

Agenda Item No 4
 Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 20 July 2023

Title: Climate Change Action Programme Update
 Lead Officer: Dave Barber 01926 456065
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ian Davison
 Wards of the District directly affected: All

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	10/7	Cllr Ian Davison
Finance	N/A	
Legal Services	N/A	
Chief Executive	10/7	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change	10/7	Dave Barber
Head of Service(s)	N/A	
Section 151 Officer	N/A	
Monitoring Officer	10/7	Andy Jones/Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group	N/A	
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	Yes: Over View and Scrutiny Committee	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

Summary

This report provides an update on the Council's progress towards its climate change ambitions and specifically in relation to the delivery of the Climate Change Action Programme.

Recommendation(s)

- (1) That members note and comment on the progress made on the Climate Change Action Programme as set out in Appendix 1.
 - (2) That members note and comment on the updated CCAP risk register as set out in Appendix 2.
 - (3) That members note the previously agreed communications strategy, communications and engagement achievements from the past 6 month and updated priorities list from the four-month rolling plan in Appendix 3.
 - (4) That members note the updated Climate Change Funding Strategy as set out in Appendix 4
 - (5) That members note that the Carbon emissions baseline data will be updated as part of a separate report to the Committee in Autumn 2023, along with the data proposed for regular collation and reporting as part of the Climate Change Service Area Plan.
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1 Reasons for the Recommendation

1.1 The Climate Change Action Programme (CCAP) was agreed by Cabinet in November 2021. This sets out the key activities to be undertaken to ensure progress towards the Climate Change ambitions that had been agreed in July 2021.

1.2 Appendix 1 provides an update on progress against each of the CCAP commitments. Each is given a R.A.G rating (Red – Significant issues or challenges encountered, Amber – Progressing with some identified issues, Green – completed or on track) as an indication of progress. As can be seen from Appendix 1 there has been significant progress in a number of areas (see para 1.3 below). At the same time there are a number of activities where progress has faced some significant challenges (see para 1.4 below). The update from December 2022 is also included for context.

1.3 CCAP Progress Highlights:

1.3.1 **Ambition 1: Net Zero Carbon Council 2025: ensure the new South Warwickshire Council is net zero carbon within a year of its first elections and that services provided through contractors include carbon reduction targets to deliver net zero by 2030.**

Commitment 1.2: Deliver the Heat Decarbonisation Plan by establishing a Building Decarbonisation Fund for three years (2022/23; 2023/24; 2024/25):

- Proposals for energy efficiency and rooftop solar being brought forward for Jubilee House.

- Proposals being developed for the Temperate House including revisions to the planting scheme, solar and energy demand reduction measures.
- Funding for a scheme for replacement lighting for St Peters Car Park is being sought.
- Roof top solar for leisure centres being explored through Midlands Net Zero Hub and in discussion with Everyone Active.
- Further work associated with office relocation and the Pump Rooms being developed in the context of other projects and initiatives.

Commitment 2.4 : The protocol for Warwick Nature Based Solutions Carbon Offsetting scheme has been progressed providing an authentic option for local and high quality offsetting.

1.3.2 **Ambition 2: Low Carbon South Warwickshire 2030: to reduce net carbon emissions from across South Warwickshire by a minimum of 55% by 2030 and alongside this, plan how to further reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050.**

Commitment 1.1: Action - Ensuring the SWLP spatial strategy and policies minimise the need to travel to access employment, schools, services and leisure.

- The evidence base for the issues and options paper included a comprehensive assessment of the carbon implications of a range of options.
- Work is progressing on the evidence to support rural land use policies relating to food productions, carbon sequestrations, renewable energy, flood prevention and ecological protection and enhancements.
- Consultant in place to support work relating to the climate change implications of site allocations and policies.

Commitment 1.2 Driving less: we will work with our partners and communities to increase the percentage of journeys undertaken by foot, bicycle or public transport from 20% to 25% by 2030.

- "Choose How You move" Better Points scheme will be extended by a further year until 2024. An apprentice is in post to move forward with this project.

Commitment 1.3: Switching to low carbon vehicles: Work with WCC to encourage and enable the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) within South Warwickshire through contributing and agreeing a coherent strategic direction for the County and as a consequence South Warwickshire

- A South Warwickshire EV Infrastructure Strategy was approved by WDC and SDC Cabinets and detailed proposals are now being drawn up

Commitment 3.1 - Action: Continue to apply for external funding sources from BEIS (eg LADs) and other organisations and match against £18m Housing Improvement Programme monies available.

- The SWC scheme is continuing until September 2023. So far, 110 measures have been installed a combination of solar PV, air source heat pumps, loft, cavity wall, smart heating controls and high heat retention storage heaters. Successful planning applications for external wall

insulation and applications for solar PV within conservation areas and one on a grade II listed building. Further funding is being applied for.

Commitment 3.4: Promoting help and support available through Act on Energy

- The Home Energy Help Scheme is launching in July to offer support to residents that are 'able to pay' for measures but require support through the retrofit journey - this will be supported through a partnership with Act on energy and Furbnow. The complex caseworker is also under the Act on Energy SLA which is currently being finalised.

Commitment 3.6: We will require new build housing to be net zero carbon in operation through the introduction of planning policies (WDC NZC DPD and SWLP) which set clear building standards for energy efficiency, heating systems, renewable and low carbon energy sources and (if necessary) carbon offsetting.

- The Net Zero Carbon DPD is nearing the end of the main modifications consultation, and subject to the outcome of the consultation, it is hoped to adopt this by the Autumn of 2023.

Commitment 4.1 – Action: Consider retrofit grant/loan scheme for assets managed/owned by community groups and town and parish councils

- The Local Climate Engagement scheme has delivered an initial tranche of events. We are currently earning from these to consider how the District Council can support local action including potential energy and retrofit projects. In parallel, RUCIS now includes a stronger focus on environment and decarbonisation benefits. The scheme will continue to be promoted to local groups as a way of reducing environmental and climate impacts.

1.3.3 **Ambition 3: Adaptation 2050: by 2050 to enable our environment and communities to have adapted to the potential of at least 3 degrees rise in global temperatures by 2100.**

Commitment 1.1 We will use the Met Office data to incorporate planning policies in the SWLP which protect key species; enhance connectivity of habitats and encourage investment in new and important ecological assets

- The update of the Met Office "City Packs" was released in August 22. Any outputs from the Met Office will be used as part of the wider climate change analysis being undertaken to support policy development of the SWLP. Independent expert advice is being obtained to understand the climate change implications of different policy and strategy options in the SWLP.

Commitment 1.4 We will plant 160,000 trees in Warwick District by 2030.

- Plan in place - see report to Cabinet March 2022. 17,000 trees have been planted/enabled through the programme by March 2023. In addition, around 74,000 trees are projected to be delivered at Newbold Comyn and Tachbrook Country Park. The programme is focusing on firming up the delivery on the major sites as well as addressing the residual gap of around 68,000 trees by considering options such as, offsetting, land purchase and the Trees Call to Action Fund.

CCAP Progress Challenges:

1.3.4 Ambition 1

Commitment 1.1: By February 2022, we will develop a fully costed Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP) comprising a programme of works for decarbonising all Council Buildings.

- Whilst a Decarbonisation Plan was developed by the timescales this has provide difficult to use comprehensively to prioritise spending. Since then progress on developing a further heat decarbonisation plan for all WDC buildings (as opposed to plans for specific buildings) has ben hampered by a lack of expertise to drive this forward. The most recent route explored through the Low Carbon Skills Fund was unsuccessful. Plans are now being developed to procure an external contractor.

Commitment 1.3: Where the measures implemented in year 1 result in revenue savings as a result of reduced energy costs, these savings will be used to supplement the delivery of the Building Decarbonisation Fund.

- To date none of the decarbonisation measures implemented or planned have delivered demonstrable financial savings. Further, the steep increase in energy costs has also, for the time being, prevented this approach being taken forward. We have there been unable to use financial savings to supplement funding for building decarbonisation in this way.

1.3.5 Ambition 2

Commitment 1.2 – Action: Explore the options of a cycle route through Abbey Fields Park, Kenilworth linking into National Cycle Route 52

- Abbey Fields cycle path, Kenilworth: With a preferred route now identified, design work is about to get underway to enable the consultation to commence. The project is behind the schedule originally envisaged

Commitment 1.4 – Action: Explore potential for autonomous driverless pods and support the low carbon "Last Mile Delivery" concept in South Warwickshire Towns

- Neither of these concepts have been progressed due to limitations on site availability and resources. No further updates.

Commitment 3.3 – Action: Review building conservation policies to ensure an appropriate balance is achieved between protecting the significance of heritage assets whilst enabling retrofitting of homes to reduce carbon emissions (such as rooftop solar or cavity wall insulation).

- Building Conservation Policies workstream currently in progress to review guidance relating to listed buildings and conservation areas. Members working group has been set up and guidance which is published on website is in process of being updated. Also review of Conservation Area and CA Statements (currently underway) will allow further guidance to be provided. Conservation webpages have been updated to ensure guidance is up to date

1.3.6 Ambition 3

Many of the commitments in ambition 3 are shown as "amber" in the RAG rating column. This reflects that the fact that progress on this whole ambition started later than the other ambitions. The primary reason for this is that the

postholder for the new adaptation officer role, was not in post until August 2022. Since August, significant progress has been made in a key areas and good progress is now being made. It should be noted that it is intended to review this section in Autumn 2023, in light of the detailed work the postholder is doing with staff teams across the Council.

1.4 Carbon Baseline - Organisational Emissions and Warwick District-wide Emissions

1.4.1 The Carbon emissions data for the organisation and District are updated each year during the summer and are ready for reporting in the Autumn. A further report will therefore be brought to the Committee in Autumn 2023 setting out the organisational and District-wide carbon emissions data.

1.5 Communications and Engagement Update

1.5.1 Appendix 3 gives a summary of the communications and engagement highlights of the last 6 months, and some of our priorities for the first part of 2023.

1.6 Funding Update

1.6.1 An update on the climate change funding strategy is shown in Appendix 4.

1.7 Risk Register review

1.7.1 The Programme risk register has been updated (see Appendix 2) and extended to include in part 1 an assessment of the risk of failing to achieve the three climate change ambitions, whilst part 2 assesses the extent to which key generic risks could impact on the overall Climate Change Programme.

1.7.2 Part 1 shows that without using a carbon offset scheme there is a high risk of failing to achieve our 2025 ambitions. For the other ambitions, the risks are assessed as medium.

1.7.3 Part 2 shows that the likelihood of risk 6 occurring has increased slightly since December 2023. This relates to a lack of specialist expertise/skills to deliver the CCAP Action Plan. It has increased in likelihood as a result of the ongoing challenges with identifying expertise to support a comprehensive approach to assets decarbonisation and the ongoing costs associated with procuring expert advice to support the development of key projects such as the Net Zero Carbon DPD and the hydrogen hub.

1.7.4 There are two risks which continue to be categorised as "red". These are:

Risk 2: The cost of achieving the shared ambitions cannot not be met within available Council resources. See funding update at Appendix 7 for further information.

Risk 3: Increasing local impacts from climate change and increasing costs of supporting adaptation. Whilst the Council has its part to play in minimising the likelihood of this risk, in the main the likelihood of this risk occurring will be dependent on international action. However, it is important that we stay focused on this in considering the actions (and the costs) that we need to take to adapt to climate change. The greater the impacts on local weather patterns, the greater the long-term cost will be in helping our economy, environment and communities to adapt to those changes.

2 Alternative Options

- 2.1 Comments on the approach set out in the CCAP are welcome, including suggested alternatives.

3 Legal Implications

- 3.1 None

4 Financial Services

- 4.1.1 See update above and detail in Appendix 4. There are no financial implications of this report, aside from those already set out when the CCAP was adopted in November 2021.

5 Business Strategy

- 5.1 Responding to the Climate Emergency is a key element of the Council's Business Strategy. This report updates on the progress made over the last six months following the adoption of the Climate Change Action Programme. In particular the report is relevant to the Council's aim around a clean and green environment.
- 5.2 Health, Homes, Communities: The CCAP seeks to ensure that carbon emissions from homes with the District are reduced.
- 5.3 Green, Clean, Safe: the Climate Change Action Programme is central to this.
- 5.4 Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment: The CCAP seeks to support a clean, low carbon economy

6 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

- 6.1.1 Given the subject matter, it is inevitable that the report has significant climate change implications. These are set out in section 1 with details in the appendices.

7 Analysis of the effects on Equality

- 7.1.1 The report has not been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

8 Data Protection

- 8.1.1 There are no data protection implications.

9 Health and Wellbeing

- 9.1.1 Climate change actions, and particularly those associated with climate change adaptation, has significant implications for health and wellbeing. These will be incorporated into decision around adaptation interventions.

10 Risk Assessment

- 10.1 A risk register is set out in Appendix 4.

11 Consultation

- 11.1 There has been no consultation relating to this report, although the CCAP has been subject to community engagement as set out in Appendix 3

Background papers:

Appendix 1a: CCAP Update December 2022 – Ambition 1

Appendix 1b: CCAP Update December 2022 – Ambition 2

Appendix 1c: CCAP Update December 2022 – Ambition 3

Appendix 2: Climate Change Action Programme Risk Register

Appendix 3: WDC Communications review 2022, priorities 2023

Appendix 4: Updated Funding Strategy