

Update on Climate Emergency Action Plan

Report of the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development (Portfolio: Climate Emergency and Countryside)

Recommended:

That the progress update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan be noted and endorsed.

SUMMARY:

- An update on the delivery of the actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan is provided. This follows on from the previous report to the Committee in October 2021.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the implementation of the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP).

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council declared a climate emergency on 4 September 2019 and committed to '*investigating clear and effective options to become a carbon-neutral organisation*'. The Council approved a Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) in June 2020.
- 2.2 The CEAP sets out that this Committee will be the forum for formally monitoring progress, with reports presented at six-monthly intervals. The last report was presented in October 2021.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 The Corporate Action Plan 2019-2023: Year 3, contains 'progressing actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan'. Key areas of work include reducing the Council's emissions as we work towards becoming a carbon neutral organisation; and through service delivery and partnership work to support carbon reduction across the Borough.

4 Climate Emergency Action Plan

- 4.1 Annex 1 to this report provides an action by action update on the CEAP. This has been collated through bringing together information from across the Council's Services, reflecting the way we have been embedding climate change across the organisation. It brings together key points from previous updates alongside the latest information. This report focuses on the key changes since the last report to this Committee, in October 2021, and changes that are anticipated in the coming months.
- 4.2 For reference, in October 2021 we advised the Committee that the deliverables anticipated to be progressed in the next six-months included:
- supporting the retrofitting of homes as part of the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) 2 scheme;
 - planting around 10,000 trees during the 2021/22 planting season; and
 - continuing to work with partners to work towards reducing emissions across the Borough.
- 4.3 Progress has been made on all of these items, as set out in this report and the associated annex.
- 4.4 This report does not provide an update on the organisation's greenhouse gas emissions. This is reported on an annual basis, with the data for 2020/21 having been provided to the Committee in October 2021¹.

Property and Energy

- 4.5 It has previously been reported that measures were installed to reduce the electricity use at the Chantry Centre Car Park through upgrading the lighting to energy efficient LED units with movement sensors. Early analysis of data on electricity use indicates this has reduced by approximately 30%.

Local Plan

- 4.6 Consultation commenced on the Local Plan 2040, Regulation 18 Stage 1 document in February 2022. This relates to a number of themes in the CEAP including actions under housing, development & infrastructure, transport and natural environment. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are identified as a strategic priority through the objectives, which feed through to the strategic policies. There is a proposed strategic policy on Countering Climate Change. Transport is also identified as a strategic priority through the Local Plan objectives which will feed through to the strategic policies in due course. More detailed policies will be developed in relation to climate change and transport at the next stage of the Local Plan (Regulation 18 Stage 2).

¹ This information is also available on the Council's website at:
<https://testvalley.gov.uk/assets/attach/15596/Test-Valley-Borough-Council-Annual-GHG-report-202021.pdf>

Smarter Working and the Use of Technology

- 4.7 Due to the coronavirus pandemic, staff have been continuing to work from home where possible; meeting virtually is minimising business travel. For smaller meetings, Bluetooth speakers have been rolled out to all Services which can be used in conjunction with laptops or tablets to run hybrid meetings.
- 4.8 A new email marketing tool (GovDelivery) was launched at the end of November 2021, which allows the public to sign up for email updates on particular topics. We have approximately 6,000 sign ups, split between latest news and events. The intention is to expand the number of topics, one of which will cover the climate emergency, as well as information on how residents can reduce their carbon footprint.

Housing, Development & Infrastructure

- 4.9 The Council is continuing to deliver the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) 2 project, which has a new managing agent, Warmworks. This fund is for households in fuel poverty and in properties with EPC rating of E or lower. The managing agent is responsible for sourcing the data and identifying eligible properties, and the Council is supporting that work by promoting the scheme to local residents and stakeholders. All work identified under the LAD2 project must be completed by the end of June 2022. The Council was successful with its Sustainable Warmth bid (LAD3 and Home Upgrade) and anticipate that this will take over when the LAD2 funding expires.
- 4.10 There are obligations on landlords to comply with minimum energy efficiency standards, which the Council has a role in enforcing. The Council received grant funding for this project, to develop processes, templates and encourage compliance, and will be delivering this by the end of March 2022 with a view to making contact with relevant landlords from April 2022 onwards.

Supporting Communities & Businesses

- 4.11 The Council, as a stakeholder of Andover Vision, is working with partners to develop Andover's Climate Day of Action for 2022.
- 4.12 The Council is taking part in LoCASE². This scheme supports businesses and community groups to reduce their carbon footprint, through a combination of support and grants (up to 40% grants). At the time of writing, 12 applications from SMEs in Test Valley have been submitted, with one approved. Work is ongoing to promote this programme to local businesses.
- 4.13 The Council delivered an online event for businesses interested in cutting carbon in partnership with the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership and Greentech South. This was attended by approximately 25 local businesses and provided them with an overview of the type of funding and support that is available to them to help them reduce their carbon emissions.

² See: <https://locase.co.uk/>

- 4.14 The Council ran a virtual thermal imaging workshop in October 2021 for local residents, community groups and parish & town councils. The workshop provided attendees with information on how to use the camera to be able to survey their properties to identify heat loss. Feedback from the course was very positive. The thermal imaging guide videos are available on the Council's website³.

Natural Environment

- 4.15 Last year's urban meadows areas have been reviewed and the majority will continue. Some small sites have been removed as they are not practical or caused significant complaint. Changes will come into effect from April 2022. Further work has been completed to look to increase the area of urban meadow during the 2022 mowing season.
- 4.16 12 hectares of restoration of species rich grassland will be completed on land purchased south of Bury Hill. This will take the area out of agricultural production and add a significant area of new meadow. An additional 2 hectares of new woodland will also be planted at land south of Bury Hill. This planting is planned for winter 2022/23.
- 4.17 The planting of 10,000 trees over the 2021/22 planting season is underway and is due to be completed by the end of March 2022.

Other Updates

- 4.18 The Council has commissioned an external organisation to review and advise on the scope of the Council's annual greenhouse gas emissions report to ensure that our approach to reporting our emissions is robust. The consultant will also provide recommendations through a corporate decarbonisation plan which will inform and identify actions to deliver on the Council's climate emergency declaration. This is an evidence based assessment which will guide the Council's approach and future direction. It will also provide insight into understanding indicative costs of the actions, potential prioritisation and phasing of projects. As part of this, energy audits are being undertaken on ten Council owned sites, the outcomes of which will feed into the recommendations.
- 4.19 A CEAP briefing session was held for all Councillors in December. This included presentations on the Council's work with businesses; funding for energy efficiency measures for private sector homes; and the conclusion of the OSCOM panel review.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 An update has been provided on the actions within the CEAP. The Committee is asked to note and endorse the progress update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

³ Available: <https://testvalley.gov.uk/housingandenvironmentalhealth/housing/private-sector-housing/energyefficiency/would-you-like-to-reduce-your-heating-bills-this-winter>

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

[Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (June 2020)

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:	1		
Author:	Karen Eastley	Ext:	8258
File Ref:	N/A		
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date:	7 April 2022