

Report Title: Climate Change Strategy update 2023	
Report to: Cabinet	
Date: 27 th November 2023	For: To note
Key Decision: No	Decision Planner Ref No: DP/2023/58
Report Presented by: Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Transformation, the Environment and Customer Services	
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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the progress of the Climate Change Strategy (the Strategy) and associated Climate Action Plan (CAP)

2. Recommendations

For Cabinet to note:

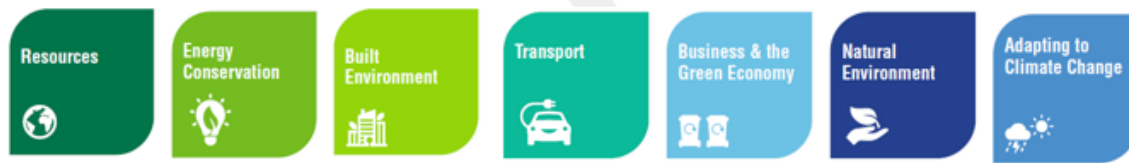
- 2.1 The Annual Climate Action Plan Year End report 2022/23, as set out in Appendix A and;
- 2.2 The Climate Change Action Plan 2022-23 Annual Communication and Engagement Report, as set out in Appendix B.

3. Background

- 3.1 In July 2019, Braintree District Council (the Council) declared a Climate Emergency with the aim to make the Council activities, as far as practical, carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.2 In September 2021 at full council the Climate Change Strategy and its associated initial Climate Action Plan was adopted. This was followed up in July 2022, where the Council considered the KPI's and a monitoring and reporting plan and approved.
- 3.4 In September 2022, the Council established an internal Officer Climate Change Delivery Board to oversee and support the delivery of the Council's commitment to climate change both within the Council and across the district.
- 3.5 In March 2023 an update on the Climate Actions undertaken and progress made was presented at full council.

4 Update on Climate Action Plan Progress

- 4.1 The Council's initial Climate Action Plan had 73 actions identified to progress across 7 key themes. The key themes being -



- 4.2 The Strategy and associated CAP did not only target organisational carbon emissions. The Strategy also recognised the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. Similarly, the Strategy also acknowledged the adaptations that would be required in the future to mitigate the effects of climate change on the Councils local environment. Timescales of individual actions varied, and were classified as follows: ongoing, short, medium and long term.
- 4.3 Of the 73 original actions, 10 actions targeted increasing biodiversity, 26 at reducing carbon emissions, 16 changing behaviours towards climate change, 13 mitigating the effects of climate change and 8 developing the local green economy.
- 4.4 The forecast reduction in organisational carbon will not be a linear decline. Key projects have been identified in the CAP that will result in a marked stepped reduction. The projects that will have the greatest impact on organisational carbon emissions are 1) the Renewable Fuel Vehicle Replacement programme and 2) the switching of the organisation's energy supply to a green/renewable energy source. (Fleet accounts for 48.54% and Natural Gas 35.70% of the organisation's carbon emissions)
- 4.5 Appendix A contains the CAP Report Year End 2022-23. This includes the Council's progress made against the Organisational Climate Performance indicators, a detailed end of year status of all the 73 climate actions and includes new actions that will be reported on as part of the future CAP 2023/2024 report.
- 4.6 In 2022/2023, 37 climate actions were completed.
- 4.7 Some highlights of the progress made on the Strategy via the actions undertaken to date include: -
- A reduction in the organisational carbon emissions by 354 metric tonnes against the Strategy's baseline year of 2019/2020
 - 6% of the Council's energy is now derived from renewable/green sources
 - 86% of the Council managed lighting is now LED
 - All Council managed car parks now have a minimum of 4 EV charging stations installed
 - An additional 4,500 trees, 18,700 whips, 73,000 bulbs planted in the district
 - A district wide tree canopy survey has been commissioned
 - The Council's Planning department have now published a new Local Plan and an accompanying Sustainable Statement/checklist and a Sustainable Supplementary Planning Document
- 4.8 39 new climate change related actions were identified as part of the development of Annual Service Business Plans. These actions have been added to the Council's CAP resulting in 2023/24 the Council progressing 75 climate related actions/projects.

4.9 The 2023/2024 CAP performance reporting will include updates on all these new additional actions.

5. Options

5.1 The Council could choose not to add additional actions to the CAP – there is a risk that without additional actions added each year the Council will not achieve its ambition of becoming carbon neutral as far as practicable possible by 2030.

5.2 The Council continues to consider the CAP as a live document that is updated annually. This reduces the risk of not achieving the required reduction of organisational carbon emissions.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 In 2021/22 budget, the Council agreed to create an initial reserve of £500,000 to support the delivery of the emerging Strategy. During the 2022/23 Budget a review of the reserves resulted in the following being added into the Climate Change Reserve:

- £48k being the Carbon Management reserve balance
- £46k being the Green Heart reserve balance
- £22k being the Flooding relief reserve balance

6.2 The total amount reserved for Climate Change is therefore £616k. Allocations from the initial £500k had already been agreed in the capital programme:

6.3 The 2021/2022 & 2022/23 Budgets included agreement to use the (consolidated) Climate Change Reserve for the following

- Programme officer for Climate Change 2 years @ £50k p.a. total £100k
- Funding for Cycling Strategy 2 years @ £25k p.a. total £50k
- Substation and electric chargers at Lakes Road £80K
- Air Quality Monitoring equipment £30k
- First year costs of air quality monitoring equipment £3k (funding beyond 22/23 to be unavoidable growth in MTFS)
- First year funding of the Tetrapak collections £8k (funding beyond 22/23 to be unavoidable growth in MTFS)
- Bulb and Trees £34K
- Air Quality Monitoring Methodology Review £7,365
- Housing Condition Survey – Environmental & Energy Efficiency information (£9,345)
- Climate Change Communications resource £37,500
- Tree Survey £10K

Total allocated £369,210 (£151K spent to date)

Leaving an unallocated balance of £246,790 at year end 2022/23 in the Climate Change Reserve Account.

6.4 £77K has been allocated for an extension of the Climate Change Project Manager post (£50K) and other small projects underway in 2023/24.

6.5 Further allocations from the reserve are anticipated as follows:

The cost of substation and electric charger installation at Lakes Road is likely to increase due to inflation and UK Power Networks is providing an updated quote. This installation could not be undertaken in 2022/23 as the extent of the installation was dependant on the review of the vehicle replacement programme and likely shift towards acquiring electric vehicles. It is currently estimated that there will be an increase in cost of circa £50K.

- 6.6 A tender exercise is due to commence imminently for the phased replacement of lamppost bulbs with LED bulbs for those managed by the Council. Estimated cost is £77K.
- 6.7 With the 2023/24 forecasted additional costs deducted from the Climate Change Reserve Account the balance at the end of 2023/24 will be circa £50K.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no identified legal implications arising from the items to note in this report. Legal implications for individual Climate Change Actions will be identified through the business case process of individual actions and projects.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 There will be a number of implications to the Council, residents and businesses of actions identified in the CAP. These will be detailed in each business case as it is developed for additional CAP Actions.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 9.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 9.3 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the items to note in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

10. List of Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A - Annual Climate Action Plan Year End report 2022/23

10.2 Appendix B - Climate Change Action Plan 2022-23 Annual Communication and Engagement Report

11. Background Papers

11.1 Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030

11.2 EIA