

# South Northamptonshire Council

## Council

13 May 2020

### Climate Change Action Plan

## Report of Executive Director: Operations

The report is public

### Purpose of report

This report follows two previous reports to Council in 2019 that set out the Climate Change challenge in South Northants and the key potential action areas for reducing carbon emissions.

The report recommends several short-term actions that can be carried out in 2020/21, before the West Northants unitary authority is formed and that will progress carbon reduction. Targets are also recommended that are based on a calculation of what is needed for South Northants to make its contribution to the Government's goal of making the UK carbon neutral by 2050. They are presented as aspirational targets, many parts of them are outside of the direct control of local authorities, and they can be reviewed by the West Northants Council considering the learning from implementing the Action Plan.

The Coronavirus pandemic will clearly influence the Action Plan and that learning can also be fed into a future review of the targets and actions.

## 1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Adopt the aspirational targets for carbon emission reduction set out in table 2, Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Agree the 2020/21 Climate Change Action Plan set out in paragraphs 3.4-3.10.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 In July 2019, following the announcement of a legally-binding national target to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, an acknowledgment

was made by full council, that action needed to be taken by all levels of Government.

- 2.2 To investigate what action could be taken by South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), a cross-party Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) was established, overseen by the Scrutiny Committee. This group has produced a report detailing the carbon footprint of the district and an interim report to full council in December which identified potential action areas and recommended the continuation of this work, including the production of an action plan to be presented to full council at their next meeting in April 2020.
- 2.3 SNC is currently going through a process of Local Government Reform (LGR), which, on 1 April 2021, will see SNC abolished and replaced by a new unitary authority; the West Northamptonshire Council (WNC). WNC will cover the geographical area currently served by SNC, Daventry District Council (DDC) and Northampton Borough Council (NBC). Creating a climate change action plan this brings challenges and opportunities: whilst short term actions by this council can be achieved, attaining net-zero across the district will require ongoing action well beyond 1 April 2021. WNC will have a wider scope in terms of powers and influence as well as resources, expertise and geographical reach meaning it could have a greater impact and progress climate change action further and faster.

### **3.0 Report Details**

#### **3.1 Strategic objectives and Targets**

This action plan has been developed with the aim of achieving the following strategic objectives:

- Short-term SNC actions and recommendations for actions to be taken by WNC
- Engaging and mobilising others
- Co-designing WNC capacity and capability

These objectives highlight the role of SNC in tackling climate change. We are limited in what we can achieve directly, but we can make sure that we take whatever actions we can, as well as using our position as a local authority to encourage action from others and develop a road map that will ensure action on climate change is taken by WNC.

The proposed approach to target setting is set out in **Appendix 1**.

#### **3.2 Embedding Climate Change action for the future**

Ambitious and effective action will need to be taken on climate change for the foreseeable future, both in terms of mitigation and of adaptation. To ensure continued progress is made, climate change action needs to be embedded in everything we do. In practice this means working across departments to

develop and support practices, policies and projects which can be followed by those working within those departments, educating, enabling and empowering external organisations and individuals to take their own action on climate change and working with other authorities to develop a road map and action plan for WNC which can be in place from day one.

### 3.3 Action Plan

The following sets out a proposed Plan for the council of actions which can be taken prior to vesting day on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. Where relevant, this action plan will also make reference as to how SNC's actions will lead into recommended actions for WNC. A further, report to be produced before vesting day, will cover the actions that SNC recommend for WNC in more depth, as well as details of lessons learnt over the course of this action plan. Further supporting information for each action area is set out in **Appendix 2**.

### 3.4 Own operation

#### Summary

##### Actions:

- Engage an external consultant to conduct energy audits at The Forum, Tove Depot, Towcester Centre for Leisure and Brackley Leisure Centre and analyse data from energy software in fleet vehicles
- Use findings from the above to carry out a series of works to reduce building energy demand and increase energy efficiency
- Reduce fleet fuel usage by 8% in 2020/21 against a 2018/19 baseline
  - Use findings from the above to develop a programme of training for drivers to increase driver efficiency
  - Use waste collection round optimisation software to minimise mileage
- Promote alternatives to council travel methods via internal communications
- Climate Change Officer to work with Procurement team to review purchasing policies to include climate change considerations

##### Financial implications:

- Consultant charges: £6,200
  - Funding sourced from existing budget
- Programme of works costs currently unknown
  - £25k has been allocated in the 2020/21 budget for the survey and improvement of energy efficiency in corporate buildings
  - Additional funding can be sourced via a SALIX loan to be repaid from energy bill savings
- Route optimisation software use, already budgeted for within refuse and street cleansing budget

### 3.5 Communications

#### Summary

##### Actions:

- Deliver a year-long communications campaign; the 'Climate Change Challenge'
- Engage with external parties to empower individual and group actions
- Develop partnerships to extend the reach of climate change actions
- Identify the most effective ways to support Parish and Town Councils with climate change actions

##### Financial implications:

- The above actions will be undertaken by in-house teams using existing channels and resources

### 3.6 Housing

#### Summary

##### Actions:

- Devise a method of communicating with those living in fuel poverty to advise on the benefits and funding available for improving insulation
- Directly contact 8,000 of the properties not connected to the gas grid to advise them of the benefits of alternative low emissions heating systems and funding available
- Create a collection of information for all householders on measures which can be taken to improve the efficiency of their homes
- Create information packs to be provided to private and social landlords on measures which can be taken to improve the efficiency of the properties they manage/own
- Seek feedback from householders as to the barriers they face in making adaptations to their homes

##### Financial implications:

- The above actions will be carried out by in-house staff
- Costs for direct mailing and printing of materials are estimated to be no more than £8000

### 3.7 Waste and recycling

3.8

Tree  
planting

<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver a communications campaign with a focus on waste reduction, increased reuse and recycling</li><li>• Identify local community partners to establish repair cafes</li><li>• Trial a number of reuse events</li><li>• Seek feedback from residents in regard to barriers to re-use</li></ul>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plant one tree for every resident in the district: 92,515</li><li>• Develop a strategic plan for future tree planting, identifying sites and species which will provide the greatest benefits across the district without damaging existing beneficial habitats/food production</li></ul> <p>Financial implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding of £30,000 has been allocated in the climate change budget to tree planting activities. External funding is also available from a variety of sources.</li></ul>

### 3.9 Planning

## **Summary**

### Actions:

- Continue to prioritise climate change in the development of the Local Plan Part One review
- Review the balance of priorities in planning decisions to consider stronger support for climate change mitigation and adaptation as outlined in existing policies
- Climate Change Officer to develop resources with Planning team to assist in decision making.

### Financial implications:

- The above actions will be completed by the Climate Change Officer in collaboration with the Planning team using existing procedures and policies

### 3.10 Transport

#### Summary

##### Actions:

- Review walking and cycling infrastructure and propose a program of improvement works.
- Promote active travel in collaboration with the Leisure team
- Promote lift share platforms and car clubs.
- Assess the feasibility for the installation of EV charge points at suitable sites
- Liaise with Parish and Town Councils to ensure they are aware of funding available for EV charge points and support any applications

##### Financial implications:

- Review work will be carried out by in-house staff wherever possible, external expertise may be required
- Funding will need to be sourced for improvements works
- Promotional activities will be delivered through existing channels
- Funding for up to 75% of capital costs for charge points is available from the Office of Low Emissions Vehicles (OLEV), match funding will need to be sourced

## 4.0 Implications

### Financial

- 4.1 The financial implications of the proposed Action Plan are set out in the paragraphs above. Most of the actions can be carried out within the 2020/21 budget and other work will require agreement of additional resources and bids for external funding.

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### Legal

- 4.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by: Andrew Hunkin, Executive Director Resources, 0300 003 0202, [andrew.hunkin@southnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.hunkin@southnorthants.gov.uk)

## 5.0 Decision Information

### Wards Affected

All

### **Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

Climate Change is identified as one of the council's most important priorities.

### **Lead Councillor**

Councillor Dermot Bambridge. Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

### **Document Information**

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Target Setting
Appendix 2	Supporting Information for Action Plan
<b>Background Papers</b>	
None	
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