

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Housing, Environment and Regeneration
Officer Contact(s)	David Haygarth / Ian Thynne - Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services
Papers with report	Appendix 1 – Draft Strategic Climate Action Plan

HEADLINES

Summary	<p>The world's climate is changing due to increased levels of gases such as carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Scientific research has demonstrated that carbon dioxide levels are higher than at any time in the past 650,000 years and this has resulted in a gradual warming of the world's climate.</p> <p>Uncontrolled climate change will lead to higher global temperatures, rising sea levels and more extreme, unpredictable weather conditions across the world. These events and their knock-on effects, such as drought and its impact on food production, or the flooding of coastal areas where many people live, will put hundreds of millions of lives at risk.</p> <p>Hillingdon Council is striving to be the greenest London Borough, to protect and enhance the environment, and to provide a brighter prospect for future generations. Over the last ten years the Council has made significant progress to reduce carbon emissions and has committed that it will be carbon neutral by 2030. This report presents the draft action plan to achieve this goal and seeks approval from Cabinet to undertake a public consultation to inform the actions the Council should take. The final plan will be presented to Cabinet in July 2021, informed by the consultation findings.</p>
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: Our People, Our Natural Environment, Our Built Environment.
Financial Cost	There are no direct costs associated with the proposed consultation on the Climate Action Change Plan, which can be managed within existing resources.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee / All Committees
Relevant Ward(s)	All Wards

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approves Hillingdon's draft Climate Change Action Plan for consultation.
2. Agrees to receive the final Climate Change Action Plan in July 2021, informed by the findings from the consultation process.

Reasons for recommendations

Recommendation 1 - The climate change action plan will deliver the Council's climate emergency declaration made by full Council in January 2020. It has a clear focus on community leadership and leading by example. Additionally, this climate change plan supports other objectives, such as air quality, fuel poverty and preventing flooding. This is important to residents, especially those who are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Recommendation 2 – To be effective, Hillingdon's Climate Change Action Plan needs to be informed by the views and ideas from residents, community groups, non-governmental organisations, commerce, industry and other stakeholders to ensure successful outcomes are achieved. It is anticipated the costs of any works and projects to deliver the plan will be met from existing budgets and external funding sources. The consultation will help determine the best use of those resources, based on need.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The option to take no action was not considered. To achieve the climate emergency declaration requires leadership from the Local Authority and targeted action working in partnership with residents, public sector organisations, community groups and businesses.

Policy Overview Committee comments

Policy Overview Committees, particularly the Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities who's remit this falls under, will be able to participate actively in the consultation on this Action Plan – including submitting comments to Cabinet as appropriate.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. The world's climate is changing due to increased levels of gases such as carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. These 'greenhouse' gases occur naturally in the atmosphere, trapping heat that comes from the sun like the glass in a greenhouse. The 'greenhouse effect' is a natural occurrence and without it the Earth would be over 30 degrees cooler and uninhabitable.
2. However, due to human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal) and deforestation, concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are rising and making the natural greenhouse effect more pronounced, trapping more of the sun's heat

and resulting in a rise in the earth's temperature. The main contributor to global warming is carbon dioxide.

3. Uncontrolled climate change will lead to higher global temperatures, rising sea levels and more extreme, unpredictable weather conditions across the world. These events and their knock-on effects, such as drought and its impact on food production, or the flooding of coastal areas where many people live, will put hundreds of millions of lives at risk. This is already occurring in the developing world.
4. Hillingdon Council has made significant progress over the last ten years to reduce its carbon footprint through a range of activities such as the installation of lower energy lighting, cavity and loft installation in Council-owned buildings, the planting of thousands of trees and successful campaigns such as 'no idling' of vehicle engines outside schools. However, there is still more than can be achieved to reduce carbon emissions.
5. On 16th January 2020 at full Council, the London Borough of Hillingdon declared a climate emergency in recognition of the need to reduce carbon emissions further, and at a faster pace. The Council gave a commitment to be a carbon neutral by 2030. The Climate Change Action Plan presented to Cabinet provides the framework to achieve this.
6. The plan sets out seven themes of focus and outline targets to achieve the goal of becoming carbon neutral:
 - 1) Community Leadership – the Council as community leader for the Borough to deliver actions to be carbon neutral e.g. active promotion to residents and businesses to be carbon neutral, promoting awareness of and access to grant funding, working with schools to be carbon neutral.
 - 2) The Council's Own Operations – reducing the carbon emissions the Council generates from day to day service delivery e.g. exploring ways to generate renewable energy, introduction of a green travel plan for staff, procuring services which are low or carbon neutral.
 - 3) Building better places – through the local authority planning process, influence developments to be carbon neutral e.g. consider introducing new planning policies that support carbon neutral developments, ensuring sustainable transportation plans, to ensure that any trees lost through development are compensated for by offsite development.
 - 4) Using Clean and Green Energy – to ensure the energy the Council uses comes from renewable sources and to make changes to the heating of buildings to lower the consumption of energy.
 - 5) Waste Management – minimising the production of waste in the first instance and where waste is produced, it creates a smaller carbon footprint e.g. delivering campaigns to residents to avoid producing waste (reducing the use of plastics), encouraging residents to grow their own food, work with businesses to reduce waste.

- 6) Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation – putting in place changes to everyday activities and changes to the environment we live in which help adapt to the changing climate and / or mitigate the effect of climate change e.g. flood alleviation schemes, water efficiency schemes to store water, providing advice and encouragement to residents and businesses to take action.
 - 7) Carbon Offsetting – to put in place measures to compensate for carbon emissions which can not be avoided in the short-term e.g. tree planting, to promote carbon offsetting actions to residents and businesses.
7. The Council wants to hear from residents, community groups, partners and businesses about the proposals, as well as their own ideas to be carbon neutral to inform the Climate Change Action Plan. Cabinet is, therefore, asked to agree that the draft plan is subject to a consultation period to engage meaningfully with residents, the community and businesses to inform the final plan, to be presented to Cabinet in July 2021.

Financial Implications

8. There are no direct financial implications associated with the preparation of the draft Climate Action Plan or proposed consultation, with both being managed within existing resources.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

9. The Climate Change Action Plan sets out the action the Council has taken to date to significantly reduce its own carbon emissions and the outline actions needed to be fully carbon neutral across the Borough by 2030. Taking action to continue to further reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change will help residents, businesses and communities to avoid disruption to day to day lives, and ensure the Borough is a cleaner and healthier place to live.

Consultation carried out or required

10. The draft Climate Change Action Plan builds on the work the Council has undertaken to date to significantly reduce carbon emissions in the Borough. Cabinet is asked to agree to undertake a consultation stage to inform the final plan to be presented to Cabinet in July 2021.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

11. Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms that there are no direct financial implications associated with the proposed consultation on the draft Climate Change Action Plan. Following the public consultation and as specific projects are developed to meet the

goals set out in the Action Plan, these will be fully costed and integrated into the Council's Medium-Term Financial Forecast and financial strategy as appropriate.

Legal

12. The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report or to agree to the recommendations and to undertake a consultation. More detailed legal advice will be given as necessary once the outcome of the public consultation is reported back for consideration.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

13. Not applicable at this stage.

Comments from other relevant service areas

14. Not applicable at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Council 16 January 2020 – Motion and Climate Declaration](#)