

<b>Council Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 October 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for Environment
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Head of Service</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. That Council notes the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 In June 2019 the council declared a climate change and ecological emergency and committed to producing an action plan to make our own operation carbon neutral by 2025 and the borough by 2030.
- 1.2 In April 2020 Cabinet adopted the Action Plan
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the Council's response to the declaration of a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency, the action plan sets out the activities required to adapt and mitigate against climate change. Appended to this report is the action plan.
- 1.4 Council is asked to note the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 At the Council meeting on 26 June Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency. This declaration included commitments to:
  - Draw up an action plan with improvement in energy efficiency and making space for nature as key priorities in all strategies and plans.
  - Provide leadership by taking all measures within our control to make Swale Borough Council's own operations carbon neutral by 2025, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3)
  - Engage with businesses, organisations and residents to facilitate the action required to make the Borough of Swale carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3).
  - Undertake actions including, but not be limited to, spatial and transport planning to make fewer journeys necessary, improvement to the energy

efficiency of new and existing housing and buildings, improved public transport especially in rural areas; encouraging active transport, developing the infrastructure for EVs; deploying renewable energy at every opportunity, while continuing to safeguard our wild places, ancient woodlands and hedgerows.

- Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.

2.2 Given these ambitious targets a key part of the agreed motion was to “report the actions the Council will take to address this emergency to Full Council”. These actions were taken to Cabinet in April to be agreed in order to continue with the momentum and progress actions.

### **3 Proposals**

3.1 Following the declaration, an internal steering group was formed in order to determine and monitor the progress of work. This group have identified a number of areas of work. The action plan has captured these areas and grouped them into the following workstreams:

- Council Estate
- Buildings and property
- Transport and air quality
- Resource consumption and waste
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Energy generation and storage
- Resilience, adaptation and offsetting

3.2 Each workstream area has been split into areas that we, as a council, can have a direct impact on, for example on our own estate or fleet and those where we need to work with partners in order to deliver the actions, such as Kent Highways, schools and local community groups.

3.3 The action plan, by necessity focuses on the actions to be carried out, rather than the outcomes. The workstreams identified above include all of the desired outcomes that were set out in the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Declaration. For example, air quality will be improved by the actions that come under the transport category.

3.4 In order to make sure we covered all possible areas of work we asked a consultant to come forward with a range of proposals for actions. This set of actions went to Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) on 4 March 2020. Following the feedback from PDRC the set of actions was rationalised and the scope and context within which the action plan sits was refined.

3.5 The action plan was shared with the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency working group for their input and feedback. This action plan can be found at

## Appendix I.

- 3.6 The action plan will be an evolving document and will be updated regularly in order to consider new technology, information and targets. As further iterations are developed residents and businesses will be engaged in order to refine and inform the actions to be included.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 We could do nothing but this would negate clear intentions and objectives in both the climate change and ecological emergency declaration as well as the council's emerging Corporate Plan. Doing nothing would lead to maintaining existing emissions in both the council's own operations and the borough which would have a negative impact on climate change.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 The action plan was developed with a number of services and teams across the council. It is envisaged that the initial action plan be reviewed on a regular basis and this review include input from residents and businesses.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The action plan supports the priority in the emerging corporate plan around developing a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies.
Financial, Resource and Property	Some of the actions will become projects and will necessarily have financial, resource or property implications. These will be considered on a case by case basis before each project commences.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this time
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this time
Environment and Sustainability	In addressing the Council Climate and Ecological Emergency, the actions proposed in this report are intended to deliver a carbon neutral Council and wider area.
Health and Wellbeing	Climate change will result in heatwaves, extreme weather events, floods, disease and increased cancer risk. The measures to reduce it will limit the dangers and those activities can also have direct positive health effects (e.g. increased fitness from cycling and better air quality from reducing car journeys)
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this time
Equality and Diversity	There are no negative impacts identified on the protected characteristics groups of the Equalities Act 2010 from the recommendations in this report. However, an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken, as necessary, for individual projects in the Action Plan before commencement to ensure this
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this time

## 7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

## 8 Background Papers

- 8.1 [Minutes from Council meeting 24 June 2019](#)

## 8.2 Minutes from Cabinet 22 April 2020