

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	16 September 2019
Title:	Climate Emergency
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Matthew Bird, Cabinet member for sustainability
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To agree next steps following the resolution by Full Council to declare a climate emergency and allocate £100k to support the immediate development of a comprehensive Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy to tackle carbon reduction and climate adaptation.
Decision type:	Key
Officer recommendation(s):	That £100k be approved to progress carbon reduction and climate adaptation interventions in 2019/20.
Reasons for recommendations:	Following the declaration of a climate emergency and a commitment by the Council to develop and deliver a comprehensive Climate Change Strategy , this report seeks Cabinet's allocation of funds to enable the progression of all the commitments made at Full Council on 15th July 2019.
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1 Introduction

1.1 At its meeting on 15th July 2019, Lewes Full Council agreed the following resolution;

1. To develop a comprehensive Climate Change Strategy within 12 months that addresses all inward and outward-facing Council functions and implement appropriate monitoring and reporting mechanisms in order to:

- Ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030;

- Ensure that appropriate resources and capacity are put in place to progress the actions needed to address the 'climate emergency'

effectively; and

- Support and work with relevant agencies and stakeholders towards making the entire District zero carbon and climate resilient by 2030.

- 2. To request Scrutiny Committee to set up a Climate Change Scrutiny Panel that receives progress reports on the policy and actions enacted by the Council to address the 'Climate Emergency'. This incorporates the existing request to Scrutiny Committee to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by the Climate Change Action Group. The Panel will also invite appropriate experts to support Council climate change actions.*
- 3. To request that a Community Climate Change Forum is convened with representation and participation from across the district. Invitees to include but not be restricted to representatives from local communities, parish and town councils, organisations, business, education, nature groups, agricultural, food, health and transport groups.*
- 4. To request that the Council is especially proactive in taking steps to include young people in the 'Climate Emergency' process, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the future.*
- 5. To report on an annual basis to the Audit and Standards Committee on the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry that our pensions plan and other investments have, and review the Council's investment strategy to give due consideration to climate change impacts in the investment portfolio.*
- 6. To ensure that all reports in preparation for the 2020/21 budgeting take into account actions the Council will take to address this emergency.*
- 7. Portfolio Holder to write to the Government to set out the Council's intentions and call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask our local MP to do likewise."*

- 1.2 This paper sets out a proposed way forward for Cabinet to consider which would enable the council to start to deliver the actions set out in the resolution.

2 Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy

- 2.1 Central to this work will be the development of a detailed strategy which will set out what action the council will take in relation to carbon reduction, climate adaptation and other issues relating to sustainability. This strategy will build on the existing Sustainability Policy which was adopted in 2018 and thus will be named a Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy. The strategy will be supported by a detailed, fully costed action plan with clear measures to track progress and demonstrate outcomes. Establishing a clear baseline and appropriate metrics against which to measure carbon reduction will be an

essential element of this work.

- 2.2 It is proposed that the Strategy, whose overall aim will be to achieve net zero carbon position by 2030, will focus in particular on areas such as; biodiversity, transport, air quality, waste and recycling, energy, food, water, procurement and planning. The emphasis will be twofold; addressing what the council can do itself to become more sustainable, and also how we will work with partners and the wider community to help tackle climate change issues across the district.

3 Climate Change Scrutiny Panel

- 3.1 Both Council and Cabinet have resolved that the Scrutiny Committee be asked to set up a Climate Change Scrutiny Panel. The Scrutiny Committee on 12 September will be asked to agree to the establishment of this Panel, including the number of Members to participate. It is recommended that the Panel should continue to operate for the full duration of the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy to ensure a maintained focus on this work.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny Panel will be able to build on the initial work of the previous Climate Action Group and have a key role in scrutinising the progress of work already agreed in this area. The Panel would also play an important function in promoting the councils' work in this area and building partnerships, alongside the Cabinet Member for Sustainability. The Panel would also have a policy development function, assisting with the formulation of proposals prior to recommendations being made to Cabinet when formal decisions need to be taken.

4 Delivering the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy

- 4.1 The resolution above represents a significant enhancement to the council's work in this area. Although having already adopted a sustainability policy, the proposed Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy will require considerably more data collection, research and expert advice in its development than was the case with the high level sustainability policy.
- 4.2 The required skills, experience and expertise are not currently available within the councils' staff team and therefore it is recommended that Cabinet agree the creation of a dedicated post to develop and support this work. Eastbourne Borough Council also considered a similar proposal for commitment of funds at its Cabinet meeting on 11 September 2019. The combined resource would enable recruitment of an officer with the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to work across the councils to ensure a joined-up corporate approach to addressing the challenges of climate change. It is proposed that the post of Strategy and Partnership Lead for Sustainability be created for this purpose.
- 4.3 It is recognised that the development and delivery of a Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy will cut across the work of many parts of the council. To ensure all relevant functions and services are fully engaged in this process, an officer working group will be established. This would be chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive and would include representation from all relevant teams,

including;

- Business planning
- Commercial business
- Parks and outdoor services
- Fleet management
- Property
- Tourism and enterprise
- Housing (property services)
- Planning policy
- Legal

4.4 The group would work, supported by the Strategy and Partnership Lead for Sustainability, to ensure commitment from across the organisation to take Cabinet and Council's resolutions forward. This would include contributing to the development and delivery of the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy.

4.5 In order to enable this work to be progressed at pace in the current year, a fund is proposed for carbon reduction and climate adaptation initiatives. Plans for use of these funds would be developed by the officer working group in collaboration with the Cabinet Member for Sustainability. A sum of **£100k** is recommended, the majority of which would fund carbon reduction initiatives in the current year, with the remainder being for the post outlined at 4.2.

4.6 Included in the group's responsibility would be to establish a baseline position against which to measure progress towards carbon reduction targets. Alongside this, the group will make recommendations for a proportionate, sustainable and affordable method of tracking that progress.

4.7 As an initial step, report authors have also been asked to include a sustainability impact statement in all future committee reports. This will aim to provide advice to members about the potential impacts, either positive or negative, to future sustainability of implementing any proposals set out in the report.

5 Financial appraisal

5.1 The Council's approved financial plans include a limited provision for one off initiatives without increasing the demand on the approved budget.

5.2 In addition, application will be made to grant funding bodies or funds from other sources aimed at increasing the financial capacity and reduce reliance on the Council's financial resources.

6 Legal implications

6.1 The EU and UK have adopted ambitious targets and legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency and increase renewable energy. In particular, the EU has adopted a framework for climate change and energy policy with targets for 2030, and the UK has adopted the Climate Change Act 2008.

- 6.2 The Council's actions to deliver a Climate Change Strategy and to allocate funds for specific interventions must be consistent with these targets and legislation.

Lawyer consulted 05.08.19

Legal ref: 008476-LDC-OD

7 Risk management implications

- 7.1 Implementing proposals contained in this report would reduce the risk of the council not achieving its aspirations in relation to carbon reduction.

8 Equality analysis

- 8.1 This report has no specific equality implications. Equality analyses will be undertaken of the various proposals developed subsequently to address the climate emergency.

9 Sustainability impact analysis

- 9.1 The proposals in this report, if implemented, will help the council to progress its commitment to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

10 Appendices

none

11 Background papers

Sustainability Policy

<https://democracy.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/documents/s8839/Sustainability%20policy.pdf>