

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE
24 SEPTEMBER 2020

CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Policy & Finance Committee regarding the work, overseen by the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) of Members, to produce a climate strategy and action plan for Newark & Sherwood District Council in response to the declared climate emergency.
- 1.2 To recommend the conclusions of the CEWG, having worked with colleagues from The Carbon Trust who were appointed to create the strategy and action plan, that the Council:
- defines its carbon footprint based on selected operational data as set out in the strategy
 - sets a target date of 2035 for carbon neutrality based on that data
 - is guided by the action plan to reduce carbon emissions in order to meet the target for neutrality
 - monitors progress against the strategy and action plan by annual reporting to this Committee, with additional operational Committee updates as required.
- 1.3 To suggest convening a virtual opportunity for all Members to view the strategy and action plan, via presentation, before submission to Full Council.

2.0 Background Information

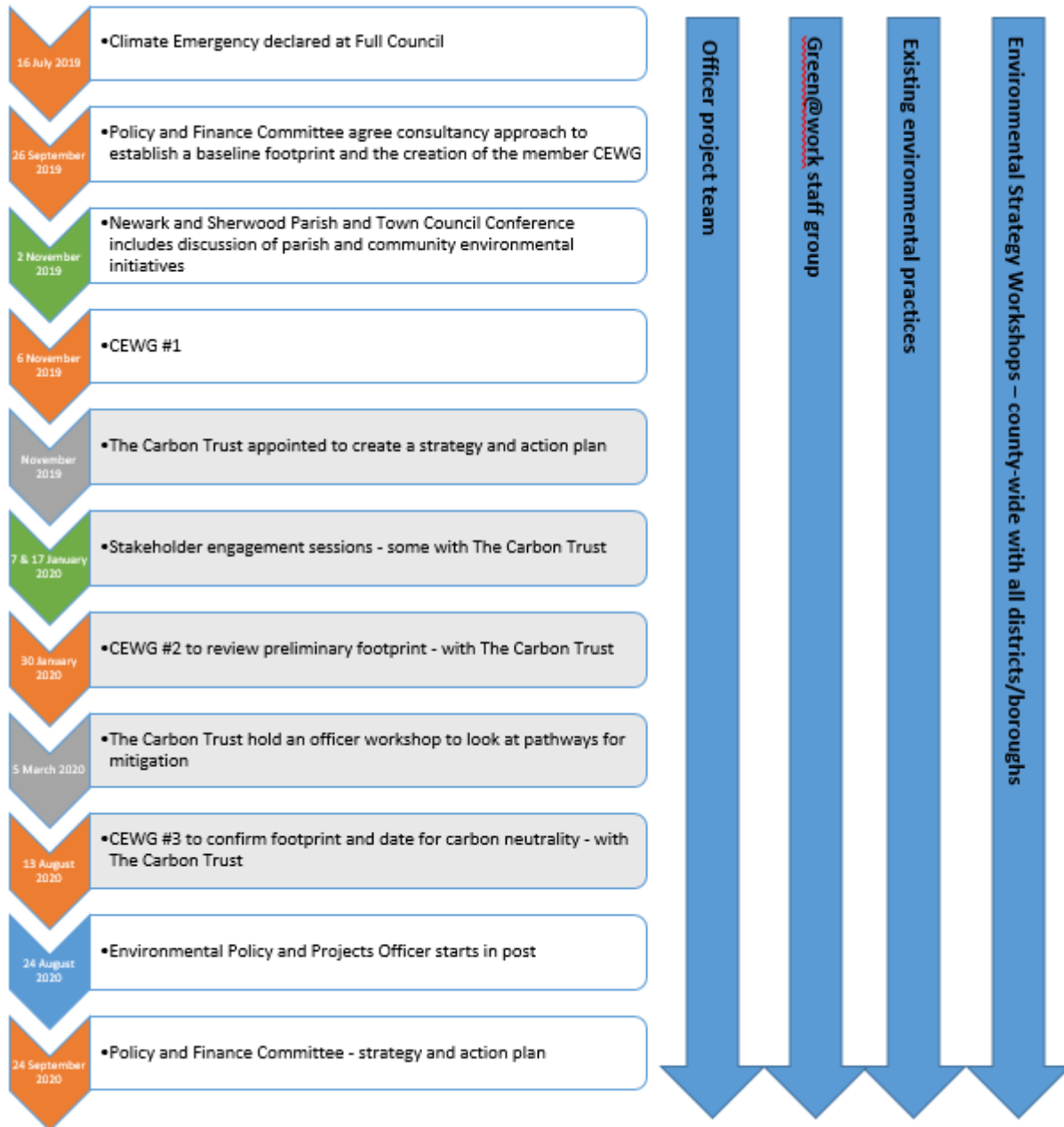
- 2.1 Newark & Sherwood District Council declared a Climate Emergency at the Full Council [meeting](#) of 16 July 2019. The declaration did not include a date for net zero for the Council but recognised the UK Government had, the preceding month, [agreed](#) a target date of 2050.
- 2.2 At Policy & Finance Committee on 26 September 2019 actions were agreed, to be enabled by commissioned consultancy providing technical expertise and a Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) of Members to oversee the process, to:
- audit [existing environmental practice](#) within the Council
 - establish data to determine the carbon footprint of Newark and Sherwood District Council
 - consider the Council's contribution to the district carbon footprint more widely, according to national data from reputable sources
 - engage with stakeholders
 - coordinate a Climate Emergency Strategy with reference to all of the above
 - produce an accompanying generational Carbon Reduction Action Plan to mitigate carbon emissions from the Council.

The rationale was to understand the Council's current position (carbon footprint) in order to better target mitigation (carbon reduction opportunities) in future.

- 2.3 The Carbon Trust was formally appointed to provide fixed-term consultancy services for the creation of the climate strategy and action plan. [A separate piece of work led by the Business Manager - Parks & Open Spaces, and sponsored by the Director - Growth & Planning, is being undertaken to consider the Council's Open Spaces Strategy. Whilst a separate undertaking, synergies are noted].
- 2.4 The CEWG has met thrice (6 November 2019/30 January 2020/13 August 2020) to review progress and findings from The Carbon Trust. The CEWG comprises the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons of the Policy & Finance, Leisure & Environment, Economic Development, and Homes & Communities Committees. While it was originally intended to report findings back to Committee earlier in 2020, regrettably both flooding and Covid-19 have impacted timing.
- 2.5 As well as being summarised for Policy & Finance Committee on 26 September 2019, existing environmental practices within the Council have been grouped within the new "Greening Newark & Sherwood" programme. The Environmental Programme Officer (formerly a member of the Communications team), working within the Environmental Services team and in consultation with other business units, has collated relevant information about existing practices via the Council's website at <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/> Categories of information include: get involved; national campaigns and funding; reduce, reuse and recycle; plastics and recycling; parks and nature reserves; gardens and green spaces; trees; green planning; council buildings; being green@work; cleaning the district; air quality; clean transport; green tourism; and green shopping. Information on the website continues to evolve and will be updated as required.
- 2.6 Working with The Carbon Trust, wide-ranging operational data was reviewed by the officer project team to determine the Council's carbon footprint – detail is given in the strategy document. The process has highlighted the importance of improving data collection and collation for the Council's ongoing response to the emergency. The data collection process, and target actions as a result thereof, will be assisted in future by the Council's new Environmental Policy and Projects Officer.
- 2.7 The strategy (attached as **Appendix 1** to the report) considers the Council's contribution to emissions within the district more widely – with district emissions comprising 987,800 tCO₂e.
- 2.8 The CEWG has engaged with a number of local stakeholders representing different sectors (health / business / natural environment / community) about their environmental ambitions via conversations in January 2020. The same conversational questions were also posed to a number of community groups. Also, the Newark & Sherwood Parish and Town Council Conference in November 2019 asked participants about parish and community initiatives. Additionally a voluntary "Green@work" group is facilitated by the Environmental Programme Officer for council staff. Across the county a series of Environmental Strategy Working Groups for local authorities have been convened over the past year by Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottingham City Council, and supported by the BEIS-funded Midlands Energy Hub. All nine Nottinghamshire Local Authorities and the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are working in collaboration on the climate Emergency Agenda through the Environmental Strategy Working Group (ESWG). These group meetings have been attended by the Council's Director, Communities and Environment.

2.9 A visual summary of the response to date is:

[Orange=members. Blue=officers. Green=stakeholders. Grey=The Carbon Trust.]



3.0 Proposals

3.1 The Council's carbon footprint is calculated within the climate strategy. In short, it is proposed the Council's target for reduction is 2,165 tCO₂e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3). The majority of the Council's emissions are associated with the fleet, the use of electricity and the use of gas. However, having been ambitious in exploring emission sources, an operational footprint calculation of 3,355 tCO₂e is also shown – this incorporates estimated emissions from additional categories including such as those associated with procured services via contracts - but the strategy acknowledges further data refinement is required. This footprint does not include emissions from housing (17,130 tCO₂e), which have been grouped separately. Further consideration will be given to the feasibility of

retrofitting strategies (being cognisant that council houses are also homes) – and the availability of funding streams. Whilst The Carbon Trust calculations represent the organisation’s professional expertise and are created with reference to Greenhouse Gas Protocols, it should also be recognised that there is no single standard for local authority carbon footprints – inclusions and exclusions for the footprint vary across authorities. As organisational energy data capture improves in future, the footprint can be further refined.

- 3.2 It is proposed 2035 be the date set for carbon neutrality for the Council. This date considers: the major sources of the Council’s emissions; benefitting from the projected decarbonisation of the national grid after 2030 (where more energy will be created from renewable sources); the estimated costs of mitigating actions in the plan. The actions focus on having the most impact in those areas that currently create the most emissions: decarbonising Council operated buildings and leisure centres via explorations of PV, ground source heat pumps, and LED lighting; working with leaseholders; and reviewing the fleet. Whilst mitigating actions as set out in the plan will reduce emissions, they do not alone enable carbon neutrality. Consideration will also need to be given to offsetting.
- 3.3 The targeted reduction of carbon emissions as a result of the Council’s operations and as set out by The Carbon Trust is entitled the “Emissions Reduction Action Plan” and this forms a considerable, quantifiable and costed (see 5.0 below) part of the broad “Greening Newark & Sherwood Action Plan”. This Action Plan is attached as **Appendix 2** to the report.
- 3.4 The broader actions recognise the Council’s environmental ambitions and the leadership role of the Council within the wider community. Additional projects, as referenced in the action plan, may be beneficial for awareness raising and for influencing green practices more widely. Of course the Council also has a role as advocate within the evolving, wider governmental policy framework - and government policy will also impact how the action plan might be delivered. Ongoing policy monitoring, and adaptation accordingly, is required.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the governance of the strategy and action plan going forwards is via an annual report to the Policy & Finance Committee, with updates to the operational committees as required. Each year the Committee will review the Council’s footprint and progress against the strategy and action plan. The coordination of this work will be undertaken by the Environmental Policy & Projects Officer (from within the Transformation team), working collaboratively with colleagues from across the Council as a whole. The projects and initiatives that are proposed in the action plan, as well as any more that are required, will be subject to detailed feasibility studies and/or approval processes.
- 3.5 It is proposed that all Members have the opportunity to view the Strategy and Action Plan via presentation at a virtual meeting to be confirmed in the coming weeks, prior to being submitted to Full Council in December 2020.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 Equalities impact assessments may be required when feasibility studies/project initiation documents for each of the suggested actions within the action plan are further explored. A copy of the strategy and action plan may be made available in additional languages and alternative formats, subject to request and availability.

5.0 Financial Implications (FIN20-21/2788)

- 5.1 Estimated capital expenditure for carbon reduction actions from the Action Plan are summarised below. All estimated costs are shown at today's prices and exclude any inflation or contingency. Therefore, further feasibility/investigation work will need to be carried out to establish the actual costs of each capital project.
- 5.2 The additional work required to ensure cost estimates are accurate can be funded from the Capital Projects Feasibility Reserve. A commitment of £40,000 (5% of the total cost in the table) will need to be added to this Reserve.
- 5.3 The total (excluding housing and vehicles) of approximately £806,000 (excluding contingency and inflation) and associated savings estimated by the Carbon Trust, are listed below as per their suggested spend profile:

Year	Estimated Capital Expenditure £'000	Potential Annual cost reduction £'000	Cumulative cost reduction £'000
2021/22	15	0	0
2023/24	91	0	0
2025/26	284	18	18
2027/28	24	38	56
2029/30	22	22	78
2030/31	370	0	78
	806	78	78

- 5.3 If the list were to be approved in principle, the profile of the schemes should be aligned with planned renewal work on Council Assets following recent and upcoming condition surveys with Asset Management.
- 5.4 There is a budget in the Capital Programme for Climate Change currently of £30,000 in 2020/21 and £75,000 per year for a further two years (a total of £180,000). Once all costs are confirmed a further report will be brought to this committee to update Members and the Capital Programme.

6.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

- 6.1 An updated Community Plan is being considered at this Committee meeting. The climate strategy and action plan particularly align with the Community Plan objectives to:
- enhance and protect the district's natural environment
 - continue to maintain the high standard of cleanliness and appearance of the local environment
 - improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.

However, the action plan can also be considered to touch upon all objectives.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the Council's carbon footprint to target be recommended for approved by the Full Council - the footprint is calculated as 2,165 tCO₂e – which incorporates selected emissions from scopes 1, 2 and 3 (this footprint does not include emissions from housing (17,130 tCO₂e), which have been considered separately);**
- (b) 2035 be recommended to the Full Council as the target date for carbon neutrality (the action plan sets out a series of schemes to support the neutral target – subject to feasibility);**
- (c) a commitment is added to the Capital Project Feasibility Reserve of £40,000;**
- (d) governance of the strategy and action plan, as coordinated by the Environmental Policy and Projects Officer, is overseen by an annual report to Policy & Finance Committee that conveys progress against the annual carbon footprint (additional projects and initiatives will be considered by the relevant officers and committees as required); and**
- (e) all Members have the opportunity to view the strategy and action plan at a virtual meeting on a date to be confirmed, prior to presentation to the Full Council.**

Reason for Recommendations

To reduce the Council's carbon emissions and to formalise its environmental ambitions by agreeing a measured and considered action plan.

Background Papers

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