

STRATEGIC CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT AND CLIMATE COMMITMENT CHARTER FOR PROCUREMENT

Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Residents' Services
Officer Contact(s)	Ian Thynne - Place Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix 1 – Strategic Climate Action Plan – Progress Report Appendix 2 – Climate Commitment Charter for procurement

HEADLINES

Summary	The Report provides an update on the objectives set out in the Strategic Climate Action Plan (adopted July 2021). The report also addresses each of the objectives and sets out the priorities for the next reporting cycle to ensure the Council is making sufficient progress to achieving carbon neutrality across its own operations by 2030. In addition, the Council has an opportunity to sign up to a low carbon procurement charter in collaboration with West London partners. The Charter addresses the carbon emissions embedded within the procurement supply chain; by working with neighbouring boroughs, action can be taken to decarbonise this supply chain.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: <i>Our People; Our Natural Environment; Our Built Environment; Our Heritage and Civic Pride; Strong financial management.</i> It also demonstrates progress against the Council's adopted Strategic Climate Action Plan.
Financial Cost	The financial implications relate to officer time. Priority work identified for 2022/23 fits within core functions however, opportunities to access Section 106 funding and secure grants from external sources is being pursued. There are no direct financial implications of this report.
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee
Wards	All Wards

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet:

1. **Notes the progress made in the Strategic Climate Action Plan Progress Report in Appendix 1;**
2. **Approves the priorities identified in this report and;**
3. **Agrees to the Council being a signatory to the Climate Commitment Charter for procurement purposes in Appendix 2.**

Reasons for recommendation

The Council's Strategic Climate Action Plan (2021) sets out the objectives to be taken to achieving the Council's aspirations to achieve carbon neutrality across its own operations by 2030. This progress report is an annual update that measures progress in an open and transparent manner. It identifies challenges and sets out priorities for the coming year to ensure there is clear focus on tackling the climate change emergency. The Climate Commitment Charter helps achieves the Council's aspirations for securing reductions in emissions associated with the supply chain.

In summary the report identifies progress against the three key areas that make up the Council's carbon footprint:

- **Electricity usage:** The available data shows a 30% drop in emissions associated with electricity usage. This represents significant progress. In addition, over 80% of the electricity used for the Council operations is accredited from renewable sources.
- **Gas usage:** As explained in the report, gas usage has been significantly impacted by a change from estimated to actual monitoring readings. This has resulted in a slight increase in emissions. However, it is important to understand that this does not mean usage has risen. The switch to automatic readings was necessary to ensure the actual carbon footprint was recorded. This has presented the Council with a larger challenge than previously understood but has been captured early enough in the Plan period (i.e. up to 2030) for action to be prioritised.
- **Fleet:** The report has identified that the Council's fleet has improved dramatically since the baseline position was established in 2019/20. However, the report also recognises that work is required to properly capture the carbon emissions associated with fleet operations across the Council. It is recognised that this is a priority for the 2022/23 reporting cycle.

Overall, there has been a 10% drop in emissions from the baseline reported in 2019/20 although significantly higher when factoring in the energy procured from renewable energy certificates. However, the move to automatic gas readings has hindered a more positive outturn.

In addition, the Council has an opportunity to sign up to a low carbon procurement charter in collaboration with West London partners. The Charter addresses the carbon emissions

embedded within the procurement supply chain; by working with neighbouring boroughs, action can be taken to decarbonise this supply chain.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Council has committed to undertaking an annual progress report of the Strategic Climate Action Plan. Alternative options were, therefore, not considered.

The Council can opt out of signing the Climate Commitment Charter. However, it is considered that this would be out of step with neighbouring boroughs and alternative arrangements would be required to meet the commitments to reducing emissions in the supply chain. Working collaboratively with neighbouring boroughs provides a greater opportunity in securing low carbon supply chains.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

1. The Council declared a climate emergency in 2020 and adopted its Strategic Climate Action Plan in 2021. The Plan provides the roadmap to securing the ambitious target of achieving carbon neutrality across council operations by 2030.
2. The Plan also commits to various other objectives and action plans that require outcomes beyond just reducing carbon emissions. It sets out aspirations to be a leader for businesses, communities, and educational facilities to reduce their own carbon footprint.
3. The Plan identifies six corporate commitments and a suite of objectives across nine key themes. Importantly, the intent of the Plan was to ensure that all of the Council's operations are set within the context of the declared climate emergency rather than creating additional workstreams.

Purpose of the Progress Report

4. Achieving carbon neutrality and becoming a borough leader will however require the prioritisation of existing workstreams or altering focus to tackle emerging challenges. The annual progress report is the key document in providing that framework. It sets out the progress against the objectives and targets in the Plan and allows challenges to be identified early enough to ensure workstreams can be prioritised to tackle them.

Summary Findings

5. The progress report, set out in Appendix 1, has identified positive movement in terms of the Council's carbon emissions. There are essentially three main areas that contribute to the Council's operational carbon footprint: Electricity usage, gas consumption and

business (including fleet) mileage. Additional emissions associated with other equipment, such as those used by green spaces amount to a fraction of a percentage of the overall carbon footprint.

6. Electricity: There has been a significant reduction in emissions from electricity usage particularly across the two main contributors, the Civic Centre and Streetlighting which have seen a 31% reduction. In total, the emissions associated with electricity have seen a drop of 29% from the 2019/20 baseline.
7. Further good news can be factored in through the accredited renewable energy supplies used to provide over 50% of the electricity used. This means that the actual emissions associated with electricity usage for 2021/22 is around 1300 tonnes which equates to a 70% reduction from the baseline. This is exceptional news.
8. However, as identified in the progress report, the Council is targeting demand reduction before placing reliance on renewable energy supplies. Although electricity from accredited zero carbon sources is beneficial, the Council would nonetheless be relying on the volatile energy markets. Reducing demand at source remains the priority.
9. Gas: The situation related to gas is somewhat different to the electricity usage. In 2021 the Council moved a range of buildings from estimated gas readings to automatic meter readings. This has revealed a significant under reporting of the actual consumption in the baseline position and the Progress report is showing a 27% increase in emissions.
10. It must be noted though that in general consumption of gas is more consistent as it is linked to infrastructure within the building and is not 'topped up' by additional sources; for example, electricity usage is dependent on a range of equipment such as laptops and computers for thousands of staff as well as associated servers; there are also more variables related to electricity usage as opposed to the two predominant sources of gas consumption, water and space heating.
11. There is no reason to believe that the actual consumption of gas has increased dramatically since 2019/20. Therefore, it is assumed that the reported increases are related to the move from estimated to actual readings, revealing that the former was significantly out of step with the latter. The progress report reflects a more accurate position and captures the actual emissions associated with gas usage. This is a positive development. However, the obvious concern is that the estimated emissions associated with gas used in the Action Plan gave an inaccurate starting position. The meter readings for the Civic Centre set out in the progress report show nearly a 100% increase in emissions from the starting position set out in the Action Plan. This introduces a challenge, and it is necessary to respond by prioritising gas related action for 2022/23.
12. An analysis of the fleet and business vehicles shows a considerably new stock than was available when the baseline position was presented. However, capturing of emissions associated with the fleet and business mileage requires further work to be of value. Fleet emissions are inherently complicated by the type of vehicles and importantly the number of miles.

13. The progress report has identified an improved fleet stock which is a positive. However, a priority for 2022/23 is to develop the reporting tools to properly capture the associated emissions. Notwithstanding that, work continues to consider further improvements to the fleet and is expected to progress in 2022/23. In addition, significant work is underway to review the waste collection routes to provide efficiencies and reduce mileage. Training has also been carried out for operatives to reduce vehicle idling.
14. Overall: The progress is positive and there has been nearly a 10% reduction in emissions from gas and electricity. The fleet emissions are likely to have reduced due to the high performance of the vehicles in use but work to capture the associated emissions is essential.

Priorities

15. The progress report identifies a series of priorities for 2022/23 these include:
- a. Identification of assets to be retained and prioritised for carbon savings.
 - b. Identifying large gas consuming assets and prioritising actions to determine solutions in particular relating to the Civic Centre. All building managers will be contacted to prioritise gas and electricity savings.
 - c. Securing the toolkits and methodologies to accurately record and monitor emissions associated with fleet mileage.
 - d. To progress work on identifying opportunities for electricity generation from solar power.
 - e. To progress work on identifying opportunities for tree planting to offset carbon emissions.
 - f. To commence work on the Council's climate adaptation strategy in light of the importance of the growing threat from extreme weather.
 - g. Improve carbon reporting and to identify a consistent toolkit for capturing all emissions to enable robust data to be upload to the Council website for public scrutiny.
 - h. To develop a programme of work that sets the targets for all the objectives and action plans set out in the Plan.
 - i. To embed the actions from the Plan in the emerging Corporate Strategy.
 - j. To ensure all objectives and workstreams set out in the Plan have a home in subsequent Service plans.
 - k. To develop an engagement strategy with schools, communities, and businesses.
 - l. To commence work on understanding the carbon footprint associated with procured services and work towards securing low carbon procurement frameworks.
16. The above is in addition to business-as-usual operations relating to emissions reductions. For example, flood and air quality action plans, waste management and the review of waste refuse routes along with other work linked to the Plan should continue at pace.

Climate Commitment Charter for Procurement

17. In response to the Council motion in November 2021, officers are recommending the Council sign-up to the West London Alliance Climate Commitment Charter in Appendix 2 that will assist with identifying emissions associated with the supply chain and helping to secure carbon reduction.
18. To underpin this, a low-carbon procurement toolkit has been developed to adopt climate considerations into procurement processes and to help to deliver low carbon goods and services via its supply chain. Training for Procurement officers took place in March and will increasingly contribute towards making Hillingdon's own operations carbon neutral by 2030.
19. All of this is intended to ensure that all our suppliers are committed to joining the Council on this important journey to reduce carbon emissions. Over the coming months, procurement officers and commissioning managers will ensure that tenders reflect the Net Carbon Zero aspirations of the Council.
20. To further support this work, officers recently offered and delivered training to our supply chain to create greater knowledge and awareness. These sessions were recorded, and procurement are planning to make the training available via the Council's website.
21. In order to help manage costs and to ensure a more coordinated approach, this work has been undertaken with the other West London boroughs.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this strategic progress update.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

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

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

The Council's Strategic Climate Action Plan was subject to public consultation. This report provides an update on progress against actions within the Plan.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms that there are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

Corporate Finance further notes the Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and to reduce carbon across the property portfolio. The impact of individual priorities will be reviewed as part of ongoing work and as part of the wider MTFF budget setting process.

Legal

Legal Services confirm that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Further legal advice will be given as necessary to ensure that the Council continues to meet its obligations under the climate change legislation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

[Strategic Climate Action Plan approved by Cabinet – 8 July 2021](#)

[Council Motion – Climate Targets Update - 18 November 2021](#)