

# Report to Place Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Portfolio: Place (Cllr Nigel Bedford)**

**Subject: Climate Change Action Plan Review**

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## Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To consider the Climate Change Action Plan Summary and progress to date on the Climate Change agenda
- (2) To review and agree the recommendations for Priorities 2023/24:

No.	Action from CCAP	Activity
1	Energy efficiency improvement of Council owned estate	Investment in energy efficiency works to be included in Operational Assets Strategy and Asset Management Strategy.
2	Review renewable energy and storage potential at existing council owned sites	Assessment of suitability for measures such as heat pumps, solar PV and solar thermal.
3	Include consideration of the Climate Emergency in Council decision making processes	Consideration of climate change to be embedded into decision reports
4	Reduce emissions for business travel in staff owned cars	Proposal to lease 2 electric pool cars at Oakwood Hill Depot and North Weald Airfield to increase % of low emission mileage for business travel and reduce business mileage spend.
5	Increase EV charge points on EFDC owned land	Rapid EV chargers to be installed at Burton Road with further locations to be explored.

## Report:

1. The Climate Change Action Plan was adopted by Cabinet in April 2022. It states the steps to be taken by the Council to deliver on the Climate Emergency that was declared on 19 September 2019 with the motion to do everything within the Council's power to make Epping Forest District Council area carbon neutral by 2030. The plan aligns with the corporate objective to strive to reduce pollution and protect our environment, encouraging jobs, housing, and infrastructure that complements, rather than competes with the natural world. It also contributes towards mitigating actions for the Climate Emergency risk on the corporate risk register.

2. The Climate Change Action Plan examines the main sources of carbon emissions both within the Council's own operations and across the District. It covers the themes Council emissions, behaviour change, travel, buildings, air quality, natural environment, waste and climate change adaptation.
3. The plan is split into the Council Operations and the wider District. This is to acknowledge the level of control that can be exerted over the emissions within each boundary. More direct action can be taken to address emissions of the Council however in the wider District the Council's role will be to facilitate the reduction either through direct initiatives, partnerships, using statutory powers or by influencing behaviour change.
4. Following organisational changes and external influences to Council services the Climate Change Action plan has been under review. The Climate Change Action Plan still stands with the aims of the review being to understand which actions are complete, which are underway and can now be classed as business as usual, and which actions can be removed following investigation. The review also aims to recommend priority actions for the Council where we can take direct action that will bring the greatest emission reductions. The document also suggests additional monitoring to track progress of the suggested priority actions. The Climate Change Action Plan Summary document has been produced to show the outcomes of this review.
5. The summary document lists completed actions from the CCAP. Further activities have taken place over the period of the plan however these are embedded within wider actions. Some of the highlights from across the Council since the final CCAP was published in April 2022 include the Corporate plan being updated to include objectives for climate, successful application for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to retrofit 130 EFDC homes up to 2025, 6 rapid chargers installed across 2 EFDC car parks at Oakwood Hill and Basons Lane and 1392 trees planted at Roding Valley and adoption of a litter strategy. The Council has also invested in energy efficient leisure centre improvements such as pool covers, Building Management System, variable speed drives and LED upgrades. These improvements have lowered the carbon footprint of our leisure facilities and help reduce operating costs.
6. The business as usual section summarises activities from the CCAP that are ongoing and therefore can be classed as business as usual. Much of this section refers to educating, influencing, and engaging others to take climate action themselves. These actions in the CCAP were spread across different themes, however the document groups them into business-as-usual behaviour change actions to have a more concise and clear overview of actions taking place. Similarly, now that the local plan has been adopted actions related to policy on new development has been grouped into a business as usual action.
7. Since adoption of the plan some of the actions have been investigated but can now no longer go ahead, others have been affected by organisational changes and others have been consolidated into business as usual above to bring clarity to related actions that span multiple themes.
8. Recommendations for priority actions in 2023/24 are those that the Council can do themselves that will have a significant carbon impact or elevate climate change as a priority in the organisation. They are actions that aim to bring co-benefits to the council, residents and other organisations in the District. Actions have also been considered based on priorities expressed by respondents to original CCAP consultation.

9. Priority 1 – Investment in energy efficiency works to be included in the Operational Assets Strategy and Housing Asset Management Strategy. This activity supports the CCAP action of Energy efficiency improvement of Council owned estate. Deep retrofit of the operational buildings and housing has the potential to bring great emissions reductions as well as reducing energy bills for both the Council and residents, providing more comfortable homes and giving added resilience against any future energy price increases. Grant funding for decarbonisation works is likely to be available through schemes such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund however match funding is usually required that will need to be accounted for along with project management resource when developing the strategies.
10. Priority 2 – Assessment of suitability for measures such as heat pumps, solar PV and solar thermal. This supports the CCAP action to review renewable energy and storage potential at existing council owned sites. Respondents in the original CCAP consultation called for more Solar PV. Generating our own energy using Solar PV would reduce the need for reliance on more expensive grid energy, assessment is also likely to show opportunities to generate income by selling energy produced. This action would require future capital investment, with business cases brought forward for projects identified.
11. Priority 3 – Consideration of climate change to be embedded into decision reports. In order to make a significant reduction to emissions within the Councils activities all projects and initiatives will need to consider the climate implications in their decision-making processes. By including an assessment of climate in decision reports this will ensure that climate is considered in major projects across all service areas. To complement this recommendation Carbon Literacy Training is to be taking place across the Council to give staff the skills required to undertake this activity.
12. Priority 4 – Proposal to lease 2 electric pool cars at Oakwood Hill Depot and North Weald Airfield to increase % of low emission mileage for business travel and reduce business mileage spend. This supports the CCAP action to reduce emissions for business travel in staff owned cars. It also supports the Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy reducing tailpipe emissions of staff driving through the forest.
13. Priority 5 – 2 rapid chargers to be installed in the EFDC car park at Burton Road and with further opportunities to be explored. This supports the CCAP action to increase EV charge points on EFDC owned land. The CCAP consultation responses called for more EV charge points. A further 6 accessible EV charge points are scheduled in 2025 with the delivery of the new Epping Forest Leisure Centre, which would provide a zero-carbon development and use modern technologies and concepts to increase the sustainability performance of the building. Leisure centres are one of the largest contributors of carbon footprint and new leisure centre is a major step in helping the Council achieve its aim of becoming a carbon-neutral District by 2030.
14. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are listed within the CCAP document to track progress, these are reviewed and published on an annual basis. The most recent metrics are listed within the summary document. To continually improve our reporting additional KPIs are recommended to reflect the priorities put forward in this summary document.
15. The recommendations are to split the measure 'Scope 1 and 2 Council emissions data' into separate measures for buildings emissions and vehicle fuel emissions. This is to give a clearer picture of building related emissions for priority actions 1 and 2. Having the fuel separate will also give a more accurate picture of the Council's fleet when used alongside the EV conversion to electric vehicles numbers now that grounds maintenance

fleet has moved to Qualis. Addition of business miles emissions measure to monitor priority 4. Addition of renewables measure eg. kW of solar PV installed to monitor priority.

16. Should the priorities stated be agreed the next steps would be to republish the Climate Change Action Plan with minor amendments to show the priorities for 2023/24 and to make minor changes to the document to make actions more succinct in line with the CCAP summary document.

**Reason for decision:**

To bring greater focus to priority actions that the Council can take to support the declaration of a Climate Emergency in September 2019 and the pledge to do everything within our power to become a carbon neutral District by 2030.

**Options considered and rejected:**

Other action considered for 2023/24 priority – development of a Climate Behaviour Change Strategy. It was decided that the focus for this financial year will be on direct emissions reduction activities that the Council can take themselves.

**Consultation undertaken:**

Working with different service areas to understand progress on actions within the CCAP and climate actions taking place.

Discussions with leadership team to agree on priority actions for recommendation.

A 6-week formal consultation was then undertaken from 12th October to 26th November 2021 on the Climate Change Action Plan document, priorities put forward for 2023/24 take forward actions from the original plan and take into account widespread comments made in the consultation, for example more EV charge points and more solar production.

**Resource implications:**

Climate Change capital budget - £677k

Buildings – capital budget required will be substantial, grant funding likely to be available to reduce this.

Management of projects will require cross service area resource particularly from housing and operational teams.

**Legal and Governance Implications, Relevant Statutory Powers:**

N/A

**Corporate Plan Implications:**

The priority actions within the plan support the following objectives from the Corporate Plan:

Investment and innovation to reduce energy consumption. Adopt cleaner forms of energy. Enable reduction of the council's carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030

We will adopt the Robert Wood Johnson Wider Determinants of Health Model as a framework through which to deliver multi-agency health and wellbeing improvement initiatives. The Robert Wood Johnson Model sites the built environment as a health determinant.

**Background Papers:**

Climate Change Action Plan

Climate Change Action Plan Summary 2023

**Risk Management:**

**Equality:**

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out and there was no significant impact.

**Key Decision:** (if required):