

Update on Climate Emergency Action Plan

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

Recommended:

That the update and progress on the implementation of the Climate Emergency Action Plan is noted.

SUMMARY:

- An update on the delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan is provided. This follows on from the previous report to the Committee in April 2023.

1 Introduction

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

2 Background

- 2.1 The adopted CEAP sets out that this committee will be the forum for monitoring progress through biannual reports. The previous report was presented in April 2023.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan for the period 2023-27 (A Place for Everyone – Supporting our communities to thrive) was approved by Council in April 2023. The Corporate Plan is one of the key documents that forms the Council's policy framework, setting out key priorities and can be used in conjunction with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Local Plan as part of the overarching strategic plans for the Council.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan is underpinned by the Corporate Action Plan (CAP) which runs for the lifetime of the Corporate Plan. The CAP details the key projects that will be delivered in pursuit of the strategic priorities of the Council. Given that the CAP is a four-year programme and reflects the major projects that the Council is delivering, it is expected that most projects that feature on the CAP will do so for multiple years given their scale and scope.
- 3.3 At Cabinet on 23 August 2023, a CAP for year one of the Corporate Plan was approved. This identified several projects under the topic of 'Delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan', including the production of an updated Climate Emergency Action Plan.

4 Climate Emergency Action Plan update

- 4.1 Information has been brought together to update on the latest position in relation to all of the actions, from across the council's services, as identified within the CEAP. This is provided in Annex 1 to the report and reflects the way we have been embedding climate change actions across the organisation. This report refers to the key projects and changes since the last report to the committee.
- 4.2 The greenhouse gas emissions from the Council's fleet fuel use is a significant component of the reported figures for the organisation. The Council introduced HVO fuel on 26 April and have been using this across all our fleet and plant. This is anticipated to reduce the associated 'scope 1' carbon emissions by about 95% - this will come through in the emissions reporting for 2023/24. We are awaiting delivery of five electric vans (two of which are replacement electric vehicles).
- 4.3 Earlier this year, the Council was awarded £97,220 by the Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) to be supported by just over £18,000 of match funding from the regeneration reserve. The original application for funding was in relation to the completion of a technical and economic feasibility study for a heat network in Andover town centre – this accounts for about £70k. We were awarded an additional £35k for a wider heat network zoning study, which looks to identify potential strategic heat network zones across the borough. We additionally have about £10k for specialist project management support (equating to about 1 day a week). The specifications to procure the project management support and a separate technical consultant to undertake both studies are being completed for procurement following advice from HNDU.
- 4.4 Progress continues to be made with regards to the suite of works to be undertaken as part of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme at Bourne House. Delivery of the scheme is scheduled to be completed by April 2024.
- 4.5 As part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the Council has tendered for a Test Valley Rural Net Zero Business Service. This will support rural businesses (both those in a linked industry and located within the rural area) to decarbonise and become more sustainable. There are three elements to the support:
1. Test Valley Rural Net Zero Business Advice Service to a minimum of 40 business. This could include one to one advice, peer to peer or a Low Carbon Accelerator. This aim of this service it to assist businesses on their net zero journey. These businesses may all be at different stages of their journey and so the successful tenderer will have to be able to provide specific advice to each business.
 2. Deliver a small grants programme to a minimum of 24 businesses.
 3. Deliver a pilot demonstrator / support programme focussing on land management and regenerative farming.
- 4.6 In June 2023, we launched the Test Valley community energy project (one of the UKSPF initiatives) through holding an event at Stockbridge Town Hall in June 2023. This featured presentations from the Council, Community Energy South and Dragonfly Power. The event was fully booked. Community Energy South is continuing to engage with communities in the borough.

- 4.7 The Community Asset Fund awards during 2022/23 included a number of schemes that have the potential to support community groups in reducing their energy consumption, including the below items from round 4:
- Romsey District Scouts: Awarded £25k towards the cost of LED lighting (internal) and installing solar PV panels on the roof of the Dr Peter Drake Centre;
 - Michelmersh & Timsbury Jubilee Hall Committee: Awarded just over £5k towards the cost of installing more energy efficient windows at the Jubilee Village Hall; and
 - Little Fingers Pre School: Awarded just over £10k towards the cost of a new fully insulated roof on the pre-school building.
- 4.8 We are now in the third year of the urban meadows initiative, with a larger area being managed this way (up to about 27 hectares). This will be reviewed in the autumn / winter. Planning is also underway for tree planting over the winter, for the third and final year to implement the target of 30,000 trees being planted over three years. We have also submitted an application to access government funding for tree planting. Any future planting would be dependent on additional land being identified to enable this.
- 4.9 A new topic for the GovDelivery e-newsletters was launched called 'Green Test Valley'. At present, the subscriptions are being built up, with notifications about the option to subscribe have been shared via the members' bulletin, social media and items in the existing e-newsletters. This is an opportunity to share updates on things going on in the borough on climate change, nature and wider environmental initiatives, as well as cover our own projects.
- 4.10 There are a number of schemes underway or to be led by Hampshire County Council (HCC) that are of relevance / interest to our climate emergency action. HCC is being given capital and capability funding through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding to support the roll out of EV infrastructure for residents without off-street parking across the county. HCC will be working with officers at each lower tier authority to discuss locations for rolling out such infrastructure. It is understood that the capital funding would be available in 2024/25. HCC are also writing its Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. TVBC officers are also engaging with HCC on the preparation of a Local Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Plan for the north of the borough.
- 4.11 A further (third) round of Solar Together Hampshire (group-buying of solar panels) was launched at the end of August. The Council's role is one of promotion to residents and other relevant stakeholders. Through round 1, there were 59 solar PV arrays installed in the borough and just over 40 batteries installed. The final installations associated with round 2 of the scheme are being completed – thus round has resulted in solar PV arrays being installed at approximately 140 properties and about 130 batteries installed. For both rounds, the battery include a combination of retrofit storage (i.e. installed for use alongside existing solar PV arrays) and in conjunction with solar panels as part of this scheme.

5 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emissions for Test Valley Borough Council

- 5.1 The CEAP (2020) sets out the approach that was taken to calculating the council’s greenhouse gas emissions. This concentrates on energy (electricity and gas) used in the majority of buildings we own and operate, as well as the fuel used in running the fleet vehicles and smaller machinery and plant. The CEAP provided the base line position as at 2018/19 using the measure of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e)¹.
- 5.2 At this stage, not all data is available to advise on the greenhouse gas emissions for 2022/23 (or whether the figures are likely to have gone up or down). Should the data be available a verbal update will be provided.

Emissions for Borough of Test Valley

- 5.3 There are a number of sources of information reporting on area based emissions. These capture different emission sources and are updated at differing intervals. The CEAP referred to the data published by the government for carbon dioxide emissions for local authority areas, reflecting that this source is readily available and published every year (based on calendar years). Additionally, this source is consistent with the UK total emissions figure that is used for wider reporting.
- 5.4 Since the publication of the CEAP, the government has updated this dataset to cover carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide - the most recent data is for 2021². Figures for previous years have also been updated by the government as part of this release³.
- 5.5 The below table summarises the total and per person emissions for the borough of Test Valley, with more detail within Annex 2. An increase in the 2021 emissions was to be expected based on national data that was released in advance. The 2020 figures were significantly affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Between 2020 and 2021, the largest percentage increase in emissions by sector are for waste management (+22%), industry (+10%) and commercial (+10%).

Table 1: Emissions for the Borough of Test Valley (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023)

Year	Total emissions estimate (kilo tonnes of CO ₂ e)	Per person emissions (tonnes CO ₂ e)
2017	967.8	7.7
2018	972.1	7.6
2019	920.7	7.2
2020	802.8	6.2
2021	858.8	6.5

¹ This is the unit of measurement advocated for use by the government to report on greenhouse gas emissions. It looks beyond carbon dioxide, for example covering methane and nitrous oxide. It records the global warming potential of each greenhouse gas, expressed in terms of the global warming potential of one unit of carbon dioxide.

² Latest release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2021>

³ Data for all years is reviewed each year to account for methodological improvements, so previous data in previous releases are superseded.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 An update has been provided on the implementation of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020) following on from the most recent report in April 2023.
- 6.2 The committee is asked to note the content of this update.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u> TVBC Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020)			
<u>Confidentiality</u> 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:	2		
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