

Executive
10th December 2020

Title: Climate Emergency Action Programme

Lead Officer: Dave Barber, Programme Director for Climate Change

Portfolio Holder: Alan Rhead, Environment Portfolio

Public report

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: Yes

Included within the Forward Plan: Yes

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: None

Final Decision: Yes

Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	17/11/20	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	N/A	N/A
CMT	17/11/20	Andrew Jones, Chris Elliott
Section 151 Officer	17/11/20	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	17/11/20	Andrew Jones, Graham Leach
Finance	17/11/20	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	18/11/20	Alan Rhead

1. Summary

- 1.1. In light of fact that circumstances prevented the Council Tax referendum taking place in May 2020, this report reviews the Climate Emergency Action Programme (CEAP) and specifically establishes the short term priorities for the Council in response to the Climate Emergency. It also sets out the process for establishing the pathway to achieve a carbon neutral District by 2030. Linked to the CEAP, the report also seeks agreement for the principle of working jointly with Stratford District Council on the response to the Climate Emergency. Finally, it seeks approval for some amendments to the Procurement Strategy and Code of Practice and agreement to support the ADEPT blueprint.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the action plan set out in Appendix 1 be agreed as the Climate Emergency Action Programme priorities for the period until June 2021 or until such time a full CEAP refresh has been agreed.
- 2.2. That £60,000 be agreed from the contingency reserve to support the CEAP priorities as detailed in Appendix 1 and in para 3.2 below.
- 2.3. That a further report be considered by the Executive in the first quarter of 2021/22 setting out the pathway towards a carbon neutral District by 2030 and a carbon neutral organisation by 2025, along with a resourced action plan for the period 2021 to 2025.
- 2.4. That the Executive agree in principle to work jointly with Stratford District Council on a programme of work to address the climate emergency across the whole of south Warwickshire, including sharing the post of Programme Director for Climate Change. Further, that joint structures to bring forward the shared programme of work are put in place alongside the practical, HR and financial arrangements required, and that this is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Head of Finance.
- 2.5. That the Procurement Strategy, as shown in Appendix 2, and the Code of Procurement Practice, as shown in Appendix 3, be amended to reflect the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration.
- 2.6. That proposals to create a Climate Action Fund (CAF), are included within the February 2021 Budget report, when there will be more clarity over the Council's overall funding and priorities to be met from the 2021/22 Budget.

- 2.7. That the Council formally supports the 5 priority recommendations calling for powers and resources to enable local authorities to address the Climate Emergency, as proposed in the ADEPT blueprint as set out in paragraph 3.8 below.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1. Recommendation 2.1: Following the Declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, the Council considered and, subject to a successful Council Tax referendum, unanimously supported a Climate Emergency Action Programme (CEAP) in February 2020. As the Council Tax referendum did not take place in May 2020, it is necessary to review the CEAP proposals. Appendix 1 sets out proposals for the priority actions through until June 2021. This ensures momentum continues with regard to the Council's climate change ambitions and in particular includes the programme of work that is required to establish the Council's and District's carbon reduction pathway and the detailed Climate Change Programme for the period 2021 to 2025.
- 3.2. Recommendation 2.2: As part of the priority actions set out in Appendix 1 there are a number of proposals that could require funding during the current financial year. This recommendation seeks agreement to utilise up to £60,000 from the contingency reserve to support that work. The focus of this funding is for two proposals:
 - 3.2.1 Appointing consultants to utilise the SCATTER carbon emissions tool to undertake an analysis of the District's carbon emissions to develop a detailed carbon reduction "pathway" to help the Council to identify which interventions have the greatest potential to reduce carbon emissions by 2030 in line with the Council's ambition for the District to be "as close as possible to carbon neutral by 2030". It is anticipated that this will cost up to approximately £20,000. Subject to Stratford District Council's agreement and funding, there is potential for this study to be undertaken across the whole of south Warwickshire to inform a joint work programme.
 - 3.2.2 Undertaking a high level feasibility study to assess the potential to invest in low carbon energy generation infrastructure in the District (or more widely across south Warwickshire) such as a hydrogen hub, solar farm and/or district heating. It is anticipated this could cost in the region of £40,000. Depending on the extent to which the study will encompass and benefit Stratford District, it is possible the costs to Warwick District Council will reduce if Stratford District Council are able to make a contribution to the study.

- 3.3. Recommendation 2.3: The programme of work set out in Appendix 1 is designed to maintain momentum until a more detailed and resourced Action Programme will be put forward. It is expected that this will be reported for consideration in the first quarter of 2021/22. However, in the event that the Action Programme is shared with Stratford District Council (see recommendation 2.4) the exact date for this will be dependent on agreeing timescales with Stratford District Council. This longer term action programme will draw on four key elements to ensure it is effective in delivering carbon reduction. Specifically, the Carbon Reduction pathway to 2030 for the District (and potentially, subject to the outcomes of recommendation 2.4 the whole of south Warwickshire) and the associated 2021 to 2025 Action Programme will respond to:
- 3.3.1 The level of resource that can be established through a Carbon Action Fund, including any funding directly agreed by the Council in its 2021/22 budget, funding that may be provided from Stratford District Council in the event that joint work arrangements for the Climate Emergency are agreed and any external funding such as grants and other funding mechanisms such as Community Municipal Investment Bond.
 - 3.3.2 The recommendations of the SCATTER pathway study which will show the interventions which can most quickly and most effectively achieve carbon reduction in the District (and potentially south Warwickshire) to get as close as possible to zero carbon by 2030.
 - 3.3.3 The recommendations of the People's Inquiry into Climate Change which will provide valuable insights into how people from across the District think climate change should be addressed.
 - 3.3.4 The potential for joint working with Stratford District Council, providing opportunities to develop a south Warwickshire Climate Emergency Action Programme and to invest in projects which have an impact across the whole of south Warwickshire with the potential for improvements in economies of scale and funding opportunities.
- 3.4 Recommendation 2.4: It has been agreed in principle to explore closer working with Stratford District Council across a range of services. There is potential to apply that principle to the work associated with the climate emergency declarations that both Councils have made. This recommendation proposes that the Programme Director for Climate Change is shared across the two Councils and that a joint strategic plan be developed to address climate change across the whole of south Warwickshire. Discussions with Stratford District Council have

started and there is emerging agreement to the principle of this arrangement. This recommendation seeks to formalise that principle and Stratford District Council will be taking a report to their Cabinet in January 2021 seeking a similar agreement in principle. Having established the principle, more detailed work will be undertaken to put in place the financial and practical arrangements to enable this to happen. This will include arrangements to:

- 3.4.1 share the costs of the Programme Director role and any other costs that are agreed to be within the scope of the joint arrangements. It should be noted that discussions to date suggest Stratford District Council will be in a position to commit financial resources to the shared work, although the scale and nature of this will be the subject of the detailed discussions.
 - 3.4.2 to coordinate how financial resources for the Climate Emergency (such as the Climate Action Fund) are utilised to achieve maximum benefits.
 - 3.4.3 adopt a shared Climate Emergency strategy or action programme in line with recommendation 2.3.
 - 3.4.4 put in place the political and management structures to support the delivery of the ambitions of both Councils in relation to climate change.
- 3.5 To enable momentum to be maintained, it is proposed that the detail of the arrangements set out in paragraph 3.4 be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the section 151 and the Leader of Council to agree. It should be noted that the shared arrangements may include a joint members advisory board, similar to that proposed for the South Warwickshire Local Plan. As a result of recommendation 2.4, the role and membership of the Climate Emergency PAB may need to change. At this stage, no other changes to the responsibilities and powers of formal Council committees are proposed. In addition, a meeting of the Employment Committee will be arranged in early 2021 to put in place the necessary employment arrangements.
- 3.6 Recommendation 2.5: The CEAP that was considered by Executive in February proposed that the Procurement Strategy and the Code of Procurement Practice should be updated to reflect the declaration of a Climate Emergency. These proposed amendments to these documents are shown in Appendices 2 and 3.
- 3.7 Recommendation 2.6: Proposals to develop a Climate Action Fund (CAF) will be brought forward as part of the 2021/22 budget setting report. The CAF will be used to support the delivery of priority initiatives proposed in the CEAP refresh. The scale of the proposed

fund will be determined in the context of a full understanding of the budgetary position and other demands on the Council's finances. Given the inability to hold a Council Tax referendum in May 2020, the scale of the CAF is likely to be significantly smaller than had been anticipated when the CEAP was considered in February 2020. Therefore, as part of the CEAP refresh, proposals will be developed to utilise that CAF in a way that has the potential to lever additional sources of funding and/or generate an income that could enable the fund to be grown over time. Crucially, proposals will focus on projects that have the potential to deliver a significant carbon savings in line with the People's Inquiry recommendations and the preferred carbon reduction pathways. In the event that recommendation 2.4 is supported, discussions will take place with Stratford District Council regarding the potential for similar contributions to be made by them.

3.8 Recommendation 2.7: A national coalition of council organisations, environment groups and others has been formed to make a concerted push to secure more powers and resources for local authorities to deliver on climate change. This coalition has developed a blueprint for the changes needed, drawing on inputs from councillors and council officers gathered through conferences and seminars organised by the LGA and the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) and through other networks. The blueprint is not intended to be the final word, but rather a starting point for constructive and meaningful discussion with government. Specifically, this coalition is asking Councils to indicate broad support for five priorities as a good basis to hold discussions with government about the role of local authorities and other local actors. The five priority recommendations are:

1. Invest in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure including public transport, renewable energy and electric vehicle charging
2. Support reskilling, retraining and research to accelerate the move to a net-zero economy
3. Upgrade our homes to ensure they are fit for the future
4. Make it easy for people to walk, cycle, and work remotely
5. Accelerate tree planting, peatland restoration, green spaces and other green infrastructure

3.9 Recommendation 2.7 seeks agreement for the Council to formally support these.

4. Policy Framework

4.1. Fit for the Future (FFF)

4.1.1. "The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects. This report shows the way forward for implementing a significant part of one of the Council's Key projects."

4.1.2. The use of the highlighted part is dependent upon the report being about a key project.

4.1.3. All reports need to say how the proposition within it contributes to the overall FFF Strategy by completing the boxes below in relation to the intended outcomes. If there are none then say so; if they work in the opposite direction, then say so.

4.1.4. "The FFF Strategy has 3 strands, People, Services and Money, and each has an external and internal element to it, the details of which can be found on the Council's website. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy."

4.1.5. Under each heading below, you should use auto-numbering for your paragraphs, and they should look like below (4.2.1, 4.2.2 etc.)

4.2. FFF Strands

4.2.1 External impacts of proposal(s)

People - Health, Homes, Communities – by addressing Climate Change the proposals in this report have the potential to improve health outcomes and risks associated with weather and environmental emergencies. Climate change initiatives are likely to directly improve air quality, encourage active travel and reduce fuel poverty with associated health benefits

Services - Green, Clean, Safe – the proposals set out in this report relate directly to the Council's ambitions of becoming a net-zero carbon organisation by 2025 and of reducing total carbon emissions within Warwick District to as close to zero as possible by 2030.

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment – The proposals in the report will provide the basis for the development of future plans to support and grow the green economy in the District at the same time as improving accessibility to town centres.

4.2.2. **Internal impacts of the proposal(s)**

People - Effective Staff – The CEAP will include proposals for communicating with staff so that each and every staff member can play their part in helping to achieve the Council climate change ambitions

Services - Maintain or Improve Services – The proposals for the People’s Climate Inquiry will ensure that the development of the CEAP is undertaken in a way that takes account of the needs and suggestions of the Council’s customers. Ongoing public engagement will enable changes to services to be carried out in a way that ensures customer outcomes are considered.

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term – Proposals for a Climate Action Fund will be incorporated into budget proposals to be considered in February 2021. If agreed, the Climate Action Fund will be utilised in a way that maximizes its impact, including considering the potential to use to generate income and to attract other sources of funding.

4.3. **Supporting Strategies**

4.3.1. “Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies with the Climate Emergency Declaration and ambitions being particularly relevant to the proposals for a CEAP. As set out in paras 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 this report sets out interim proposals for progressing work to achieve the Climate Emergency ambitions as well as the work that needs to be done to establish a longer term CEAP and carbon reduction plan during 2021.

4.4. **Changes to Existing Policies**

4.4.1. The CEAP that was considered by Executive in February 2020 was agreed subject to holding a successful Council Tax referendum. As the referendum was not able to take place, it has not been possible to fully establish the policies and approach set out in that report. This report provides a set of interim proposals which draw on a number of the more immediate proposals set out in that report as well as setting out how the CEAP will be fully refreshed in the first quarter of 2021/22.

4.5. **Impact Assessments**

4.5.1. The People’s Climate Inquiry is an important part of the Council’s approach to public engagement in relation to the development of the CEAP. Extensive work has been undertaken to ensure that the membership of the People’s Inquiry reflects the District’s population. In particular, efforts have been made to ensure the membership, as

far as possible, mirrors the District's population in relation to age, gender, ethnicity, disability, geography and attitude to climate change.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1. The £60k funding requested for the work detailed in paragraph 3.2 above, is proposed to come from the Contingency Budget which currently has an unallocated balance of £77,200.
- 5.2. Proposals to create a Climate Action Fund (CAF), will be included within the February 2021 Budget report when there will be more clarity over the Council's overall funding and priorities to be met from the 2021/22 Budget.

6. Risks

- 6.1. The Significant Business Risk Register (SBBR) identifies "Failure to meet District's ambition to be carbon neutral within specified timeframes" as a significant risk. This risk is within the "red" rating for residual risk and the mitigation notes the need to review the CEAP in light of the postponed referendum. The proposals set out in this report are important in mitigating this risk and provide a way forward to enable progress to be made in respect of the Council's climate change ambitions.
- 6.2. In terms of the proposals set out in the report, there is a risk that the level of funding available through the 2021/22 budget will not be sufficient to deliver the Council's climate change ambitions or that the programme of work that is developed in 2021 will fall short of the ambitions. This risk will remain until such time that the programme of work has been established and the projects are being delivered. They can be mitigated through careful planning to ensure that any resources that are committed are used to maximum effect in line with the People's Inquiry recommendations and the outputs from the proposed detailed analysis of the SCATTER data.
- 6.3. A further risk is that the feasibility study into potential energy generation projects shows that none of the projects are feasible. To mitigate this risk, work is currently underway to understand both opportunities and potential barriers before the feasibility study is commissioned. This includes talking to providers, other Councils, connected projects and local experts to ensure that the brief for the feasibility is focused on projects that do have a reasonable prospect of success.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1. The possibility of not seeking agreement for an interim CEAP ahead of a full refresh was considered. However, this would mean that the Council's climate emergency work until June 2021 would be undertaken within an uncertain context. The proposals for an interim Action Plan to June 2021 provide clarity about the immediate way forward.
- 7.2. The possibility of not funding the studies proposed at paragraph 3.2 until the 2021/22 budget had been approved was considered. However, the studies proposed are considered necessary in the short term to enable the development of a full CEAP refresh in the first quarter of 2021/22. The proposal to fund this now, reflects the emergency that has been declared and will enable progress to be made more rapidly during 2021 and will also help the Council to position itself better should external funding opportunities become available over the coming months.
- 7.3. Whilst it is necessary to refresh the CEAP in 2021, it would be possible to delay the date of this to allow more time and indeed this may be necessary in the context of developing a joint approach with Stratford District Council. However, efforts will be made to avoid this as this would be inconsistent with the declaration of a Climate Emergency. It would also be possible to utilise inputs that are different from those detailed in paragraph 3.3 to inform the development of the CEAP. However, the commitment to place a strong emphasis on the People's Climate Inquiry is important as the CEAP needs to draw on a good understanding of the issues and barriers our residents face in changing behaviours associated with climate change. Further, the People's Inquiry is likely to generate valuable ideas and recommendations for the Council which will help to shape our plans. The CEAP refresh also needs to draw on a detailed understanding of data and the resources available to deliver it. For these reasons the inputs proposed in paragraph 3.3 are considered to be necessary for the development of an effective CEAP.

- 7.4. The Council could choose not to work jointly on the Climate Emergency with Stratford District. This would have the advantage of being able to focus efforts specifically on Warwick District. However, this is not recommended as the proposal for joint working brings significant potential benefits in sharing resources, looking more widely and strategically (recognising that climate change impacts do not stop at District boundaries), increasing opportunities to attract funding and using synergies to develop interventions which have a greater impact. Further, the joint approach proposed is entirely consistent with the already established ambitions of both Councils and in that context it is expected that in working up the details any issues around setting priorities can be managed.