



COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL - 23 SEPTEMBER 2020
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 8
Subject	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY 2020-2030
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr. Rachel Coxcoon - Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, Climate Change and Energy Email: Rachel.coxcoon@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Christopher Crookall-Fallon (Head of Climate Action) Tel: 01285 623250 Email: chris.crookall-fallon@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report sets out: a) A description of the purpose and main points of the accompanying Climate Emergency Strategy. b) A description of the purpose and main points of the accompanying high level three year indicative programme plan for climate actions. c) A description of the proposed governance arrangements for overseeing the strategy and the actions which fall out of it. d) Observations on how the strategy, once adopted, may be best put in the public domain.
Annexes	Annex A - Cotswold District Council Climate Emergency Strategy – 2020-2030 Annex B - Indicative high level three year programme for climate actions.
Recommendation/s	<i>Cabinet recommendation: That Council approves the Strategy and Programme Plan.</i>
Corporate priorities	Responding to the challenges presented by the climate emergency
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO

Consultees/ Consultation	Consultation has been carried out by the Head of Climate Change with the portfolio holder, key Officers and colleagues within Cotswold District Council, with district stakeholders with climate emergency concerns, and with delivery partners and with Officers from neighbouring District Councils. This consultation process has informed the Climate Emergency Strategy provided in Annex A and the high level three year programme in Annex B.
-----------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The purpose of this high level strategy is to:
 - a. justify why the climate emergency is a high council priority;
 - b. formalise a high level of ambition in taking action on climate, commensurate with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in July 2019;
 - c. set out the high level principles that underpin the development and execution of the strategy;
 - d. identify the scale and sources of emissions from the district and from council operations;
 - e. identify the points of greatest leverage in bringing about carbon reductions in the district; and
 - f. set direction and identify priority action areas.
- 1.2. The timeframe of this strategy is 2020-2030, reflecting the importance of the crucial 'Decade to Make a Difference' – the ten years in which the world must see annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions stop rising, plateau, and start falling steeply, if we are to have a chance of limiting global climate breakdown.
- 1.3. Climate science, technology innovation, public understanding, sentiment and behaviour changes, the international and national policy environment for climate action, and the scientific evidence on greenhouse gas emissions and climate impacts, are all changing fast. For this reason it is likely to be necessary for this strategy to be thoroughly reviewed during the ten year period, at least at the mid point in 2025, if not sooner.
- 1.4. At the review point we must expect the evidence of climate crisis to be starker than it is today. It is very likely that climate scientists will confirm that it will be practically impossible for global heating to be contained below at least 2 degrees Celsius, and probably very significantly higher. This will have implications for the climate adaptation actions that need to be taken in the Cotswold District, and may spur the adoption of even more ambitious carbon reduction targets than are suggested in this strategy.
- 1.5. Reflecting the speed of change in climate priorities, the strategy does not attempt to identify specific actions to be delivered over a ten year period, but is a high level direction finder which identifies broad priority areas for action.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. **This strategy sets out high level principles, imperatives, targets and action areas for responding to the climate emergency** (both as a Council and more widely for the district as a whole) for the ten year period 2020-2030, consistent with the Council's unanimous declaration of a climate emergency in July 2019.
- 2.2. **The climate crisis, and the related ecology crisis, present a profound threat** to the prospects and livelihoods of all Cotswold district residents, but particularly our young people, and future generations beyond them. There is an urgent imperative to act.

- 2.3. **The Covid-19 crisis has shown that people pull together in an emergency, and that change can happen very fast** when it has to. We have a chance to make permanent changes for the better, as we recover from the virus.
- 2.4. **Cotswold District as a whole emitted 605,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases (CO₂e) in 2018**, equivalent to the emissions from burning about one and a half Cirencester leisure centre-sized pools of diesel every day. A bit less than half is from road travel (diesel and petrol), a third is from gas and other fuels for heating homes and workplaces, and 15% is from electricity for homes and workplaces. Some carbon is also sequestered (stored) in grasslands and woodland.
- 2.5. **The Council's own corporate emissions for 2019-20 were 2,746 tonnes CO₂e, or 0.4% of the district** as a whole. Half is from diesel used by the waste fleet, a quarter is from gas for heating council buildings and leisure centres, and a quarter is from electricity.
- 2.6. **We propose to develop an emissions reduction target and pathway for the whole District.** This will be extremely challenging, and outside the direct control or resources of the Council. The Council will use the target to focus discussions with key stakeholders to increase commitment and seek joined-up solutions.
- 2.7. **The Council's target for its own net emissions is to reduce by two thirds from the current level by 2030, and to zero by 2045**, with no reliance on offsetting. This is a challenging target, and how the Council organises itself post Covid-19 will affect progress towards it.
- 2.8. **The organising principles of this strategy** include being bold; providing leadership; being evidence based; looking for the biggest effects and co-benefits; linking mitigation with adaptation and linking the climate and ecological emergencies; working in partnership; encouraging citizen leadership; and leveraging external help and internal strengths.
- 2.9. **The Council has to work within the constraints of its levers of influence.** The Council has a high level of control over some actions that will have only a small emissions impact (relative to the district as a whole), but only a low level of control over other actions that could have a much larger impact. Our leadership role is therefore crucial, in using our own commitments and actions to help others to realise the impact they can have.
- 2.10. **Priority action areas are broken down by scope of Council leverage.** Action areas are divided into **direct control** (eg council's own operations), **indirect control** (eg commissioning), **place shaping** (eg Local Plan policies), **enabling** (eg proactively helping others to take action) and **engaging** (eg communicating and consulting)

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. Some finance is still available from the provisions set aside when the climate change emergency declaration was made, and it is expected that priority actions emerging from this strategy will be able to draw on that original allocation.
- 3.2. Since this strategy sets out high level principles, imperatives, targets and action areas, it is not possible to provide cost implications to the Council on the detailed measures that will in due course fall out of the strategy.

- 3.3. Several of the action areas identified in the strategy are nonetheless already incorporated and outline costed within the corporate plan being submitted to the September Council.
- 3.4. The general proposed action on the climate emergency is wide reaching and incorporates everything that the Council currently does, plus much which it doesn't yet do. For interventions aimed at meeting the Council's own target for emissions reduction, some may comprise making changes to the way the Council works and carry little or no cost. Some interventions are already happening, such as Publica's agile working strategy. However, the Strategy is clear that the scale and urgency of the climate crisis requires everyone, including the Council, to undergo a paradigm shift in thinking about taking decisions and investing to achieve a liveable climate, which will inevitably conflict with established ways of thinking about cost-benefit calculations and value for money.
- 3.5. The Strategy has some specific medium-term financial implications:
- it makes a commitment to conduct research to determine a district-wide science-based emissions reduction target based on the level of reduction necessary to contribute fully to meeting the Paris Climate Accord.
 - it seeks to reduce the Council's own greenhouse gas emissions. This, for example, includes the fuel that waste collection vehicles use, insulating Council buildings and reducing the energy consumed for heating Council buildings. There will be some (currently unknown) short-term costs in making this transition but also opportunities for (also currently unknown) cost savings in the medium- to long-term from taking this action.
- 3.6. Any further investment required, in addition to current budgetary provision, will be subject to Council's usual decision making processes and will require business cases to be produced for formal consideration.

4. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY

- 4.1. Delivery of this strategy will initially be overseen by the Council's portfolio holder and the existing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However one action identified in the strategy and in the Declaration of a Climate Emergency is the creation of a citizen climate panel, which reflects the strategy's goal of engaging with Cotswold District residents and enabling citizen leadership on the climate emergency. Whilst the form of the citizen panel is yet to be defined, it may, aside from general consultation and ideas generation, be able to provide some ongoing oversight of the delivery and review of this strategy in parallel with the responsibility of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.2. The indicative, high-level three year programme plan in Annex B is not intended to be read as an action plan. Its intention is to complement the main strategy document to illustrate in broad terms which categories of activity are likely to be brought forward earlier or later within a three year forward view.
- 4.3. Individual action plans and projects linked to this strategy will be developed and brought forward to the Council (as required) through the Council's normal channels.

- 4.4. For non-investment actions we envisage identifying resources, intended outcomes and success indicators, and approving and allocating resources as required. The progress of such climate actions will be overseen by the portfolio holder and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the normal way.
- 4.5. For investment actions aimed at delivering a climate benefit, the Council's normal higher level of scrutiny would apply in line with the scale of the investment, and may include a suitably detailed feasibility study, outline business case, detailed business case, risk management plan, delivery plan, and bespoke oversight as required. It seems likely that any such 'climate' investment proposals that come forward are likely to be conceived as part of, be managed through, and subject to the controls of, the Council's emerging Recovery Investment Strategy.
- 4.6. More detailed climate action plans will be developed and brought to Council in due course. They will take the form of live, rolling three year plans broken down by month and costed. They will be brought forward for approval, kept under constant review, progress reported to the Council at a frequency to be agreed, and revised and updated annually.
- 4.7. The first three year plan will be based on the priority action areas identified in the Strategy being adopted here. Subsequent updates and developments to the rolling plan will still take their direction from the strategy but will also reflect new opportunities, risks, funding streams, ideas and partnerships that emerge.

5. PLACING THE STRATEGY IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

- 5.1. Part of the purpose of the strategy is to be a communication tool, contributing to what should be an ongoing meaningful engagement with Cotswold District residents on the meaning of the climate crisis and actions that all stakeholders can take.
- 5.2. For this reason it is proposed that the strategy, once adopted, is not immediately published in the form attached here (other than through the usual channel of putting Council papers on the public record). It is proposed that a more visually appealing, better produced version be prepared (with no change to the approved content) for electronic distribution, enabling easier integration of the strategy into climate communication channels.
- 5.3. Furthermore, considering the importance of wide public engagement in this issue, and also acknowledging the length the document, it is proposed that a succinct infographic is developed which captures the key data and issues contained in the strategy, is published alongside the main strategy document, and is used in public communications and engagement on the climate topic.
- 5.4. Considering the importance of engaging all residents in the District in this crucial topic, regardless of political or any other affiliation, it is further proposed that Councillors may wish to consider that the carefully produced version of the strategy, perhaps through the foreword to the strategy, be endorsed by the leaders of each political grouping and jointly signed by them.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. The Strategy, at section 5.3, identifies and discusses four significant high level potential near- and medium-term risks to the delivery of this strategy, these are:

- Planning Reform White Paper,
- Economic recession,
- Covid-19 and
- Unitarisation

- 7.2. The strategy's guiding principles make clear that the Council will need to be bold and ambitious, and to accept and manage risks. It further explains that responding to the climate emergency requires the Council to take, and learn to manage, a level of economic and political risk in taking actions, and helping others to take actions, which are commensurate with the scale of the emergency. Strong leadership and effective partnership working are prerequisites.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT (IF REQUIRED)

- 8.1. The impacts of implementing Climate Action for Cotswold District will have an equal impact on all services, customers and staff as there is a shared benefit to the objectives of this report.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS (IF REQUIRED)

- 9.1. To avoid repetition, please see the Summary and Main points sections of this Cabinet Report for further detail.
- 9.2. The Strategy also identifies ecological emergency implications, principally that climate emergency and the ecological emergency are intrinsically linked. Many of the measures set out in Annex 1 to address climate change issues will therefore also help to address ecological emergency issues.

10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 10.1. No alternative strategies for delivering Climate Action for Cotswold District are being considered. However, the Strategy provides a range of initiatives that will collectively help Cotswold District Council to deliver on its climate change emergency targets.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. 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:

- Declaration of a Climate Emergency Declaration at Council 3 July 2019¹; and
- Declaration of an Ecological Emergency at Council 15 July 2020²
- Adoption of Motion 9 of 2019/20, Carbon Neutral³, at Council 25 September 2019

11.2. These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX during normal office hours or via www.cotswold.gov.uk for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.

(END)

1

<https://www.cmis.cotswold.gov.uk/CMIS5/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=EYiTFnXeSBGN3L%2bgvd33ejv1y1FVfCA4Dym9iYQIVJc8s2spw0IOSw%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7Ik n8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWcTPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d &mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnl%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGo Bi5olA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WG ewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1 PaO=ctNJFf55vVA%3d>

2

<https://www.cmis.cotswold.gov.uk/CMIS5/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=1ilrp666gWXP4X92KRNHblaQJtLX9rYM0SdpLjeHRv%2bEPmur5v095A%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7Ik n8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWcTPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d& mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnl%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=h FflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi 5olA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WG ewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1 PaO=ctNJFf55vVA%3d>

3

<https://www.cmis.cotswold.gov.uk/CMIS5/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=p4UC7VGTXFqkcODyFtVBorSznJi9rzilmsrnmVjO1X5yYW3iFw4zoQ%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7Ik n8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWcTPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mC TIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnl%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFfl UdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5ol A%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewm oAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO =ctNJFf55vVA%3d>