

The local authority perspective on their need  
for green skilled staff and engagement with  
businesses

# Context

## What is a green job?

National definitions are somewhat broad. The Office for National Statistics concluded that there is no simple answer to the question on what is a green job ([The challenges of defining a "green job" - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/articles/green-jobs-2019)).

The Government's Green Jobs Taskforce report published in July 2021 defines green jobs scope as *"...focuses on employment in an activity that directly contributes to, or indirectly supports, the achievement of the UK's net zero emissions target and helps mitigate climate risks"*.

Strategic Development

# Local Authority perspective

## Immediate need

As a Local Authority, our need for expertise has evolved in line with the exposure and prominence given to the Net Zero both on a regional and national scale.

The need specific net zero expertise has increased in line with the development of our first Net Zero Action Plan:

- Climate Change Manager
- Energy and Sustainability Manager

## Job creation via secured funding

In 2021, SBC secured a significant amount of Active Travel funding. To fully deliver this funding, an Active Travel Officer has been recruited to take forward sustainable travel initiatives and further EV charging initiatives.

# Local Authority perspective

## Net Zero Action Plan

In July 2021, SBC created its first Net Zero Action Plan. This has identified initiatives that are contributing towards SBC's own reduction in CO2 emissions.

We are continuing to deliver initiatives within a number of key areas may stimulate a regional need for skills and services from a "green" perspective. For example:

### Lighting replacement

- LED replacement across the corporate estate.
- Phased replacement of 28,000 streetlights across the borough.

### Retrofitting housing stock

- Ongoing retrofit of existing housing stock to be delivered by a mix of contractors and in house staff.
- Pilot of new technologies within the Swindon's Railway Village to determine feasibility of energy solutions in the area.
- The Council's Housing Company are look to move towards a Net Zero Carbon Housing Model. This will require skills development in terms of understanding and staying abreast of low carbon construction methodologies.

# Local Authority perspective

## Points of consideration

SBC has recently installed 11 double headed EV charging points across the borough that went live in October 2021.

The installation and maintenance of these will be looked after by a Hertfordshire based company. Should demand across the region increase greatly and the UK Govt push EV in favour of Hydrogen for fleet, opportunities may exist for regional providers in the future.

Solar PV – Swindon and Wiltshire Councils are collaborating to participate jointly a group purchasing solar initiative (Solar Together).

The scheme works on a reverse auction basis with the lowest priced auction being accepted as the winner. The process is open to local installers who may wish to express an interest in tendering in the future. Furthermore, in the context of rising energy prices, demand for solar PV may soar, creating a demand that may need be catered for (thus presenting regional upskilling and employment opportunities)

# Engagement with local businesses

## **Be the Change**

Our '[Be the Change](#)' campaign aims to raise the profile of climate change in Swindon and highlight the many positive contributions people and organisations are already making to reduce their emissions. Specifically, the campaign looks at:

- What businesses and organisations can do to reduce their emissions and better understand the net zero agenda.

This may help create a level of understanding and spark a willingness to further upskill.

- Case studies (Arval, Zurich, CCm Technologies) to raise awareness of the agenda within the local business community.

This may help the business community understand the issue at hand and what expertise and skills may be needed in order to make a difference.

# Engagement with local businesses

## **Future intentions**

- To work with larger organisations to 'set an example' to the local business community where appropriate.
- To leverage the information and support through the 'Be the Change' campaign to influence a greater number of SMEs and enterprises to take action.
- Work in collaboration with New College and the IOT to understand local labour trends and piece together business engagement and the relevance of the further education offering – First series of meetings underway.

## Engagement with the LEP and next steps

- We would welcome collaboration with the LEP in understanding the local labour and skills market in further detail (building on discussions re SW Energy Hub funding).
- Welcome a focus on green skills within LEP skills plan.