



COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 28 JULY 2020
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 10
Subject	UPDATE ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning Tel: 01285 623000 Email: rachel.coxcoon@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Locke, Group Manager - Commissioning Tel: 01285 623427 Email: claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Committee with an update on the Council's progress against its Climate Emergency declaration.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That Committee note the contents of the report.
Corporate priorities	Respond to the challenges presented by the Climate Change Emergency
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	List any consultees or consultation that has taken place.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. In July 2019 the Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' with commitments that included:

- Making its own activities net-zero carbon as soon as possible, aiming for an 80% reduction against a 1990 baseline by 2030, and a 100% reduction by 2045, with no reliance on offsetting or the trading of carbon credits.
- Achieving clean energy use across the Council's full range of functions as soon as possible, and not later than 2030.
- Instructing Officers to produce a strategy and delivery plan within 12 months, aligned with the above targets, together with budgeted actions and a measured baseline, to be submitted to Cabinet fully detailing the financial, resource and other implications arising from the Motion.

1.2. Unfortunately the Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted on the delivery of some actions, most notably the Council's ability to commission some key consultancy support and public consultation both of which will inform the Strategy. Despite this work is progressing.

2. MAIN POINTS - PROGRESS

2.1 Work undertaken to-date:

- Following Cabinet Agreement in September 2019, a Head of Climate Action was recruited, commencing the role on 3rd February 2020.
- A review of existing data on the carbon impact of Council activities has been completed, a new template adopted for annual emissions reporting, and a 2019-20 corporate emissions estimate has been completed (to be issued shortly).
- Electric vehicle charging points have been installed in the new Permit Holder Whiteway car park at the Rugby Club, Cirencester (due to open Summer 2020).
- Hybrid fitters vans have been procured for Ubico to trial the use of electric operational fleet (charging point installation at the Depot has been delayed by the Pandemic - awaiting quotes from Utility Company).
- The Waterloo car park design and specification have been remodelled to develop Carbon zero proposals utilising green technologies and materials.
- Research has been undertaken on the true cost of developing net zero housing to inform the Council's housing delivery plans and specifically the business case for the Kemble development.
- An Energy efficiency report has been obtained for Trinity Road.

- Development of a draft Climate Emergency Strategy has been undertaken and will be presented at the September Cabinet meeting.
- Opportunities for investment in solar energy has been explored.
- Initial contact has been made with citizen environment groups and other stakeholders to enable future exploration of citizen-led renewable energy initiatives both on our own limited estate, and more strategically in the district to provide for our needs. This will also enable the establishment of the Cotswold Climate Panel that was a commitment in the climate emergency declaration.

2.2. Work underway:

- Procurement of a 'Renewable energy strategy and opportunities' study to inform the Local Plan, Climate change leadership role and investment strategy has commenced, with appointment of consultants anticipated in August and report to be complete by November to feed into the Local Plan evidence base and planned community consultation on renewable energy.
- A corporate Agile working project to explore opportunities for increased home working to reduce travel, requirement for office space and utility usage.
- Linked to the Agile working project, work to review building energy usage and possible alternative systems.
- Covid -19 Recovery - the Environment and Climate change is a key theme. The Council is working with County partners to explore opportunities to learn from and retain the environmental benefits that resulted during lockdown. The Environment and Climate Action Group working on Covid-19 Recovery has produced a draft evidence report quantifying environmental impacts of Lockdown, and will now work on an actions report.
- Consideration of suitable Council owned sites for Solar PV - a business case is now being prepared to come forward to Council.
- The legal position is being established on procuring locally-sourced renewable power for direct use in CDC's operations.
- A Parish and Town Council climate action planning web conference is being planned for September / October
- A public consultation on climate concerns and ideas is in development.
- Options for staff training including online courses are being reviewed to identify suitable resources to increase awareness and capabilities, help embed a culture of climate change awareness and increase carbon literacy.
- Exploring options for bulk community based solar PV purchase, drawing on best practice elsewhere.

- Town centre recovery work focussing on expanding pedestrian areas to enable social distancing. This provides the opportunity to trial changes which would provide environmental and visual improvements to town centres by reducing traffic.
- Development of strategy for Electric Vehicle Charging Point infrastructure on our own estate.
- Inputting to climate strategy work by significant local stakeholders.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1.** In September 2019 Council agreed to allocate funding of £105,000 for two studies to aid progress with the Climate Emergency work. The Renewable technology study was initially progressed but then paused to ensure the outcomes would provide the right level of evidence to inform the Greening of the Local Plan. Commissioning was then delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic as many potential suppliers had furloughed staff, but is due to restart shortly.
- 3.2.** Commissioning of the study on the Council's baseline position and opportunities to reduce carbon and identify investment opportunities was delayed until the Head of Climate Action was appointed and could review what data was held and what was needed to avoid the Council commissioning unnecessary work or paying consultants for work that could be carried out in-house. It is likely that the Council will commission consultancy support in the coming months to obtain data it does not hold but which will be needed to inform the Strategy, particularly in respect of adopting a realistic target for emissions reduction across the district as a whole.
- 3.3.** There are a number of projects which are likely to come forward as developed business cases requiring investment such as the installation of Solar PV. These will be subject to the normal constitutional decision making at either Cabinet or Council depending on the value of the investment.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1.** None associated with this report.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1.** None associated with this report.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1** Not relevant.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Set out in the main body of the report.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

8.1. West Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate Emergency and instructed that a member led board be established to drive this work forward. A cross party member board was therefore set up and continues to meet monthly to oversee progress with Climate Emergency Actions.

8.2. The Council could decide to establish a Board, if it felt sufficient progress was not being made and further oversight of actions was required. Boards of this nature tend to operate well where staff and members representing a number of different council services need to jointly deliver against a project. There is already very good buy-in from Officers and members on climate change with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning involved in discussions on key strategic projects such as the Waterloo car park development and Kemble Housing development. There is therefore no identified need for a Board at this time. .

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

Climate Emergency Motion to Council dated July 2019 and associated minutes

9.2. These documents are available on the Councils website.

(END)