

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Climate Emergency Action Plan Annual Progress Report 2022 September</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Council on 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2022
<b>WARD</b>	Non-Specific;
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

The Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) Third Progress Report outlines the progress made on the actions that were approved in July 2020 towards the target to playing as full a role as possible in achieving a net zero carbon Wokingham Borough by 2030. The setting of targets within the plan will support further action to place Wokingham at the forefront of addressing climate change, whilst improving the quality of life for all residents.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

This is being presented by officers on behalf of members and includes significant changes following member input, with the recommendation that the Council notes:

- 1) The progress made in the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) third progress report.
- 2) The updates made from previous reports to demonstrate the expected trajectory that we calculate existing projects will deliver.
- 3) That a more ambitious approach will be required going forward to enable WBC to play as full a role as possible in achieving a net-zero carbon borough by 2030.
- 4) That this remains a live document and will continue to be updated as more details become available to support decision making.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- Summarises the Borough's current carbon profile and the councils performance for the last year.
- Demonstrates the current situation around reaching net zero and how more support is needed.
- Details the benefits of becoming net zero and WBC's scope of influence towards such.
- Outlines related policies released this year which may impact the actions/trajectories.
- Presents updated summaries for each section explaining the purpose and format of the sections targets, along with outlining key achievements, upcoming actions, challenges, and overall carbon savings.
- Contains full details of actions and their associated outcomes, milestones and the latest status update for each, alongside updated anticipated costs and expected carbon savings wherever possible.
- Includes definitions and inventories as appendices to explain the information more clearly for all.
- Involves a separate methodology document to outline carbon savings calculations.

Most of the actions to be delivered over the first few years set in motion the groundwork and foundations for new strategies and policies that will influence our way of life locally over the medium and long term. The biggest gains (in terms of carbon savings) are expected to come towards the end of the decade after most of the actions have come to fruition.

Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint is 557 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e (BEIS 2019), with a remaining shortfall of 264.27 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e after all the actions in the plan are implemented. This action plan is a working document and planning tool that allows us to understand where we are heading and to implement new actions accordingly. Hence, it is expected that this plan will change significantly over time as many of the actions will develop. The updated progress report will in future iterations return to being published in July each year, enabling this continuous assessment of performance against the 2030 target.

## **Background**

Following the climate emergency declaration made in July 2019 the CEAP was adopted, identifying the key priority areas for CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions, including transport, renewable energy, retrofitting, carbon sequestration and waste among others. It also includes projections of the boroughs emissions

to 2030, based on the included actions and SCATTER BAU trajectory to outline the scale of the challenge. It recognises that at this point in time the actions in the plan are not sufficient deliver the level of carbon reductions necessary to meet the Borough's 2030 target and outlines that significantly more support is needed from government and more emphasis on partnership working. However, it is a living document and planning tool that will incorporate new ideas to deliver maximum savings, stretching targets where possible.

## **What happens next?**

Where possible under these changes, the council will continue to pursue the actions listed in the plan, firstly identifying the strategies required to do so, then outlining a proposal approach, before fully delivering on each target, meanwhile monitoring progress for each on an annual basis at the minimum. However, in many areas this will require significantly increased support from the government.

## **Areas for celebration:**

- Recycling has definitely seen an increase, from 50 to 54% and total tonnage, increasing by approximately 3000, particularly in terms of food and garden waste, with these two aspects alone rising to over 16500 tonnes following new incentives and targeted campaigns.
- Multiple council assets have undergone retrofitting to net zero standards including Dinton Activity Centre, Woodley Library, Carnival hub and 75 London Road.
- Carbon sequestration projects have now begun in earnest, with over 15,000 trees planted in a number of areas, including schools and residents gardens.
- Renewable energy installations continue to rise, with significant progress at Barkham Ride solar farm and numerous new installations at schools and other

council sites contributing to the generation of 42,572.84 MWh (Megawatt hours) renewable electricity in the last recorded year (2020).

- Over 1500 households so far are now getting assistance from help to heat, the councils locally set ECOFlex scheme.
- Development of the EV Infrastructure to support the transition continue to perform strongly, with 176 active sockets installed, with a further 190 planned. This means 1,099 tCO<sub>2</sub>e savings have been identified.
- Homeworking and other travel reductions continuing throughout, and post, covid have delivered significant carbon savings in the borough and are now more established to remain long term.

#### **Areas for development:**

- Some strategies have been delayed, such as the EV strategy, the Low Emission Transport Strategy (LETS) and Local Plan Update (LPU), with staffing issues at consultants contributing.
- While there are a good number of subscribers to newsletters, there seems to be less response to act on projects, meaning a focus is needed to shift residents and business towards action. A full engagement strategy and review of comms is underway to address these aspects.
- The love to ride programme has declined so is now under review.
- Procurement elements of the plan remain not started due to staffing shortages, meaning those projects requiring procurement of goods and services have been unable to contribute towards these targets at this stage.
- The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), greenways and some other grant funding bids have been unsuccessful, meaning delays to these actions as the amount required is substantial and can only be covered by such grants. In response, new approaches are being considered and new bids will be submitted to secure this funding.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

***The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£35,572,000	Yes in budget	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£34,545,000	Yes – subject to approval at Council	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£4,986,000	Yes – subject to approval at Council	Capital

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
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These estimated costs are sourced from the existing medium term financial plan. It is the total for all of the projects included in such which relate to, or are directly included in, the CEAP, with major projects detailed below:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Total Cost (£000s)</b>
Gorse Ride Regeneration Project	9,688
Community Investment (Social Housing Decarbonisation)	33,333
Work place re-imagined	2,722
Carnival Pool Area Redevelopment (including library & leisure fit out)	1,841
Wokingham Borough Cycle Network	3,000
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans	2,400
Public Rights of Way Network	2,210
A327 Cycleway	750
Bus Stop Infrastructure Works to Support North Arborfield SDL Bus Strategy	60
Renewable Energy Infrastructure projects (e.g. solar farms)	8,000
Solar Farms (Barkham)	2,000
Energy Reduction Projects	5,500
Electric Vehicle Charge Points	3,000
Supplementary Estimate - Carbon Capture Planting Trees	271
Waste Schemes - Recycling	267
Food Waste Collection	60

They are therefore all financed by the relevant team and have gone through separate approval processes, so should not be affected by budget constraints. However, additional elements may be included once feasibility assessments are completed for additional carbon saving projects or if additional projects are added by members.

Where possible finance will be sourced from relevant government grants and schemes, but for smaller local actions such as engagement in particular, this will require council funding. However, many of these actions will act to save the council money in the long run, for example from retrofitting assets and utilising EVs.

**Cross-Council Implications** (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

The Climate Emergency Action Plan is a council-wide project that requires all council services, investments and delivery projects to review and prioritise reducing carbon dioxide emissions where possible.

#### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Equalities assessment has been completed. Appendix C.

#### **Reasons for considering the report in Part 2**

NA

#### **List of Background Papers**

Appendix A. WBC 2022 September Progress Report

Appendix B. WBC 2022 Carbon Accounting Methodology and Assumptions

Appendix C. WBC 2022 September Progress Report EqIA
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