

## **HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

**13 SEPTEMBER 2021**

### **CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE**

#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide an update to Members on the progress of the Climate Emergency Strategy and associated Action Plan.

#### **2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council declared a Climate Emergency at the Full Council meeting of 16 July 2019. The declaration did not include a date for net zero for the Council but recognised the UK Government had, the preceding month, agreed a target date of 2050.
- 2.2 The Carbon Trust were appointed to work alongside officers and members to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. The Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) met on several occasions to review the data and findings from The Carbon Trust, as well as to seek out views from partners, businesses and local groups. The CEWG comprised of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons of the Policy & Finance, Leisure & Environment, Economic Development, and Homes & Communities Committees. Members of the working group recommended the carbon net neutral target date of 2035 and the emissions reduction target which were recommended to Policy and Finance Committee in September 2020 and approved by Full Council in December of the same year.
- 2.3 The Council's agreed target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 2.4 The Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan is now being progressed and an annual report will be presented to Policy and Finance Committee in September 2021 (as agreed at Full Council in December 2020). This report will be a project update and a full report on the Council's progress towards its 2035 carbon neutrality target will be provided in 2022 to allow a years' worth of data to be collected. This data will be caveated as the Council's energy usage has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic

#### **3.0 Proposals**

Work has been underway to progress a number of the activities relating to this agenda. Please see Appendix 1 for the full report detailing all progress made towards the climate change agenda.

##### **3.1 Electric Vehicle Transition**

- 3.1.1 As part of the Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan the Council have made the commitment to explore the implementation of electric vehicles within the Council owned fleet of vehicles. It was agreed at Leisure and Environment Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to adopt a phased approach towards electrification, this will begin with small scale pilots, before considering two possible phases of transition – 2023-2026 for small vans and fleet, subject to an approved business case, and post 2026 for larger

vehicles, subject to vehicle type specific business cases submitted to Committee for approval.

- 3.1.2 Approval has been given to replace two vehicles which have reached the end of their useful life, the procurement process has begun and the Council will begin using these in autumn 2021. A project group has been set up to consider the future of Brunel Drive Depot and the sites ability to meet the requirements of the Council going forwards. In order to meet these potential requirements, Brunel Drive Depot may need to store more waste and fleet vehicles on site. Also, if the pilot study of the two electric vehicles is successful further electric vehicles will need to be purchased and potentially stored and charged at the location overnight. The project group is currently considering various options to meet the requirements and develop a master plan for the future of the site.

### 3.2 Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD2)

- 3.2.1 A total of £59.95 million grant funding for The Midland Energy HUB has received been received of this the Council have been allocated £724,850 of funding to deliver a project which enables cost saving for householders, carbon reduction, creates green jobs via use of Regional Energy Hubs and ultimately improves the quality of homes by increasing the EPC ratings of the properties.
- 3.2.2 Through the implementation of this project the Council have been able to identify those residents in the district who are most likely in fuel poverty and will benefit most from energy efficiency updates. This also incorporates residents living in the worst quality off-gas grid homes contributing towards the phasing out of carbon intensive fossil fuel heating
- 3.2.3 The Council have developed a partnership with Eon to deliver the LAD 2 programme of works due for completion 31st December 2021 comprising of 53 properties from the private market and 20 properties from the Council's housing stock. The latter will be focused on the installation of solar PV to improve EPC ratings of properties from a Band D to a Band C rating, this project will provide low income households with up to £10,000 of environmentally friendly home improvements. Given the large geographical area of Newark and Sherwood District Council and relatively small number we are doing; we have had to focus on two areas. The two areas chosen have the highest percentages of residents living in fuel poverty and multiple deprivation indicators strongly suggesting that most of the households to be targeted have low incomes and will meet the schemes application requirements.

### 3.3 Climate Emergency Project Meetings

- 3.3.1 A working group of internal members of staff has been set up to encourage the sharing of environmental related actions and activities taking place in various directorates. This meeting currently happens on a quarterly basis. This gives members of staff a forum for sharing good news stories, current workload and carbon reduction and environmentally focused activities, this meeting is also attended by our Communications Team to ensure that the information shared in the project meeting is communicated out through our social media channels.

### 3.4 Electric Vehicle Transition

3.4.1 As part of the Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan the Council have made the commitment to explore the implementation of electric vehicles within the Council owned fleet of vehicles. It was agreed at Leisure and Environment Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to adopt a phased approach towards electrification, this will begin with small scale pilots, before considering two possible phases of transition – 2023-2026 for small vans and fleet, subject to an approved business case, and post 2026 for larger vehicles, subject to vehicle type specific business cases submitted to Committee for approval.

3.4.2 Approval has been given to replace two vehicles which have reached the end of their useful life, the procurement process has begun and the Council will begin using these in autumn 2021. A project group has been set up to consider the future of Brunel Drive Depot and the sites ability to meet the requirements of the Council going forwards. It is expected that as part of the National Waste and Resources Strategy, Newark and Sherwood District Council will be mandated to collect more waste streams than is currently collected. In order to meet these potential requirements, Brunel Drive Depot may need to store more waste vehicles on site. Also, if the pilot study of the two electric vehicles is successful further electric vehicles will need to be purchased and potentially stored and charged at the location overnight. The project group is currently considering various options to meet the requirements and develop a master plan for the future of the site.

### 3.5 Solar PV Feasibility

3.5.1 The Council have produced a tender document and are in the process of appointing external support in looking at the rollout out of photovoltaics on Council buildings. One of the principal sources of the Council's carbon footprint comes from its estate and this work will help the Council to understand the capital costs, payback and carbon reduction impact from generating energy through sustainable sources.

3.5.2 Our Leisure Centres in particular, are the principle emitters in the Council's estate given their high energy needs. However, the feasibility will go beyond just the leisure centres and look at a range of buildings, including the Brunel Drive Depot, National Civil War Centre and Palace Theatre, the Newark Beacon and The Buttermarket amongst others. An assessment of the intricacies involved in expanding the current solar PV installation on Castle House will also be carried out by the appointed contractors. This will enable us to make an informed decision on which sites to proceed with and prioritise for solar PV installation on our corporate and leisure buildings.

3.5.3 The first phase of the project involves the desktop study and modelling of the selected sites, individual site visits and the development of a detailed study providing clear advice on viable solar PV array options, installation considerations and to produce a package of works and comprehensive installation details including prospective installation costs and a site by site business case. This will enable Newark and Sherwood District Council to make an informed decision regarding which sites to progress with based upon recommendations provided by the appointed consultants who are experts in the field.

3.5.4 The consultant will provide indicative estimated installation costs and payback periods to the Council, this will then be brought back to Policy and Finance Committee for approval for funding for the installation of solar PV on a range of our corporate and leisure buildings. Should the Council wish to progress with the installation then procurement support in the development of a specification document based on design elements from the first phase and project management of the successful installer will be provided by the contractor, ensuring the forecasted benefits from phase one are realised.

#### 4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 There are no equalities implications envisaged within the projects discussed in this report.

#### 5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 Whilst there has been no digital implications identified there may be associated software requirements once feasibility studies have been completed and have been further explored by Newark and Sherwood District Council. The implications shall be considered as deemed appropriate. Furthermore, the ICT & Digital Services team will work to with the Environmental Policy and Projects Officer to reduce the technology carbon footprint for Newark and Sherwood District Council.

#### 6.0 Financial Implications FIN21-22/5770

6.1 Current funding agreed for Climate change is set out below:

<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>21-22</b>	<b>22-23</b>	<b>23-24</b>	<b>24-25</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Current Budget within Capital Programme	105,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	<b>330,000</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>					
Capital Receipts	0	0	75,000	75,000	<b>150,000</b>
Borrowing	75,000	75,000	0	0	<b>150,000</b>
Capital Reserves	30,000	0	0	0	<b>30,000</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>105,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>330,000</b>
<b>Allocated to Specific Projects</b>					
Solar Panels	30,000	0	0	0	<b>30,000</b>
<b>Balance Unallocated</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>
<b>Expenditure to date</b>					<b>0</b>

So far only Phase one of the solar feasibility study has been allocated specific funding, a budget of £30,000 has already been allocated to this.

A further report will be provided should the Council decide to progress with Phase 2 of the Solar feasibility study which will involve the development of a site specific installation specification

document and the project management of the prospective installation of solar PV on our corporate and leisure buildings.

## **7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives**

7.1 These projects align with the Council’s Community Plan objective to “Enhance and protect the district’s natural environment”. There is a specific activity under this objective to reduce the Council's carbon emissions by implementing an environmental strategy and carbon reduction action plan to achieve carbon neutrality. However, the Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan can also be considered to touch upon all objectives.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- a) Project update to be noted;**
- b) Further reports providing additional progress updates on Newark and Sherwood District Council’s carbon reduction journey will be provided as required;**

## **Reason for Recommendations**

**To provide an update to Committee on project progress.**

**To ensure there is engagement at committee level with the climate emergency progress**

## **Background Papers**

26 September 2020 – Policy and Finance Committee

15 December 2020 – Full Council

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Policy and Finance Climate Emergency Update report 23 September 2021

For further information please contact:

Briony Ashton, Environmental Policy and Projects Officer, Ext. 5357

Matthew Finch

Director - Communities & Environment