



Co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Union

**Project Title:** Regional and Local public Authorities cooperating in sustainable energy planning through effective multi-level governance models

**Acronym:** COOPENERGY

**Grant Agreement Number:** IEE/12/703/

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>D2.4-Regional review report – Kent County Council</b>
<b>Associated WP</b>	WP2- Multi-Level Governance Models
<b>Associated Task</b>	Task 2.5
<b>Date Delivered</b>	SWOT analysis: July 2013; Full report: September 2013
<b>Prepared by</b>	Kent County Council
<b>Dissemination Level</b>	Public (PU)



**Deliverable D2.4- Regional review report - KENT**

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## 1. Introduction

This document covers the deliverable D2.5 of the COOPENERGY project.

The deliverable is submitted either in English (5-10 pages in an electronic format) or in National language with a 2-3 page summary in English.

Each COOPENERGY regional partner is responsible for delivering this document for its own region.

## 2. COOPENERGY

The main goal of COOPENERGY is to foster the development of collaboration models in sustainable energy planning between the regional and local public authorities to lead the transition towards low carbon communities and regions.

COOPENERGY aims to mobilize eight (8) regional public authorities to work hand in hand with the local authorities and demonstrate their collaboration by developing Multi-Level Governance (MLG) models that support the creation of mutually beneficial Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAP) at regional and local levels and the development of joint actions in energy planning for the successful implementation of SEAPs.

In complement to cooperation in strategic regional energy planning, three (3) **themes of collaboration** were identified as key cross-cutting pillars for the successful definition and implementation of the MLG models. COOPENERGY will focus on these collaboration themes:

- **Financial instruments**
- **Modelling, planning and monitoring tools for decision making**
- **Awareness raising and stakeholder involvement instruments**

## 3. Overall context in sustainable energy planning

Achieving sustainable energy solutions often requires the development of a number of interrelated measures such as a change in land use, sharing of sustainable energy resources or development of new financial models. Therefore, successful implementation will require coherent and concerted energy planning to bring all the differing strands together at regional and municipality levels. This could include additional support for the development of:

- infrastructure planning at a spatial and network level (covering more than one public authority or region) such as renewable energy networks
- cross boundary renewable energy resource supply chains e.g. wood fuel biomass
- natural resource use planning and conflict management
- comprehensive monitoring of energy use and GHG emissions at regional and local levels to inform development of local SEAPs and business cases



- development of innovative financial mechanisms supporting local actions

Successful implementation is further complicated by the fact that regional SEAPs are often part of a wider plan or strategy involving a greater number of stakeholders, and a longer plan development time. It is therefore imperative at the outset to develop a firm multi-level governance basis for action.

#### 4. Main purpose

Each regional partner will perform an **analysis of the situation in its region** with regards to the implementation of MLG models in **sustainable energy planning** and provide recommendations for further improvements to the planning processes.

It will:

- Analyse if the local and regional needs are addressed in the regional SEAP by interviewing the regional authority and a number of municipalities (at least 3 per region).
- Identify areas of potential conflict for each stakeholder and propose a mapping of inconsistencies.
- Identify the drivers to provide a comprehensive business case for the definition of ambitious regional SEAPs.
- Assess if the financial instruments are planned and approved.
- Provide recommendations for improving the regional SEAP in terms of methodology for its revision as well as priority areas.

The report of the review analysis will be discussed with the regional authorities and serve as basis for COOPENERGY activities.

## 5. Regional situation in energy planning

### 5.1 General information

#### Background: regional authorities in England

**County Councils:** County councils in England are elected administrative bodies to govern each county within England (or region). Councils have responsibility for delivering a large range of strategic services which cover all areas of the county such as highways, waste, flooding, health and social care amongst others. In addition to County Councils, there is another local tier of government within the county (district and borough councils) who are responsible for delivering more local services such as planning and waste collection. An alternative governance model in the UK is that of unitary authorities. These are 'single-tier' government which means they often deliver both strategic and local level services to residents within their administrative area. Within the geographical county of Kent, there is also one unitary authority called Medway.

#### ➤ Energy planning responsibilities at regional level

Kent County Council is one of the largest councils in the country and provides more than 300 services for around 1.6 million residents, as well as visitors and those working in Kent.

We work closely with district councils, Medway Council and town and parish councils to provide the best services possible. We each have specific responsibilities, but some are shared.

***Please indicate the areas of responsibilities of your regional government in relation with energy. Please indicate (YES/NO). If YES please describe.***

- Public buildings (schools,..): Yes, Kent County Council (KCC) has responsibility for its own public buildings, which are chiefly offices, children's centres, highway depots and some schools in Kent. Some schools in Kent have now become academies taking them out of local government control. District and borough councils have separate public buildings they are responsible for such as their own offices, leisure centres and some 'Gateway' buildings which are information hubs to provide a number of services to the general public.
- Public transport: KCC has the opportunity to implement transport schemes such as 'car sharing' and 'pool cars' for its own staff and to influence planning policy, for example by working collaboratively with planners to maximise sustainable public transport opportunities in developments and developing travel plans for services across the county which encourage use of public transport. Local transport schemes are also carried out by local district and borough councils (e.g. 'Park & Ride schemes, electric

vehicle charging points) however some strategic projects (county-wide assessment of electric vehicle points) are underway at regional level.

- Energy network infrastructures (planning, operation,..): Yes in terms of strategic plans to investigate new sources of energy (such as renewable energy) across Kent. Operation of energy networks are largely privately owned in Kent by energy companies and national energy operators. Local energy schemes such as district heating schemes are influenced or implemented by the district/borough councils however collaboration with the county council occurs. Planning applications for new developments and energy networks are a local authority responsibility (districts & boroughs), who supervise and approve new developments according to building and environmental laws.
- Local energy production (planning, authorisation, operation,..): Local energy production would need planning permission and authorisation at local authority level only (district/boroughs), however planning local projects is coordinated with the county council (KCC) at strategic level e.g. wood fuel and biomass projects, renewable energy projects. Kent partners have produced a Renewable Energy Action Plan for Kent to provide an over-arching plan for the county.
- Energy and GHG monitoring: No, this is carried out nationally by the Department of Energy and Climate Change however data is submitted annually to DECC for reporting on GHG emissions by both the county and local authorities in Kent. DECC issued guidance to English Energy Conservation Authorities (ECAs), pursuant to the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995. Local authorities are now required to provide DECC with a HECA Further Report and subsequent biennial HECA Progress Report and these local reports are sent to the regional authority to inform our planning.
- Land use and spatial planning: Responsibilities vary depending on the size of the scheme. For large planning schemes such as Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, this sits at county level. Districts and Boroughs are responsible for local planning and building regulation.

➤ **Regional SEAP and Covenant of Mayors**

***What is the name of the “regional SEAP”?***

- Kent Environment Strategy and Implementation Plan.

***When was it established?***

- The strategy was published in 2010 and an Implementation Plan created in 2011, covering the period 2011-12. The Implementation Plan is monitored every 6 months and a revised plan for 2013-2015 is due to be published shortly. The wider strategy is also due for review in 2015.

***Does it need to be revised, if yes when?***

- Yes likely to review in 2014 for publication in 2015. The Implementation Plan, which underpins the strategy, has been revised in 2013 but there is a need to continually review and assess its relevance against local and regional needs and to monitor the delivery of the plan, which occurs every 6 months. This review should inform the next review of the strategy and the 6 monthly monitoring of the plan.

***Are there any Covenant Of Mayors coordinating structures in your region? Please describe.***

- None at the moment.

***How many CoM signatories are present in your region?***

- None at the moment.

## 5.2 Cooperation between national and regional levels

***To what extent are National public authorities involved, support or can influence energy planning activities at regional and local levels?***

- Apart from changing national policy and funding mechanisms which can influence planning at local level, there is a strong emphasis on 'localism' in the UK, meaning that the responsibility, resource and co-ordination of energy planning is done at local level. This has both positive (local people determining local energy needs) and negative (lack of national support, funding, statutory policy and coherency) impacts on regional energy planning.
- Central Government have a series of targets in relation to energy which have been set out through their Low Carbon Transition Plan and the Climate Change Act. To support delivery of these there are policies such as Feed in Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive and funding opportunities include community energy and district heating schemes.
- Where schemes are considered of strategic or national importance (e.g., large scale wind or solar farms), the final planning decision rests with the Secretary of State.

***Are there any collaboration processes in place between the National and Regional levels that support the design and/or implementation of the regional and local SEAPs?***

***This could include for instance setting up a regulatory framework supporting a joint definition process, a joint awareness raising campaign, a national level financial instrument supporting regional level investment. Please describe***

- Kent has established a county-wide partnership called the 'Kent & Medway Green Deal Partnership' (K&MGDP) which aims to capitalise on a national policy (Green Deal and ECO) to retrofit private domestic housing across the county.

- A direct initiative between national and local government is also the Climate Local Initiative. Again this is an initiative from central government but with a strong focus on 'localism' and so each region is encouraged to develop its own regional targets and actions for climate change, encompassing both climate mitigation (e.g. energy actions) and adaptation. National government communications with local government are currently weak in this area and tend to focus on organising events and issuing case studies and brochures on the initiative.
- Currently, stronger collaboration processes and links between the regional and national level are focussed on climate change adaptation, not energy (e.g. regional representation on the national 'Local Adaptation Advisory Panel' and take up of regional tool SWIMS in the National Adaptation Programme).

### 5.3 Cooperation between regional and local levels

#### ➤ **Content of the regional SEAP:**

**What are the 3 main sectors targeted by the "regional SEAP"? (e.g.: building retrofitting, sustainable mobility,..)**

- The Kent Environment Strategy (KES) has a broader focus than energy and looks at priorities including biodiversity, heritage, economy and climate change adaptation. Therefore these priorities are headed under three main themes and energy represents cross-cutting actions within these themes:
  - Living well within our environmental limits.
  - Rising to the climate change challenge.
  - Valuing our natural, historic and living environment.

With regards to energy specific activity the three highest priorities are:

- Housing and building retrofitting
- Renewable Energy deployment
- Supporting businesses to reduce their energy use (Low Carbon Kent)

***What is the level of recommendations/actions at regional level/joint actions between regional and local levels, proposed within the regional SEAP?***

- The KES was developed in partnership between regional and local partners. There are action leads across both the local and regional councils and other partner agencies including Kent Fire & Rescue Service and the National Health Service (NHS). A full

consultation process across local and regional partners was issued to develop the plan and the KES outlines:

- the key priorities for the environment and Kent economy, developed across all regional and local authorities
- Joint actions and projects
- Joint targets

***Does the regional SEAP include an estimated budget for implementing the recommendations/actions?***

- No, although financial mechanisms are in place for projects and actions e.g. authority funds, Central Government schemes and European funding streams.

***Does the regional SEAP provide recommendations or measures for addressing interrelated measures such as a change in land use, sharing of sustainable energy resources or development of new financial models?***

- Yes.

***Does the regional SEAP provide recommendations for implementing joint sustainable energy planning tools between the regional and local levels (see COOPENERGY pillars)? If yes, please specify.***

- **Financial instruments**

- Yes, for example the Kent and Medway Green Deal Partnership worked together to procure an ECO funding provider and apply for funding through the Green Deal Pioneers programme.

- **Modelling, planning and monitoring tools for decision making**

- Yes, the Kent Environment Strategy is monitored on a six monthly basis and this informs our wider work. In addition to this we have a series of targets through Climate Local Kent which we monitor to inform our programme planning and these have been incorporated as targets within the Kent Environment Strategy itself. Actions within the strategy further promote use of planning, modelling and monitoring tools. For example, an action to develop a renewable energy plan for Kent within the KES, prompted a study to map and model renewable energy opportunities across Kent to inform development of a Renewable Energy Action Plan, which has now been completed. In addition models were used as part of retrofit actions within KES to model potential areas for housing retrofit work across the county where people are most likely to benefit e.g. fuel poor. From an adaptation-perspective, the KES included an action to develop a new monitoring tool called SWIMS (Severe Weather Impacts Monitoring System) to inform

resilience/business continuity planning and how we can prepare for future severe weather events.

- **Awareness raising and stakeholder involvement instruments.**

- Yes, the Kent Environment Strategy includes priority actions for joint delivery of housing retrofit work in Kent. The Kent and Medway Green Deal Partnership was formed (a group involving both the regional and local authorities) to deliver this retrofit work in partnership across Kent. This has included a joint action plan and raising awareness of retrofit work to different stakeholders (such as residents) through a joint communications campaign between the regional and local partners called 'Warm Homes'. Other actions in the strategy included to develop a renewable energy action plan for the county. This was undertaken through extensive stakeholder involvement at numerous workshops and through a consultation, in order to develop the plan in partnership.

➤ **Regional SEAP design and approval process**

***What was the process followed for designing the “regional SEAP”?***

- The strategy was developed through extensive stakeholder engagement including workshops and meetings. The original strategy was reviewed against local and national priorities and drivers to ensure it was still fit for purposes and updates made as required. Once completed the strategy went out for public consultation and responses integrated into the final version.

***How was the regional public authority represented and involved?***

- The regional authority (KCC) led the process

***How were the local public authorities represented and involved?***

- The strategy was developed entirely in partnership and so local authorities were included in workshops and in the review of the strategy as well as coming up with locally appropriate actions.

***Were other regional stakeholders represented and involved during the design process?***

- Yes, as a partnership document we carried out a detailed stakeholder analysis to identify other key partners. These included Kent Fire and Rescue Service, NHS, Environment Agency, Natural England and Business Support Kent amongst others.

***What were the different phases followed for designing the “regional SEAP”? How long did it take?***

- External review of previous strategy and identification of priorities

- Stakeholder analysis and engagement
- Workshops and drafting of plan
- Stakeholder consultation
- Updating draft
- Gain agreement for consultation from politicians
- Public consultation
- Final draft
- Sign off across partner organisations

**Time taken:** approximately 1 year from initial review to sign off.

***Was the National level involved?***

- The national level targets were integrated as appropriate into the strategy. They were incorporated into the consultation and provided feedback. The Environment Agency are a delivery partners for the strategy.

***What was the process followed for approving the “regional SEAP”?***

***Who approved the regional SEAP within the regional authority?***

- It was approved across Kent partners organisations through Kent Forum (representing political Leaders from across authorities).

***Did any local public authority representatives approve the regional SEAP?***

- Yes.

***Did any other regional stakeholders approve the regional SEAP? If yes, please specify.***

- Yes, Medway Council were also involved (as a unitary they could be considered a different region).

***Were there any communication activities implemented following the approval of the regional SEAP? If yes, please specify who was involved?***

- Yes, the strategy was launched with a press release and communications are ongoing. For example we will shortly be releasing a public document Climate Local Kent: One Year on which details how we are delivering on our commitments. This will be going out to the media in October 2013.

➤ **Needs of local and regional public authorities**

This section is based on the feedback from regional and local public authorities.

The wider review of how we are delivering sustainable energy in Kent has been an iterative process of review, monitoring and feedback with all partners involved in

delivering our county-wide Kent Environment Strategy and Implementation plan. The plan has recently been reviewed and consulted on with both local and regional partners as per the set 6 monthly reporting against the plan and so it was felt that interviewing local and regional partners just after this time would create 'consultation fatigue' and deter partner engagement in the plan. This review of the strategy therefore culminates the feedback from local partners via wider consultation on the plan, and at a dedicated Climate Change Network meeting where the plan was critically reviewed. It also comprises the outcomes of the SEAP review undertaken with regional authority partners at a dedicated meeting in July 2013. Both forms of consultation and review answered the following three questions:

***Question 1: In your case, what are the benefits and dis-benefits of implementing a collaboration process in sustainable energy planning between the regional and local levels? Please identify and discuss at least 3 benefits and 3 dis-benefits.***

***Question 2: Considering the existing regional SEAP, what are the potential conflict areas or inconsistencies (due to the lack of cooperation) that could prevent its successful implementation? Or prevent the implementation of the local SEAPs? Please provide details about the targeted area, reasons for the potential conflict and inconsistency.***

***Question 3: What recommendations would you like to suggest improving the cooperation in sustainable energy planning between the regional and local levels?***

The summary of this consultation and review has been summarized in section 6 of this report.

## Synthesis

### 5.2 SWOT analysis sustainable energy planning situation within your region

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a county-wide strategy and implementation plan for the environment called the Kent Environment Strategy (KES) – both the regional (county council) and local authorities (district and borough councils, NHS etc) are signed up*</li> <li>• Targets are ‘SMART’ and measurable.</li> <li>• Kent has a cross-cutting strategy covering environment, economy and society which is county –lead. This protects against fluctuations</li> <li>• Publically available – communicable and accessible</li> <li>• Part of core priorities within the council and related to bold steps (a key document within the regional council)*</li> <li>• Top level support*</li> <li>• Strengthens Kent economy</li> <li>• Good partnerships with districts</li> <li>• Review and monitoring in place – flexibility to adapt to policy/legislation</li> <li>• Partner-led actions</li> <li>• Accountability delegated out: making maximum use out of limited resources.</li> <li>• Case studies – we can demonstrate it’s working</li> <li>• Climate Local Kent has good national profile – supports local delivery</li> <li>• Climate change increasing national profile</li> <li>• Kent partnership working is used as an example for other counties</li> <li>• Do more than most – also early adopters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are partners fully included?</li> <li>• Maintaining communication channels to public and districts (and vice versa)</li> <li>• Two year plan – is it flexible to respond to policy change</li> <li>• Language barriers and communication</li> <li>• Wordy document – how to communicate with public and districts</li> <li>• Not clear on progress, monitoring and successes</li> <li>• Lots of county council leads for actions – do they have capacity and are they really engaging for delivery</li> <li>• Are the climate change network the right contacts</li> <li>• Liaising directly with leads</li> <li>• Is the skills balance right?</li> <li>• Skills gap - actions are seen as an ‘add on’ to job so not detailed knowledge</li> <li>• Reliant on consultants and there is a skills transfer out of organisations</li> <li>• Do we know skills across organisations?</li> <li>• Resourcing gaps for the Kent Environment Strategy (KES) – human and financial</li> <li>• Is the strategy owned? Often additional to job and not part of job descriptions</li> <li>• Are the district/borough plans aligned with the strategy?</li> <li>• Some targets don’t have baselines and aren’t time-bound</li> <li>• Are timescales achievable?</li> <li>• Do actions have a long-term sustainability outside of the strategy,</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong links to health agenda</li> <li>• More targets for each activity - makes actions clearer</li> <li>• Delivery across teams (one council approach)</li> <li>• Actions for all levels – strategy and local (community)</li> <li>• Links to key strategies e.g. growth without Gridlock</li> <li>• We have the ability to deliver on actions and these deliver local needs, so need localism</li> <li>• Resilient</li> </ul>	<p>in case it stops?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does everyone know where to go to find the strategy?</li> <li>• Is the strategy available in Braille and other languages?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with new partners and organisations</li> <li>• New members – opportunity to raise awareness</li> <li>• Building momentum – the domino effect</li> <li>• Financial situation forcing more joined up working across organisations*</li> <li>• Build in contract clause that a skills transfer from consultants back to authority*</li> <li>• Review skills capacity across organisations*</li> <li>• Increased public awareness of new technologies and the expectations of Las to drive political cross-party support (pressure)*</li> <li>• Improve Kent’s environment!</li> <li>• More media attention, creating bigger press potential (case studies and stories)</li> <li>• Providing focused delivery</li> <li>• Raising the profile of KES</li> <li>• Better knowledge through targets and monitoring.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current central government policy is unclear and policy changes may affect funding and attitudes</li> <li>• Over exposure to ‘green’ issues may decrease receptiveness to the issues</li> <li>• Public backlash to perceived interference in personal choice</li> <li>• Changing global markets and commodity prices may affect cooperation from businesses and public</li> <li>• Public and government must play their part</li> <li>• Conflicting partnership agendas/maintaining partnerships</li> <li>• Miscommunication</li> <li>• Skills shortages</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge and initial resistance to new technologies</li> <li>• Growing economy may result in less concern for wastage due to more financial security</li> </ul>

**Summary of findings from the SEAP**

**Strengths**



From this review process, it is clear there are a number of strengths in how Kent is currently delivering sustainable energy plans in partnership, with the most immediate strength being that a county-wide strategy and implementation plan exists in Kent (the Kent Environment Strategy), which both the regional (Kent County Council) and local authorities are signed up to. There is already strong top-level political and officer support for the plan's delivery (the plans approval and monitoring has been agreed by 'Kent Leaders' who are the highest level of political support in Kent). It is also clear that the strategy and its plan are partnership documents, with action leads at both the regional and local level, whilst clear targets ('SMART') targets are also in place to create clear and measurable goals for partners to work towards. It is also clear that the plan is strongly embedded into core priorities and plans within the regional council (e.g. Bold steps for Kent and Growth without Gridlock).

### **Weaknesses and threats**

These strengths were then critically assessed and raised questions and potential weaknesses that need addressing through this review. This includes recognition that although the plan is a partnership document, many actions are lead by the regional council (KCC) and therefore how well are these leads really engaging with local authority partners and sharing delivery of actions within the plan. However, as the strategic authority it is to be expected that the majority of actions would sit at this level for leadership. It is important to note that a 'lead' still works in partnership to deliver actions. Although the plan is part of core priorities and plans within the county council, it is not always clear how well the plan links into the priorities, core plans and other strategies that exist at local level. Other key weaknesses recognised within the review, was a lack of resource (both human & financial), the threat of decreasing budgets and recognition that many actions with the Kent Environment Strategy (KES) and its implementation plan are sometimes seen as 'add -ons' to the core roles of staff across both the regional and local authorities. The different agendas and priorities of authorities at both these levels compounded this threat to delivering the KES effectively in partnership. Other key weaknesses and threats to delivery in partnership were skills gaps and a lack of understanding about what skills exist across the partnership and across different organisations delivering KES. Unclear and changing policy at central government level was also seen to be a threat to what is delivered at local level and has the potential to create confusion amongst partners and the general public in delivering sustainable energy plans. Finally, maintaining communication between the regional and local authorities, as well as to the general public was recognised to be difficult and an areas to improve through this review.

### **Opportunities**

These strengths, weaknesses and threats led on to a number of opportunities for more effective partnership working. This included reviewing skills across all organisations and the potential to build clauses into contracts with consultants so that skills could be transferred back to public authorities



and up-skill those delivering sustainable energy plans across Kent. This would create more opportunities for joint working and save partners money. Opportunities to strengthen communication links between partners and to the general public were recognised including opportunities to further promote projects and initiatives to the public. By working on joint communication campaigns, partnership links would be strengthened and mixed messages to the public could be avoided, whilst saving money and resources by delivering communications together. There is also an opportunities to review job descriptions so that delivering KES or environment and energy plans in general is embedded as part of core work, although it is recognised this may be difficult in the current job and economic climate in England where resources are continually stretched and officers across the county are being asked to take on more work with less resource.

## **6.2 Recommendations for collaborative sustainable energy planning based on results of regional SWOT-analysis and consultation with local authority partners:**

In light of this review, a number of recommendations have been made for reviewing how we are delivering sustainable energy plans in partnership, in Kent:

### Recommendations:

1. **Reviewing local needs:**
  - a. to include specific and targeted questions in the next review and consultation of the Kent Environment Strategy (KES) and Implementation Plan. This should include asking local partners whether priorities at local level continue to be addressed in the plan and how the KES is given priority in relation to other local plans. A supplementary question on how KES could be further integrated into other local plans and priorities should be included, where necessary. For example: does the plan and its actions reflect your priorities locally? If not what actions would you include?
  - b. A review of current targets and the energy data (and other data) needed to robustly monitor delivery of the plan and whether we are delivering our targets ( COOPENERY pillar 2, modelling, planning and monitoring tools for decision making) should be undertaken.
2. **Accessibility and promotion of the KES and Implementation Plan:**
  - a. to review publicity and promotion of the strategy and implementation, so that both are communicable and easily accessible to all. This includes reviewing where the plan is publicised at regional level (e.g. Kent.gov page, opportunities to promote on KNet and Kmail) as well as current promotion at local level (review where the plan sits on local council websites and if clear linkages are in place).
  - b. This review should also include a review of accessibility for those with certain needs, including Braille and opportunities to access the strategy in other ways beside the internet.
  - c. Opportunities to publicise the strategy and plan more widely should be explored including case studies, news stories, TV and radio. This will also clearly communicate successes and progress in delivering the plan to all partners. The outcomes of any

monitoring and reporting should also be communicated back to those delivering the plan so they can see progress and next steps for delivery.

3. **Review communication channels and opportunities for joint communications – to improve awareness raising and stakeholder involvement (COOPENERY Pillar 3):**
  - a. A review of how the regional and local authority can communicate better together should be considered. This could include opportunities to host shared documents that all partners can contribute to (e.g. on forums such as Sharepoint, google documents and 'clouds' or other shared platforms).
  - b. With changing policy and attitudes to the environment, it is recommended that clear messages are developed to communicate the plan/strategy and projects being delivered within it. These must be developed and agreed between both the local and regional partners to ensure they are working effectively together.
  - c. Joint communications campaigns should be considered to avoid mixed messaging to target audiences (such as the general public) and to strengthen partnership work. It is also recommended that a review of existing communication channels is reviewed to ensure local and regional partners are communicating updates effectively to one another, as well as to the general public.
4. **Review skills set across partners and opportunities to up-skill all partners**
  - a. A review of existing skills (and gaps) across local and regional partners should be undertaken to ensure skills are matched to actions being delivered within the plan. This could also lead to new opportunities to work with partners to up-skill in certain areas, to enhance delivery of the plan in partnership.
  - b. Investigate where skills can be transferred over from consultants to public authorities who are delivering plans, whether this be as formal clauses to contracts or as part of handover sessions and training.
5. **Review stakeholders (stakeholder analysis)**
  - a. A review of stakeholders to identify whether the right leads and contacts are in place to deliver the plan should occur. In particular where there are large parts of the plan being delivered by the regional authority, a review of where local leads should be created or opportunities to co-ordinate more action between partners, should be undertaken. For example this could be incorporated into recommendation one, with consultation questions including: where could you deliver this action with another local partner? Where could you help to support an action being led by another local partner?
  - b. A review of where existing partnerships, groups and commitment can be strengthened (e.g. through multi-level governance agreements) should be considered and is something already being progressed through the COOPENERY project.
6. **Review where current gaps in delivery could be filled**
  - a. This could include reviewing opportunities for new funding (Pillar 1 of COOPENERY: Financial instruments), new staff or where existing funding (such as the COOPENERY project itself) can be used to deliver current gaps in the KES. This has recently been done in relation to COOPENERY, where the funding is enabling us to deliver renewable energy opportunities to Kent communities (e.g. Isle of Sheppey and opportunities to investigate projects in other areas)

