 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; to fairly evaluating all applicable energy generation measures and to ensuring that Kent has as resilient and sustainable an energy supply as possible.
- 1.2.3. This review will aim 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.
- 1.2.4. The supply and generation of energy for Kent, as well as the reduction of energy consumption, is of significant 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.

### **1.3. Terms of Reference**

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

## 1.4. Scope

1.4.1. The complexity of this topic and the tight timeframe of the review required a clear and focused approach. The key themes and aspects that were covered by the review are detailed below:

**To clarify the meaning of “Energy Security” and the responsibilities of KCC in ensuring this security.**

- a. To explore the definition of “Energy Security”.
- b. To examine the responsibilities and roles that KCC holds in securing energy security.

**To examine and assess a range of energy generation methods so as to best secure the future energy needs of Kent.**

- a. To investigate the various energy security measures available to KCC, Kent residents, and Kent businesses.
- b. To assess these measures and their suitability in helping to secure the future energy needs of Kent.

**To identify existing best practice across the UK and abroad of how best to strengthen a sustainable, reliable energy infrastructure for Kent.**

- a. To explore best practice examples, both across the UK and abroad, of how local authorities and other relevant organisations work to develop energy security and sustainability in their area.
- b. To consider how this best practice can be replicated to improve energy security in Kent.

**For the Energy Security Select Committee to make recommendations after having gathered evidence and information throughout the review.**

- a. To use the findings of the review and the resultant recommendations to inform the development of a joint Kent and Medway

energy security strategy and to contribute to the updating of the Kent Environment Strategy.

## **1.5. Recommendations**

**NB: The recommendations below are arranged in priority order. Numbering reflects order of appearance within the report text.**

### **Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (combined)**

**That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport writes to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, to highlight key issues of concern for national and local energy security, such as:**

- 1. The importance of further new nuclear both nationally and for Kent (see Section 5.1, p.79).**
- 2. The need for the introduction of stronger national building standards, requiring both increased energy efficiency and generation measures in new developments (Section 5.1, p.82).**
- 3. The need for additional financial support for community energy projects following the reduction of the FiT (Section 4.2, p.74).**
- 4. The need for local authority control and management of any future energy efficiency schemes that replace ECO (Section 5.3, p.101).**
- 5. The need for energy utilities to produce and implement 25 year management plans, akin to those held by water utilities (Section 6.1, p.118).**
- 6. The need to ensure that the South-East CORE is adequately resourced and supported so as to facilitate the continued uptake of renewable (wind) energy within Kent (Section 4.2, p.72).**

### **Recommendation 7**

**That KCC, working in partnership with relevant organisations, builds on the work of the Select Committee in identifying key opportunities and risks to Kent's energy infrastructure, ensuring the evidence base underpinning our energy security is up-to-date and robust (Section 2.4, p.34).**

### **Recommendation 8**

That KCC leads by example through driving further energy saving and energy generation measures across its estate - in accordance with KCC's Carbon Management Plan - and in partnership with Kent social housing providers and districts (Section 4.1, p.65).

#### **Recommendation 9**

That KCC creates a communications strategy strengthening its engagement with businesses and local communities to help them understand the benefit of reducing energy use and generating their own energy (Section 4.2, p.74).

#### **Recommendation 10**

That KCC investigates the feasibility of creating investment measures to develop local, low-carbon energy generation and diversification projects (Section 5.2, p.99).

#### **Recommendation 11**

That KCC works with partners and local authorities to influence the design and planning process for developments from the start, so as to ensure that they are as energy efficient as possible (Section 5.3, p.104).

#### **Recommendation 12**

That KCC works with educational institutions within Kent to ensure that students and apprentices are given the necessary skillsets and expertise required for working across the energy sector (Section 5.4, p.109).

#### **Recommendation 13**

That KCC continues to strengthen its ability to work in partnership with local authorities, relevant agencies, businesses, community groups and the education and training sector to make sure that a comprehensive approach is taken in ensuring energy security for Kent (Section 6.1, p.114).

#### **Recommendation 14**

That LASER and Sustainable Business and Communities investigate the feasibility of KCC establishing itself as an energy supplier to the local community (Section 6.1, p.116).

#### **Recommendation 15**

**That KCC works in partnership with UKPN and relevant energy generation companies within Kent to better understand the risks to Kent's energy systems and how these can be mitigated (Section 6.1, p.118).**