

## **FULL COUNCIL - 15 DECEMBER 2020**

### **CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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

- 1.1 To update Full Council 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 based on the recommendation for approval from 24 September Policy & Finance Committee at Full Council.
- 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 ; and
  - monitors progress against the strategy and action plan by annual reporting to this Committee, with additional operational Committee updates as required.

#### **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 & 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; and
  - produce an accompanying generational Carbon Reduction Action Plan to mitigate carbon emissions from the Council.

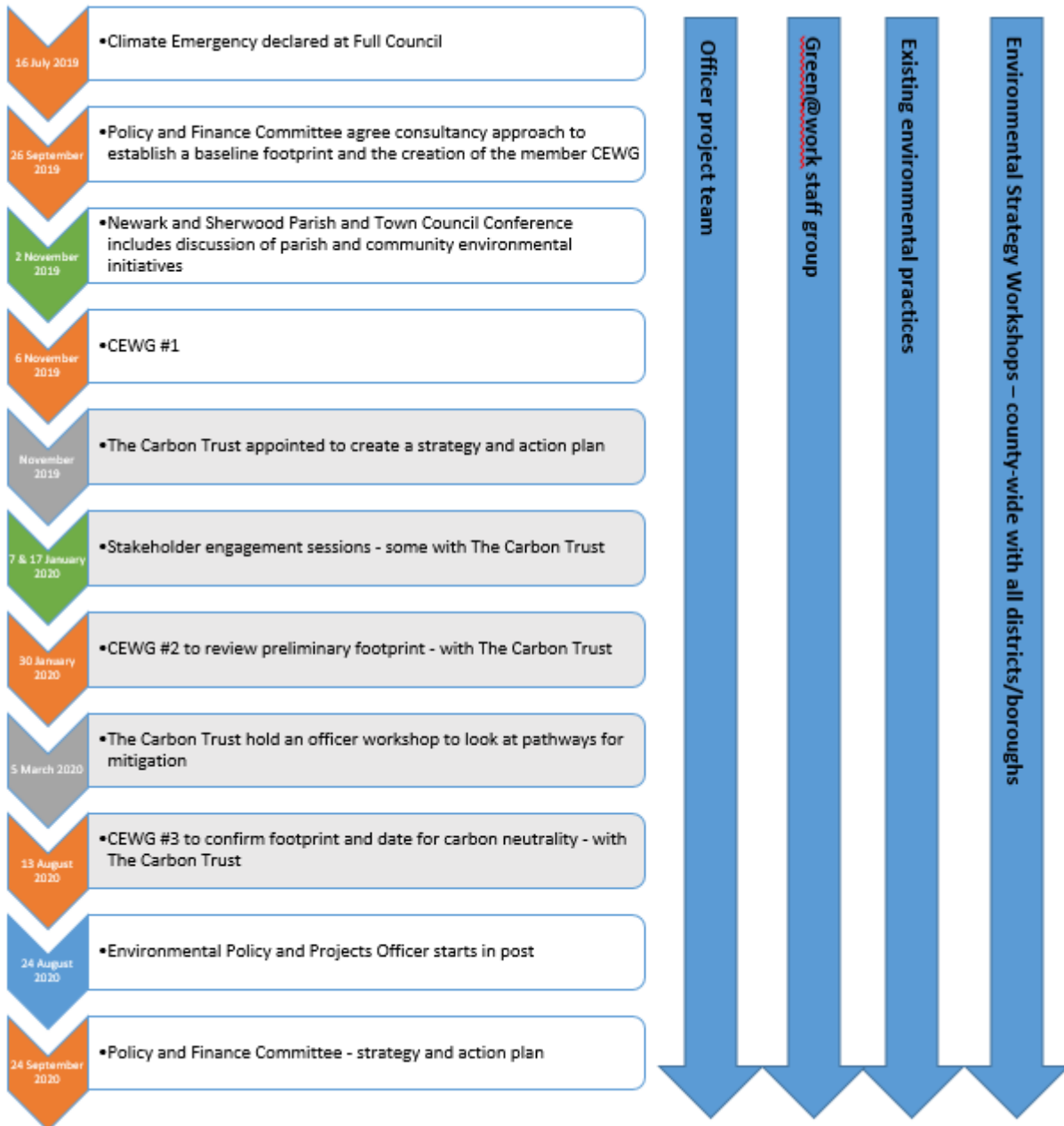
The rationale was to understand the Council's current position (carbon footprint) in order to better target mitigation (carbon reduction opportunities) in future.

- 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 and 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 Environmental Policy & Projects Officer.
- 2.7 The strategy considers the Council's contribution to emissions within the district more widely – with district emissions comprising 987,800 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.
- 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 All Members were given the virtual opportunity to attend a workshop presented by the Carbon Trust, the purpose of this enabled Members to have an overview of the methodology involved in the carbon footprint calculation. The workshop gave Members insight into a range of carbon reduction projects which may be undertaken in order to become carbon neutral by 2035. This has been made available online to all Members, specifically those who were unable to attend the live workshop with the Carbon Trust.

2.10 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 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (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 tCO<sub>2</sub>e 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 tCO<sub>2</sub>e), 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”.
- 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.
- 3.5 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 and 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.

#### **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 is expected to cost £40,000 (5% of the total cost in the table) and has been added to the Capital Projects Feasibility Reserve as a commitment.
- 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:

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Estimated Capital Expenditure<br/>£'000</b> | <b>Potential Annual cost reduction<br/>£'000</b> | <b>Cumulative cost reduction<br/>£'000</b> |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| 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   |
|             | <b>806</b>                                     | <b>78</b>  | <b>78</b>                                  |

- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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).

## **6.0 Digital Implications**

- 6.1 Whilst there has been no digital implications identified there may be associated software requirements once feasibility studies/project initiation documents for each of the suggested actions within the action plan are further explored. 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.

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

- 7.1 A refresh of the Community Plan was approved at Full Council in October. 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; and
  - improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.

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

## **8.0 Policy & Finance Committee**

- 8.1 As has been reported the Climate Emergency Strategy and Emissions Reduction Plan were presented to the Policy & Finance Committee at their meeting held on 24 September 2020, where the decision was made to refer this to this Full Council Meeting for approval.
- 8.2 All Members were also invited to a workshop led by the Carbon Trust outlining the rationale behind the decision to set the carbon neutral target of 2035 and to gain further insight into the calculation of our carbon footprint.

## **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:**

- (a) the Council's carbon footprint target be approved - the footprint is calculated as 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e – which incorporates selected emissions from scopes 1, 2 and 3 (this footprint does not include emissions from housing (17,130 tCO<sub>2</sub>e), which have been considered separately);**
- (b) 2035 is approved 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) progress against the strategy and action plan, as coordinated by the Environmental Policy & Projects Officer, be reported to Policy & Finance Committee on an annual basis (additional projects and initiatives will be considered by the relevant officers and committees as required).**

## Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Briony Ashton, Environmental Policy & Projects Officer on Ext. 5357

Matthew Finch  
Director - Communities & Environment