

Report to	On
Scrutiny Committee	13 July 2021
Cabinet	14 July 2021

Title	Portfolio Holder	Report of
Climate Emergency Action Plan	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing)	Director of Communities

Is this report confidential?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To provide to members, for consideration and adoption, a draft Climate Emergency Action Plan, setting out the initial actions that the Council will undertake towards achieving the corporate goal of net-carbon neutral by 2030.

Recommendations

2. That the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan is considered by members.
3. That the draft Climate Emergency Action is formally adopted by the Council.

Reasons for recommendations

4. In July 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency, with a goal of achieving net carbon neutral by 2030 for the Council operations and the borough.
5. In July 2020 the Council approved and adopted a Climate Emergency Strategy which identified the current carbon footprint for the Council operations and the borough and determined that a Climate Emergency Action Plan was required to achieve the net-carbon neutral goal.
6. The draft Climate Emergency Action Plan is a cumulation of work that fulfils the above requirement and sets out the initial measures to move South Ribble towards a net carbon neutral status.

Other options considered and rejected

7. The option for not developing an action plan has been discounted. Members have made a commitment to developing an action plan and achieving the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
8. The approved Climate Emergency Strategy sets out the scope of what is and is not to be included within the calculation of the carbon footprint for both the council and the borough as a whole. This scope has directed the formation of the action plan.
9. The action plan details those consultation responses that have not been included within the action plan. All other comments received have been incorporated into the action plan.

Corporate outcomes

10. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	X	Thriving communities	X
A fair local economy that works for everyone	X	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places	X

Background to the report

11. In July 2019 the Council declared that the effect of climate change within the borough poses an immediate danger to the Health and Wellbeing of our residents. To combat this threat the Council set a goal of rendering the borough carbon neutral by the year 2030.
12. The effects of climate change are still identified national and internationally as one of the biggest threats to humankind and the wider environment. The issue has also grown in understanding, acceptance and importance over the last year in public, political and business worlds.
13. A cross-party Climate Emergency Task Group was formed to work with officers to achieve this goal. The Task Group have met regularly to move this agenda forward.
14. In July 2020 members approved and adopted a Climate Emergency Strategy. The Strategy, Appendix 1, provided background to the Climate Emergency issue, our current position in terms of the Council and the borough and identified categories of areas to concentrate on to achieve the overall goal of net-carbon neutral by 2030.
15. It was identified at an early stage that the level of work required to achieve the carbon neutral goal was immense and a clear action plan was required to steer the Council towards this goal containing short, medium and longer goals.
16. Following the adoption of the Climate Emergency Strategy; which identified;
 - the current position of the Council and the borough;
 - the parameters to which improvements were to be measured; and
 - the categories on which the Council would concentrate;
 work began on the formulation of this action plan.

17. As the Council's goal included not only the Council operations but that of the wider borough, it was essential that the public and business communities within South Ribble were included within the formulation of the action plan.
18. A full public consultation was undertaken, asking for suggestions in how we can achieve this goal. Unfortunately, the consultation was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic, many businesses were closed, including schools and many people had more immediate concerns.
19. The Draft Climate Emergency Action Plan, Appendix A, has been developed from the work undertaken by the cross-part Climate Emergency Group, and the responses received from the consultation. The consultation period was extended slightly to seek further responses with elected members, community groups, staff and press releases made requesting people respond.

The Action Plan

20. The Draft Climate Emergency Action Plan has been developed, following a full public consultation period and circulated for additional comments through the Council's leadership team and elected members.
21. The Action Plan sets out short, medium, and long-term goals under each of the Climate Emergency Strategy's five key categories. It sets out the actions which the Council will concentrate on over the coming years to achieve the stated goal of net carbon neutral by 2030.
22. Once adopted each action will be provided with a detailed description and methodology, including where possible timescales and costings for completion of the action.
23. The Climate Emergency Action Plan will undergo regular reviews. This is essential to maintain the document, consider new technologies, legislation and policy that will emerge over the coming years and ensure the council's goal is achieved.
24. During the next year the emphasis of the work to be undertaken as part of the Action Plan will be on internal operations to showcase the Council as a community leader and on building community interaction through schools, businesses and community groups.
25. It is envisaged that the next review will follow a wider public consultation following the lifting of restrictions imposed as part of the pandemic. This is hoped to identify further actions that can be included to reduce the carbon emissions within the community.

Risk

26. Climate change is one of the biggest if not the biggest threat to humankind if action is not taken now. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified that we must prevent a 1.5°C rise in global temperatures to prevent a significant risk to risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth.
27. The Council has made a commitment to achieving a net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. Failure to develop and deliver on the action plan will have a negative impact on the Council, our residents, businesses and visitors to the borough, the council's reputation and is likely to result in higher costs for our services. This too would negatively impact on service delivery to the borough.
28. As central government policy changes it is also likely that the Council will be forced along this route of improved energy efficiency and reduced carbon emissions. This is likely to occur at a time when sufficient planning and resources and external advice, equipment and resources are not readily available

Equality and diversity

29. The action plan contains a number of challenging targets and it is important to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the potential opportunities to get involved and reduce their carbon footprint.
30. To this end each action will be carefully considered to ensure that everyone can take full advantage of the opportunities which arise.

Air quality implications

31. The action plan contains a number of actions which interact and replicate those within the council's Air Quality Action Plan and the overall aim of reducing carbon emissions will help towards the air quality goals of ensuring compliance with the National objective values, and improving air quality generally.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

32. There are likely to be significant financial implications of the items within the action plan. There is an existing reserve of £250k and external funding has already been secured to the value of £145k as detailed within the action plan.
33. Financial costings and analysis of individual schemes will be undertaken and presented as they are brought forward. External funding opportunities will be sought where possible.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

34. There are no concerns with this report from a legal point of view. The report seeks the adoption of a draft Climate Emergency Action Plan. It is right that this should be a decision of Full Council. Obviously we must do what we can – whether acting alone or in conjunction with other agencies and organisations – to address the fundamental issue of climate change.

Background documents

Climate Emergency Declaration July 2019
Climate Emergency Strategy July 2020
Climate Emergency Strategy July 2021
Interim Climate Emergency Action Plan January 2021

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Climate Emergency Action Plan

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