

Key Decision Required:	Yes	In the Forward Plan:	Yes
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CABINET

13 NOVEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A.3 ADOPTION OF A CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN 2020-2023

(Report prepared by Tim Clarke)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To recommend the adoption of a climate change action plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 9th August 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency with a commitment to the Council's operations becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and community leadership activities to influence and encourage others across Tendring to strive towards carbon neutrality for the district as a whole.
- The declaration committed the Council to a number of actions including the setting up of a member working group, calculation of the Council's carbon emissions and development of a climate change action plan.
- All of these actions have now been undertaken and an action plan, covering three years to the end of 2023, is ready for approval by Cabinet and adoption by Full Council as part of the Council's policy framework.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- **Notes the work undertaken by the Climate Change Working Group to date;**
- **Approves and recommends the Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2023 for adoption by Full Council and that, in view of the significance of this plan, the Constitution (part 4.01(a)) be amended such that the list of local choice plans to form part of the policy framework of the Council shall include the Climate Change Action Plan; and,**
- **Delegates authority to the Chief Executive, to put the necessary arrangements in place to deliver the Action Plan and projects arising from it.**

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The decisions will contribute to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2020-2024:

Community Leadership Through Partnerships

The Action Plan includes a large element of community engagement and engagement with other partners across the district. This will be key to bringing the district as a whole on the journey to becoming net zero carbon.

Building Sustainable Communities for the Future

Climate change is very closely linked to sustainability, especially in relation to renewable energy generation which is something the Council will need to look at very closely. There are also links to waste generation, health and wellbeing and fuel poverty.

Delivering High Quality Services

The quality of our services will be increasingly judged on their impact on the climate. It is vital that the Council works towards service delivery becoming net zero carbon and the Action plan supports this.

A Growing and Inclusive Economy

An increase in renewable energy generation and improvements to buildings and property will generate opportunities for business and the Council is keen to support local businesses.

Strong Finances and Governance

None of the projects included in the Action Plan will be possible without strong finances and governance. There will be some challenging decisions to take but also opportunities for investment and invest to save measures that can be financially beneficial to the Council in the long term.

Governance is key, especially as the journey to net zero carbon will need to be embraced by all Members and officers and become a “business as usual” consideration as part of all decisions.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

Many of the actions proposed in the Action Plan will have resource implications for the Council, both financial and in officer time. The Council has already set side £150,000 to support the development of the Action Plan and some of the actions arising from it, along with setting aside budget for energy efficiency improvements to the Council’s buildings.

Each project will need to be considered on its own merits based on a robust business case with decisions on whether to proceed based on both the commitment to net zero and the Council’s wider financial position and priorities. It will not always be possible or viable to take the green option when the broader position is taken into account and the Council will explain why a particular decision has been taken.

Where grant funding to support projects becomes available the Council will make applications where it is appropriate to do so.

Staffing resource will be necessary to deliver the commitments in the Action Plan. Some of this resource can be drawn from existing services although there will be a need for dedicated resource to research, design and implement some projects.

Risk

The following risks have been considered:

Failure to achieve net zero by 2030 – this is a risk but 2030 is many years away and with careful planning and annual progress reporting it is possible to manage this risk.

Insufficient staffing resource to deliver projects and necessary actions – an assessment of the resource needed for each project will be undertaken and through the project management process the required level of resource identified and put in place.

Insufficient budget to deliver projects and necessary actions – clearly improvements to buildings and development of renewable energy generation facilities are going to require significant investment. Some of this investment can be borrowed and some will be investments that then generate a saving or payback. In some cases grant funding may be available to support projects. Through the decision making process for each project the level of funding will be identified and nothing will be approved unless the necessary funding is in place.

LEGAL

The Actions proposed are within the Council's legal powers. Specific projects will be subject to particular powers or procedures and they will be set out and explained as part of the decision making process.

Current National Policy Environment:

The Climate Change Act 2008 is the UK's long-term framework for tackling Climate Change. The Act aims to facilitate the UK's transition to a low-carbon economy by 2050. Since the Climate Change Act 2008, a number of national initiatives have been introduced to help meet targets.

- The Carbon Plan 2011 identifies the emission reductions needed in five key areas of the economy; buildings; transport; industry; electricity; and agriculture to meet targets.
- The Clean Growth Strategy 2017 outlines the plan to grow the national income while cutting greenhouse emissions.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan published in 2018, sets comprehensive goals and targets to improve the UK's air and water quality and protect threatened plants, trees and wildlife species.
- The Resource and Waste Strategy 2018 outlines the actions the UK will take to minimise waste, promote resource efficiency and move towards a circular economy.
- The Clean Air Strategy 2019 demonstrates how the national government will tackle all sources of air pollution, and boost the economy.

The Council's Climate Emergency Motion affirmed Parliament's commitment to addressing Climate Change. While there is no single definition of a Climate Emergency, the general consensus is to work toward becoming carbon-neutral by 2030.

At the Paris Climate Conference (COP21) Agreement placed emphasis on the notion that the real solution to climate change would require wide scale collaboration and sharing of best practices. Whilst Britain leaving the EU will not necessarily mean that Britain will stop collaborating with international partners, there may be a change in the manner this collaboration takes place.

The Climate Change Act did not include a statutory duty for local authorities to develop plans and deliver cuts in line with its carbon budgets. Nor did it set local authorities their own carbon budgets however, in declaring a Climate Emergency at its meeting at full Council in August 2019, Tendring District Council has committed to including its approach to achieve carbon neutral by 2030 within its Policy Framework and Cabinet is therefore required to report its recommendations to Council for adoption.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder/Equality and Diversity/Health Inequalities/Consultation/Public Engagement

Equality and Diversity

There are no equality impacts, the Action Plan does not favour or disadvantage any particular groups.

Ward

All wards are covered by the policy

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

In August 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency. The Climate Change Action Plan 2020 – 2023 in **Appendix A** includes the wording of the declaration and provides a background to the subject of climate change and why action is necessary.

Since the making of the declaration, at the request of the Leader of the Council a Climate Change Working Group was set up including representation from all political groups. The Working Group has been chaired throughout this time by Councillor Alan Coley. This group has met on several occasions and discussed many topics including tree planting, plastic pollution, house building and the Council's carbon emissions data. Most recently the group met to discuss and agree the Climate Change Action Plan for recommendation to Cabinet.

The group has worked well and identified the benefit of appointing consultants to assist the Council in data collection, calculation of carbon emissions and provision of advice to Members and officers on how to work towards the 2030 target. APSE Energy were the appointed consultants as confirmed by the decision of the Corporate Director (Operational Services) on 4 December 2019.

The Action Plan sets out a summary of the Council's emissions and explains what the Council is committing to. Specifically, the Council is committing to achieve net zero in respect of Scope 1 and 2 emissions, those that it has direct control over. This does not

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mean that it is ignoring Scope 3 emissions. These will be measured and reported on where data is available and actions taken to ensure contracts are awarded having considered the ability of the supplier to reduce emissions as far as possible. The Council has a strong influencing role here.

The Action Plan covers a three year period, in essence breaking down the period to 2030 into smaller timeframes and ensuring that the Action Plan is reviewed and updated at least twice in the period to 2030. This will help to maintain focus and allow for realignment based on progress. Annual progress reporting will be implemented and will allow for earlier review of the action plan in the three year cycle if necessary.

The format of the action plan sets out key deliverables and milestones rather than a detailed, costed plan at this stage. This will be developed as part of exploring the business cases for the separate actions identified, which will in turn form part of separate decisions on whether to proceed. The Action Plan does however set out estimated costings for key actions and possible savings and reductions in emissions that could be achieved as a result.

FURTHER HEADINGS RELEVANT TO THE REPORT

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Climate Change Action Plan 2020 - 2023