

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting name & Date	EXECUTIVE 8 July 2020
Agenda item	8.1
Report title	Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy
Report reference no.	EX/20/40
Wards affected	All wards
Report author, job title & email	Dr Sarika Jain, Climate Change and Sustainability Officer Sarika.jain@hertsmere.gov.uk Ross Whear, Head of Planning and Economic Development Ross.whear@hertsmere.gov.uk
List of Appendices	Appendix 1 – Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Appendix 2 – Climate Change and Sustainability Action Plan
Reason for urgency	Not applicable

Is it a Key Decision?	No
Call-in expires on	This will be five working days after the decision is published (not made). You cannot implement the decision before this date.
Exempt from Call-in	Not applicable
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Seamus Quilty

PUBLIC REPORT - this report is available to the public.

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1. That the Executive approves the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to the report.
- 1.2. That the Executive approves the Climate Change and Sustainability Action Plan for implementation of Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 2.1. Hertsmere Borough Council declared climate emergency in September 2019. The purpose of this strategy is to:
 - a. Present the current status of emissions from Hertsmere
 - b. Define the actions and measures the Council can take to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by no later than 2050

- c. Define the actions and measures the Council can take to influence others both directly and indirectly to mitigate the negative impacts their activities have on climate change
 - d. Define the actions and measures the Council can take to offset emissions that are unavoidable
 - e. Define the actions and measures the Council can take to build climate resilience
 - f. Define the actions and measures the Council can take to further incorporate the principles of sustainability and circular economy into its operations
 - g. Define the actions and measures the Council can take to further incorporate the principles of sustainability and circular economy into its operations.
- 2.2. Review and revise the strategy and action plan annually to reflect the advancement in technology and to keep them in line with the national targets and policies.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1. At the time of declaring Climate Emergency, the Council committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions no later than 2050. This strategy and action plan will:
 - a. Enable the Council to reduce its own operational emissions leading up to net-zero emissions by 2050;
 - b. Enable the Council to offset its own operational emissions that are unavoidable;
 - c. Further the implementation of sustainability and circular economy in the operations of the Council;
 - d. Enable the Council to influence the land use and operational impact of residents, businesses and organisations to reduce and offset their own emissions;
 - e. Help build resilience against impacts of climate change on the Council;
 - f. Promote zero carbon and sustainable development of the Council; and
 - g. Improve well-being and quality of life of the residents of the Council.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1. The Council has committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions no later than 2050. A delay in acting on reducing emissions will require more radical interventions in the future at a greater cost, and larger impacts on the residents of the Council and society at large.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1. There is now clear scientific evidence that climate change is happening. The average temperature at the surface of the Earth has risen by about 1°C since pre-industrial period, temperature of the oceans is increasing, polar

ice and glaciers is melting, sea levels are rising, and more extreme weather events are being seen around the world.

- 5.2. Recent climate change is largely a result of increased levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases trapping the Sun's energy and causing the Earth to warm.
- 5.3. The increase in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is almost entirely due to human activity including burning of fossil fuels for energy, agriculture and deforestation, and manufacturing of cement, chemicals and metals.
- 5.4. If we take action to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions now, we may be able to limit the increase in temperature to 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Doing so will limit the burden we put on future generations, protect our economies and provide wider benefits to health, energy security and biodiversity.
- 5.5. The Council can implement measures and take actions that will reduce the carbon emissions from its operations and from residents and enterprises that it can influence directly or indirectly.
- 5.6. In order to achieve net-zero carbon emissions, the following principles will be imbibed in all aspects of the functioning and development of the borough: reducing consumption, minimising waste, switching to renewable forms of energy, switching to active, public and sustainable forms of transport and reducing the need to travel overall, implementing principles of circular economy, buying and consuming local produce, ensuring sustainable and zero carbon new developments with compensatory improvements to greenbelts, protecting and enhancing greenbelts, open spaces and biodiversity, and building climate change resilience.
- 5.7. These principles will be implemented through corporate and community projects, awareness campaigns and local planning as presented in Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.

6. PROGRESS SO FAR

- 6.1. Between the climate emergency declaration on the 18th September 2019 and this meeting the following progress has been made:
 - a. Climate Change and Sustainability Officer has been recruited;
 - b. An 18kwh solar photovoltaic system on the Civic Offices to generate renewable energy has been installed;
 - c. The Executive authorised officers to prepare a detailed project plan for the delivery of Phase 2 of the Meadow Park Improvements which are to include a solar photovoltaic system above car parking bays, electric charging points and the planting of 60 new trees;
 - d. The officer and member working groups have met three times. The groups are working well, approaching the matter with enthusiasm, drive and urgency;
 - e. Officers have attended the Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum;
 - f. Officers have attended the inaugural Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership meeting;
 - g. Officers and Member have jointly visited the BRE Innovation Campus; and

- h. The Council's baseline position in terms of greenhouse gas emissions has been established.

7. FINANCIAL AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The Climate Emergency resolution provided "£150,000 budget to fund climate change initiatives and the staffing resource for taking forward the climate change agenda".
- 7.2. Many of the initiatives in the climate change action plan are likely to require capital funding. In particular this will have impacts on infrastructure need and investment for long term sustainability. It is likely that a wide range of potential funding options and sources will need to be considered.
- 7.3. Community Infrastructure Levy Funding (CIL) will play an important role alongside the establishment of a carbon offsetting fund where developers, whose schemes are unable to achieve net-zero carbon emissions, will be required to fund off-site activities to reduce emissions. However, funding options will be evaluated on a project to project basis.
- 7.4. It is anticipated that work shall engage with and involve partner organisations. Where appropriate contributions, both direct and in-kind, will be requested.
- 7.5. There may be appropriate grants and loans which can be accessed as well as partnership working with local businesses. These will be subject to specific research.

8. LEGAL POWERS RELIED ON AND ANY LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The Council has the legal power to expend monies on developing plans and identifying and implementing measures intended to mitigate the impacts of the activities of the Council on climate change and to mitigate the effects and impacts of climate change on the Borough.

9. EFFICIENCY GAINS AND VALUE FOR MONEY

- 9.1. There may be efficiency gains and improvements to value for money however this will depend on the measures used. It may not be possible for some of the changes and adaptations implemented to be cost-neutral.
- 9.2. For some changes there will be revenue savings over time which can be offset against any initial outlay.
- 9.3. Where the Council will change to processes there may be non-cashable gains. For example, when going paperless the council is able to quantify the amount saved in terms of paper and printing however Officer time spent processing and posting papers represent a non-cashable gain.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council has risk management processes in place which already identify a number of strategic risks based upon their likelihood and impact. The risks relate to the services provided by the Council and how they might be impacted in certain scenarios and concentrate on tangible outcomes.

- 10.2 Ongoing work to mitigate the likelihood and impact means that the risks are reassessed on a regular basis to reflect changes in the environment and to help focus attention.
- 10.3 Climate change as a whole represents a significant risk which will influence all aspects of life. Current concerns include how changing weather conditions will increase extreme weather events including drought and flooding, impact on food and water security with the resultant knock on implications for healthcare and other support services as well as general infrastructure.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 11.2. The implementation of strategy and action plan will require staff time from all departments.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. At a local level, health implications related to climate change, such as air quality, disproportionately impact the young, elderly and disabled are at risk groups.
- 12.2. At a global level the potential impacts apply to all groups

13. CORPORATE PLAN and POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Council is legally and ethically required to create and protect a safer environment for all stakeholders.

14. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. None directly for the purposes of this report.
- 14.2. The implications for Council assets will be identified through the ongoing work.

15. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1. None directly for the purposes of this report.
- 15.2. Reductions in emissions and probable improvements in air quality and physical activity levels will have an indirect positive health and safety implication.
- 15.3. Enhancing the greenbelt and planting urban trees will improve the quality of life and well-being of the residents.
- 15.4. Building climate resilience will reduce the impacts of climate change such as droughts and floods, on the communities.

16. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT REPORT

16.1. A draft of the report was sent to the following on the following dates:

Consultee	Report sent	Comments rcvd
Managing Director	04/06/20	
Head of Asset Management & Engineering	04/06/20	
Head of Finance & Business Services	04/06/20	
Head of HR & Customer Services	04/06/20	
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	04/06/20	
Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement	04/06/20	
Head of Planning & Economic Development	04/06/20	
Head of Street Scene	04/06/20	
Management Board	18/06/20	18/06/20
Executive Briefing	26/06/20	26/06/20