

Sustainability Approach; Plastics Policy and CEAP Update

1. Part 1: The Sustainability Approach 2016-2020 Update

Aim 1: To embed sustainability at a strategic level

1.1 **Measure of success:** A sustainability impact assessment process has been put in place for major decisions.

Update: the 'Clean, Green, Safe' element has been included in the Fit for the Future (FFF) table contained within all report templates for some time. Over the last year, this has been supplemented by a requirement to consider how the report's proposals contribute to the CEAP aims of becoming a net-zero carbon organisation by 2025 and keeping the total carbon emissions within Warwick District as close to zero as possible by 2030.

1.2 **Measure of success:** All of our staff and elected members have received relevant information and training and plans are in place for the ongoing identification of training needs.

Update: There have been a number of presentations to the Managers Forum regarding the Climate Emergency and the role of each individual in addressing that. All staff received climate emergency meta-compliance training Summer 2019 once the climate emergency had been declared. In addition, the Sustainability Officer Group is in place and information on its activities is maintained on the Intranet. The Group is responsible for ensuring good sustainability practice is in place across the Council. Training needs are established through the appraisal process where staff roles have a direct impact on sustainability/climate change.

1.3 **Measure of success:** Every major decision is subject to a sustainability impact assessment.

Update: All Executive must address the requirements set out in the Fit for the Future section of the report (see 1.1 above). In addition, all reports are reviewed by CMT which now includes the Programme Director for Climate Change. This provides the opportunity for the climate impacts of reports to be checked and discussed prior to publication.

1.4 **Measure of success:** All major projects consider sustainability as part of the process.

Update: Sustainability considerations are increasingly becoming established in projects. This is supported by a growing awareness of project managers of the corporate focus on addressing climate change and by the process for drafting, reviewing and considering Committee reports as set out above.

Through his role on CMT, the Programme Director for Climate Change is now able to input in to projects where relevant.

Aim 2: To address our own impacts

1.5 Measure of success: To produce a sustainable travel plan.

Update: Previously we have installed 8 dual chargepoints (16 points in total) in Warwick District along with some on-street charging. More recently plans have been put in place to expand this significantly (see 3.15 below). The Council has a fleet of 7 electric vehicles which are used by staff to carry out site visits and other duties. A staff travel survey was undertaken and a car share postcode mapping exercise was undertaken by Liftshare which highlighted that 38% of staff may benefit from car sharing. A car share scheme was developed internally and almost ready to launch prior to the pandemic. The Council has a bike to work scheme in place and has also encouraged cycling through the Bicycle User Group which includes secure, indoor cycle parking, changing and shower facilities, and maintenance tools and tips. More widely, there are a range of initiatives that have supported, cycling, walking and which will ensure the Council's initiatives are firmly based within the strategic framework of the County Council's Local Transport Strategy review (see 3.20, 3.21 and 3.22 below).

1.6 Measure of success: We have produced a sustainable procurement toolkit.

Update: We have adopted a Sustainable Procurement Policy which sets out the guiding principles for all contracts and provides advice on the sustainable procurement considerations that procuring managers should address including issues such energy efficiency, recycling, packaging, pollution and sustainable sources. This policy links directly with the Code of Procurement Practice. The Senior Procurement Business Partner plays an active role on the Sustainability Officers Group and has actively influenced procuring managers to incorporate sustainability within procurement. There is room to further strengthen the approach to sustainable procurement. The Senior Procurement Business Partner has prepared further advice on how climate change in particular needs to be given a clearer focus in the Procurement Strategy and Code of Practice in light of the CEAP - see 3.12 below.

1.7 Measure of success We have identified and assessed the viability of additional energy & resource efficiency measures and set post-2018 targets.

Update: The Council has continued to invest in a range of energy efficiency measures within its assets such as improved weather compensators and rollout of LED lighting. A consultant's report on was prepared in early 2020. This sets out a number of further measures which could improve energy efficiency. However, whilst these proposals have the potential to bring further financial savings, the environmental and climate impacts of these proposals have been superseded partly by the Council's switch to green electricity and partly by the emerging bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund (see 3.9 below)

1.8 **Measure of success** We have assessed the viability of renewable & low-carbon energy schemes and set post-2018 targets.

Update: At present it has not been possible to progress any of the District Heating scheme options considered by Encraft. One is not viable due to a key partner not wishing to take part and the other is facing practical and conservation issues which is leading to considerable uncertainty and preventing progress in the timescales required. Nevertheless, these options are being revisited as part of the CEAP. Other options continue to be assessed including the potential for micro renewable energy schemes (such as solar panels), heat pumps, a hydrogen hub (see 3.25 below) and a solar farm (see 3.14 below)

1.9 **Measure of success:** We have updated our climate change risk assessment.

Update: This has been superseded by the CEAP.

Aim 3: To promote and enable sustainability in the wider district

1.10 **Measure of success:** We have completed our housing stock condition survey and produced an investment strategy to improve our stock's energy efficiency.

Update: The stock condition survey was undertaken in 2016 and the information from this is used to inform our investment priorities. In a report to the Joint meeting of the Finance & Audit and Overview & Scrutiny Committees, 24th July 2018 details were provided on each component of the survey including both the condition and the age of each element. It further outlined how components considered to be in a less than satisfactory condition would be renewed by March 2020. Following this meeting, Executive and Council agreed the alignment of funding to achieve these ambitions. The Housing Investment Programme is an annual programme which renews building components such as windows, doors, roofs, heating and which considers insulation measures.

1.11 **Measure of success:** We have produced a district-wide fuel poverty strategy.

Update: A draft Fuel Poverty Strategy was prepared in March 2020. However, it was agreed not to progress the strategy at that time as it was decided that better linkages to the Climate Action Fund was required and resources agreed to deliver the action plan. The Strategy is now being revised and will be reported to Executive in December 2020. Despite the absence of an adopted strategy, work did take place in relation to the 2019 Winter energy campaign with Act on Energy and plans are underway for the winter 2020 campaign in the form of communications to residents.

1.12 **Measure of success:** All of our tenants have been provided with advice and/or assistance (as required) relating to reducing fuel bills.

Update: All Tenants were provided with information by the way of a small postcard in Winter 2019/20 regarding fuel switching and signposting to the repairs team for support with heating and insulation. In addition, door knocking and drop-in events took place at Crown to signpost Tenants to help available. Act on Energy offer a Freephone telephone line to help all residents in the District with home energy efficiency advice and home visits can also be undertaken for complex cases. An initiative to contact private sector landlords with Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) of 'E' 'F' and 'G' has been undertaken, and we have signposted such landlords to information to help make improvements. Act on Energy has attended a number of 'drop-in' home energy efficiency events during the Winter months at community Forums, local community hubs and dementia groups and cafes. ECO (Energy Company Obligation) funding is provided by energy providers and is aimed at householders on means tested benefits to help cover the cost of installing boilers and insulation measures. A Statement of Intent has been signed by the authority in relation to ECO Flex, which is an extension of ECO. The 'flex' element enables the authority to provide funding to vulnerable residents not necessarily on means tested benefits such as those on a low income, with small children, a disability or health condition and on a prepayment meter. There are also a significant number of grants delivered under the HEART Partnership (Home Environment Assessment Response Team) which provides advice and home improvement and adaptation work to disabled residents including home energy efficiency improvements. In addition, the Warm & Well Service operates across the County to offer grants and support to residents with health conditions. The Service Level Agreement with Act on Energy has come to an end because it was not considered value for money, however the freephone advice line and Warm & Well service will continue along with ECO grants support. This ultimately means that the Council is now taking the lead on promoting Act on Energy and home energy support within communities through social media, newsletters, community centres and linking to third sector organisations.

1.13 **Measure of success:** Rates of fuel poverty in the district have reduced.

Update: The proportion of households in fuel poverty in Warwick District (source ONS) is as follows:

2014: 10.8% (6429 households)

2015: 12.3% (7376 households)

2016: 10.8% (6598 households)

2017: 10.0% (6142 households)

2018: 8.6% (5369 households)

(NB: data for 2019 is not yet published)

2. **Part 2: Plastics Policy Update**

2.1 **Priority:** Procurement - We will wherever possible avoid the procurement of single-use plastics in relation to eating and drinking, such as straws, water bottles, disposable cutlery and plastic cups and source practical alternatives. Where we cannot avoid single-use plastics, we will aim to ensure these contain recycled plastic and can be easily recycled.

Update: Plastic Free Champion status achieved for Warwick District Council. Plastic cups and drinking straws avoided from the Town Hall, Royal Pump Rooms and Royal Spa Centre. Recyclable pint and half pint glasses introduced to Royal Spa Centre to replace single-use. Some carbonated plastic drink bottles have been replaced with glass. Everyone Active have introduced re-usable coffee cups at the café at Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre. Milk coffee stirrer refills in the training room to be avoided, using up existing supplies first.

2.2 **Priority:** Procurement - We will minimise plastic from the goods that are procured where available and challenge suppliers in this area.

Update: Introduced single-use plastic reduction requirements to tenders in relation to our suppliers and contractors.

2.3 **Priority:** Procurement - We will avoid plastic bottle use in relation to the election count.

Update: Avoided single-use plastic bottles and cups at the May election count, however there were drinks available from the onsite café in non-sustainable receptacles. Ballot box plastic seals and plastic bags are recycled.

2.4 **Priority:** Procurement - We will include plastic avoidance requirements in procurement guidance.

Update: The sustainable procurement guidance is being refreshed.

2.5 **Priority:** Procurement - will procure items made from recycled plastic where plastic cannot be avoided.

Update: Not yet formally introduced or fully monitored.

2.6 **Priority:** Tender Contracts - we will include plastic avoidance requirements in tender contracts if applicable.

Update: Plastics policy requirements have been added to the Project Initiation Document (PID) for new tenders. A disclaimer has been added to the tender information document to advise bidders of the council's commitment to reducing single use plastics. A pass/fail question has been added to the commercial response template as part of the technical and professional criteria for all procurements over £25k. To be used for relevant contracts as a pass/fail criteria. Monitoring of this commitment will be undertaken by contract managers. Ensuring this is monitored will be investigated as part of the contract management review.

2.7 **Priority:** Staff Awareness - We will explore further opportunities to recycle more types of plastic from our own buildings and provide clear guidance to staff on the types of plastic that can be recycled.

Update: Introduced new plastic recycling streams at Riverside House including for crisp packets and office stationery / office consumables in

conjunction with the organisation Terracycle. The office recycling guide has been refreshed.

- 2.8 **Priority:** Staff Awareness - We will ensure Staff are aware of the environmental impacts of plastic use and provide guidance on how to reduce their impact at home and at work.

Update: Training is under development as part of wider staff sustainability awareness.

- 2.9 **Priority:** Monitoring our performance - We will monitor the number of single-use plastic items avoided. We will monitor the number of new plastic recycling streams introduced.

Update: A Plastics Register is in place to capture the progress with items that are avoided, re-used or recycled and is available to all staff on the Intranet to update as and when required.

- 2.10 **Priority:** Raising Awareness - We will work with Birmingham Commonwealth Games Organising Committee in relation to the Commonwealth Games in Leamington Spa to avoid the use of single-use plastics.

Update: Discussed at the Commonwealth Committee. Further work required to check the BCGOC policies incorporate single-use plastic free commitments.

- 2.11 **Priority:** Litter and recycling - We will continue to support Clean Up Britain on the 'Now or Never' scheme to reduce litter. We will support the implementation of the National 'Re-fill' scheme across the District. We will continue to collect recycling from bring sites located in various public places across the District.

Update: Now or Never have supported two recent events that WDC organised, being a plastic free stall to support 'Green Week' and the 'Ecofest' event, which were both well attended. The Spa Centre and Pump Rooms Café are now Re-fill sites. There have been a number of Re-fill messages on social media and this will be on-going. Bring Sites continue to be promoted. Plastics Policy animation developed for the public, promoted on social media and our website to bring together the work of local organisations on the plastic free agenda.

- 2.12 **Priority:** Events - We will develop plastic reduction event guidance in relation to events that we organise and share this where events are taking place on our land.

Update: Plastic Free Leamington & Warwick Group have developed some useful requirements to help achieve single use plastic free stalls at events and this is with the Events team for consideration. Recycling of plastic bottles is now offered as a standard chargeable service at all events on our land along with these other items: glass; cans and cardboard. A formal Events Guide is in the final stages of being produced by the Events team and will incorporate both recycling and plastics avoidance guidance along with other requirements.

3. **Part 3: Climate Emergency Action Programme Update** Work Package 1: Programme Establishment

3.1. **Priority:** Establish Climate Emergency Programme Board.

Update: CEPAB Established. 1st meeting held 5/10/20.

3.2. **Priority:** Approval for year 1 priorities including budget.

Update: Initial priorities arising from the CEAP have been supported by the Climate Emergency Working Party (1st July) and the LCG (13th July) and form the basis of this update. A further report will be brought to the December Executive alongside the 2021/22 baseline budget report setting out priorities though to April 2021 and the framework for agreeing priorities beyond that date.

3.3. **Priority:** Establish provisional Climate Action Fund.

Update: In the absence of the 2020 Council Tax referendum, the establishment of a CAF has been part of the discussions for the 2021/22 budget. Subject to the outcome of these discussions, proposals will be brought forward for approval by Council as part of the budget report in February 2021.

3.4. **Priority:** Establish GHG monitoring and reporting.

Update: There are two parts to this. For the Council's own carbon emissions, we are currently collating data for 2019/20 to update the Council's footprint through One Carbon World. It is hoped the updated data will be available by the end of November. The second part concerns the District's carbon footprint. This will be undertaken using the SCATTER tool and will provide consistent data with that published in the CEAP. Work on the year 1 update is now underway and we expect to have the updated outcomes early in the new year.

3.5. **Priority:** Consider proposals for Council Tax Referendum in 2021 to support a CAF.

Update: It is not proposed to hold a Council Tax referendum in May 2021 due to the Covid Pandemic

3.6. **Priority:** Agree and deliver approach to community engagement.

Update: The Citizen's Assembly (known as the Warwick People's Climate Inquiry) will commence on 12th November, with initial findings in February 2021 and a final report to follow shortly after (see also para 3.18). In addition, the CEPAB have suggested a small number of themed climate action teams to engage with local experts and activists. These will be established in January 2021 and are likely to cover themes relating to each of the main sources of CO2 emissions in the District: transport; household energy; business and institutional energy.

3.7. **Priority:** Partnerships.

Update: A wide range of partnership work is either underway or is being established through developing key relations:

- Warwickshire Strategic Officers Group established
- Warwickshire Members Group established
- WCC (transport) – meetings with key officers involved with WCC transport have taken place – exploring both opportunities shape the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan and to get involved with practical projects relating to projects such as cycling and EV charging
- Warwickshire Police - discussions with Police’s sustainability group to explore synergies
- SWFT/Warwick Hospital – meeting with SWFT sustainability lead to explore synergies. Looking at the potential to share energy saving messages for staff working from home
- Stratford District Council – potential to develop a shared strategic approach and to share resources has been discussed. No decisions taken yet, but has the potential to form part of the move towards closer working relationships with SDC.
- University of Warwick – regular meetings with Vice Chancellor (next one in Jan 2021) provide the opportunity to share strategic approach to climate change. Ongoing discussions with the university’s sustainability lead. Also exploring potential for academic and research partnerships whereby the University may be able to support WDC initiatives which involve innovation. In addition, for each of the last three years the Council has provided placement opportunities for UoW students who are undertaking courses relating to sustainability and climate change. These placements have proved to be of significant value to the Council.
- Further work needed to establish or strengthen other partnerships including with CWLEP, WMCA, Town and Parish Councils, Sustrans.

3.8. **Priority:** Business Engagement.

Update: Limited progress to date. Initial discussions have taken place with Sustainability West Midlands who support a business network which focuses on sustainability and climate change. This has not yet been followed up, but is expected to be a focus from January 2021

Work Package 2: Carbon Neutral Council by 2025

3.9. **Priority:** Energy reduction in Council Buildings.

Update: Proposals are being developed for a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. This will focus on, wherever possible, replacing gas (and other fossil fuel) boilers with heat pumps, along with other energy efficiency measures. The bid will be submitted during November and if successful, will be implemented by September 2021. As the Council has now switched to 100% green (renewable) electricity, other energy efficiency measures relating to electricity usage (such as installing LED bulbs) will not directly impact on carbon emissions. These measures will therefore be brought forward separately as part of the Council’s savings proposals.

- 3.10. **Priority:** Support for home working and review staff green travel initiatives and incentives.

Update: Data to demonstrate the impact of Covid on staff travel and associated carbon emissions is currently being collated. This will inform future priorities around staff travel. In response to Covid, there has been considerable investment to support staff working from home. Not only does this enable the Council to continue to provide services during the pandemic, it has significantly accelerated and expanded the potential for significant levels of homeworking beyond the pandemic. This in turn, will significantly reduce staff commuting. Other staff travel initiatives and messages will, in future, be a focus for the Sustainability Officer's Group.

- 3.11. **Priority:** Develop and deliver a communications plan for staff and Councillors.

Update: the Communications Plan has not yet been developed. It has been agreed that internal communications will become a significant focus of the Sustainability Officers Group and will be discussed at their next meeting. Otherwise, internal communications have been limited to ad hoc initiatives such as a presentation to Managers Forum.

- 3.12. **Priority:** Procurement and contracts.

Update: An approach to better integration of climate change with procurement and contract management has been put forward by the Senior Procurement Business Partner. This will form part of the CEAP update to be considered by Executive in December 2020.

- 3.13. **Priority:** Ensure WDC building projects are built to standards that deliver net zero carbon or have a clear justification for not doing so

Update: Significant ongoing work on a number of projects. Work with Culture to design Kenilworth Leisure proposals in a way that minimises carbon emissions; work with CDP to minimise carbon emissions associated with Spencer Yard proposals; work with Culture to support design proposals for the Community Stadium that are zero carbon in use and subject to financial feasibility, minimise embodied carbon; advice to WCC on developing the brief for the Oakley Grove School with a view to achieving zero carbon; Housing Services developing an approach to achieve zero carbon in new Council house building.

- 3.14. **Priority:** Evaluate the most effective approach to renewable energy investment for Council (and other) assets.

Update: Proposals for heat pumps to replace gas boilers are being prepared (see 3.9 above); proposals for investment in a WDC Solar Farm are still under consideration – the site initially proposed is unlikely to be viable and may not be available, but alternatives are being explored with potential to link in with developments to the south of Warwick, Whitnash and Leamington. A review of the District Heating Network report is being undertaken, particularly exploring the potential for an energy centre in the Europa Way area.

- 3.15. **Priority:** Implement proposals for Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure in Car Parks and other WDC facilities.

Update: We have jointly (with WCC) procured additional charge points for WDC car parks. In total 48 charge points (24 dual units) will be provided across Warwick, Leamington and Kenilworth (net, this will be an increase of 40 charge points as some existing points may be replaced). This will be installed early in 2021. In addition, there will be approx. 4-8 on street charge points (2-4 dual units) provided in the District. Beyond that, we are working with WCC to establish a EV Strategy which will provide the framework for introducing further charging points in the District to meet growing demand.

Work Package 3: Carbon Neutral District by 2030

- 3.16. **Priority:** Set up and run a Citizens' Assembly (known as the Warwick District People's Climate Inquiry).

Update: The facilitation team has been appointed; an "Oversight Panel", comprising of local experts and leaders, is in place to provide advice on the establishment and running of the Inquiry; the 30 Inquiry participants have been selected – they reflect the District's population in terms of a range of demographics and in terms of their knowledge/view of climate change; the first meeting of the Inquiry will take place on 12th November with 9 more sessions planned through until early February; initial findings will be available from early February, including a briefing for all Councillors.

- 3.17. **Priority:** Develop WP3 priority actions.

Update: The existing WP3 roadmap will be developed into Programme Plan for consideration by Executive in April 2021. This will set out a 10-year pathway towards a zero carbon district along with priority actions, timescales, resource/cost requirements for the first 5 years. The Programme Plan will be informed by:

- The outcomes of the People's Climate Inquiry
- The outcome of the 2021/22 budget setting process
- The development of a carbon reduction pathway based on the SCATTER data
- Emerging central Government priorities and opportunities and partner initiatives that can help achieve WDC's ambitions

- 3.18. **Priority:** Progress Climate Change and Sustainable Buildings DPD.

Update: A draft DPD has now been prepared by Development Services. This will be brought to Executive in early 2021 to agree a period of consultation,

- 3.19. **Priority:** Develop Strategy for Local Plan review.

Update: Proposals for Joint Local Plan with SDC have been established. From WDC's point of view it is understood climate change will be at its heart, but a report setting out the strategic framework for the Local Plan

will be developed with SDC for consideration by the Executive early in process. In the meantime, work on an evidence base is underway, with WDC leading the sub-regional work relating to the climate change evidence base.

3.20. **Priority:** Work with WCC on a Local Transport Strategy.

Update: WCC is preparing a Local Transport Strategy for consultation in January or February 2021. This will provide an opportunity for WDC to respond to the Strategy. WCC officers have committed to involve the Districts and Boroughs in the strategy. It is understood that active travel and carbon reduction are likely to be central to the strategy.

3.21. **Priority:** Develop Town Centre Access Strategy.

Update: there has been no progress on a strategy, in part because any Town Centre Access strategy needs to be developed in the context of the Local Transport Strategy (see 3.20). However, several initiatives are progressing for access to and around Leamington Town Centre including the Future of the High Street Fund proposals, Leamington Station Forecourt, changes to the Bath St area; introduction of a Better Points sustainable transport initiatives (restart in January 2021 through to August 2022); improved waymarking and various cycle infrastructure improvements; and electric taxis - a taxi assessment will be offered by Electric Blue to help encourage taxi drivers to go electric and two rapid chargers adjacent to taxi ranks will be installed with funding already obtained from Evolve.

3.22. **Priority:** Deliver sustainable transport initiatives included in Commonwealth Games LEP Funding.

Update: Station Forecourt proposals have published and are on track for delivery; wayfinding proposals are being finalised and are due for consultation shortly; the Better Points Sustainable Travel programme is progressing; extended and improved cycle facilities are planned.

3.23. **Priority:** Tree Planting project.

Update: Neighbourhood Services have developed proposals to establish the Tree Planting project, and to deliver tree planting on some initial sites during the tree planting seasons of 2020/21 and 2021/22. These proposals, including the first part of the funding, were agreed at Executive on 1st October.

3.24. **Priority:** Develop WDC housing building standards that delivers zero carbon.

Update: Housing Services are establishing building standards to deliver zero carbon Council houses as proposals are brought forward.

3.25. **Priority:** Implement proposals for EV Infrastructure in Car Parks and other WDC facilities.

Update: See 3.15 above. In addition, work on a connected zero-carbon transport initiative is now commencing. This is exploring the feasibility of

developing a hydrogen hub within the District, potentially in conjunction with the Asps Park and Ride. Whilst this work is still in its early stages consideration is being given to producing green hydrogen and using this to fuel buses and municipal contract vehicles. In the right location, the hydrogen production process could be fuelled directly from renewable energy such as a solar farm. Subject to the outcome of the current work on high level feasibility and rough costs/income, a report will be brought to Executive in due course seeking agreement to commission a more focused feasibility study.