

COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 28 APRIL 2022

TITLE OF REPORT: CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE

Report of: Leader of the Council

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide members with an update on the progress made since April 2021 with delivery of actions the Council is taking to address the climate emergency,

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Council approved the following motion at its April 2021 meeting:

“Following the successful adoption of Hart’s Climate Change Action Plan, this Council now wishes to declare a climate emergency, which commits us to putting the reduction of CO2 in the atmosphere at the front and centre of all policies and formal decision making, particularly Planning, and will:

1. Pledge to make Hart District carbon neutral by 2040 whilst bringing forward the current 2040 target to 2035 for areas under direct control of Hart District Council.

2. Report to full Council every six months setting out the current actions the Council is taking to address this emergency and the plan to measure annual District wide progress towards meeting the 2040 target.

3. Meaningfully engage with the local community and to work with partners across the District and County to deliver these new goals through all relevant strategies and plans drawing on local, national, and global best practice.

4. Actively work with Hampshire County Council and the Government to provide the additional powers and resources needed to meet the 2040 target.

5. Actively encourage and push for Hampshire County Council to reduce its target for net zero Carbon to 2040, acknowledging that 2050 is too far away for such an emergency.”

2.2 Council was provided with its first update on the progress being made to deliver the agreed Carbon reduction targets at its meeting in November 2021. This report provides the first annual update.

2.3 Cabinet approved a Climate Change Action Plan in February 2020. The delivery of the action plan is monitored through regular meetings of the Climate Change Working Group. This action plan will be updated to incorporate the recommended actions arising from the Carbon Pathway report once this has been completed.

3 PROGRESS TO DATE

3.1 Since April 2021 the following progress has been made towards achieving the council's carbon reduction targets:

- a) Consultants (Eunomia) have been appointed to review the council's climate change action plan and produce a Carbon Pathway Report for Hart which will set out the work that the council needs to do to achieve its carbon reduction targets – the draft outcomes of the carbon pathway report will be the subject of a separate presentation to this committee.
- b) Planning permission has been granted for two solar farms capable of powering up to 30,000 homes, almost 70% of the district.
- c) The first phase of the Hart Green Grid East opened on 8 April 2022, with phase 2 due to complete in the summer this year. Once complete this will provide a green pedestrian and cycle path from Fleet Station, via Hartland Park, onwards to Farnborough town centre and railway station.
- d) Progress in delivering the Local Walking and Cycling Strategy (LCWIP) has been delayed due to lack of resources at Hampshire County Council (HCC). Hart Officers are however working with HCC to establish if Hart can assist in progressing this work. Once completed this will allow Hart to further progress its own Green Grid Strategy.
- e) Our recent electric survey highlighted that three quarters of Hart respondents were planning to change to an electric car within five years.
- f) £250k has been allocated in Harts 2022/23 budget to fund delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.
- g) The Council is currently seeking prices for the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points in 6 of its car parks. Subject to award of the contract it is anticipated that these charge points will be installed by December 2022. EV charge points are already installed at both Church Road car park and at the new Edenbrook flats.
- h) Our leisure centres use of solar panels continues to save around 16.7 tonnes of carbon emissions every year.
- i) Worked with HCC to promote the take up of the Solar Together scheme for group buying of solar PV and battery storage systems.
- j) The Countryside Team are switching to battery powered equipment such as hedge trimmers, mowers, and chainsaws.
- k) The community garden project at Edenbrook opened in March 2022. This project will help encourage residents to grow their own vegetables and using sustainable compost generated by our wider activities within the team.
- l) Bramshot wetlands project was completed in the summer 2021.
- m) The Climate Change working group has evolved to include Blackwater Valley Friends of the Earth, we now include themed items which have included tree planting schemes and the new Environment Act.
- n) A climate emergency communication plan has been produced delivery of which is monitored by the Climate Change Working Group. In the last 12 months initiatives promoted through the communication plan included the Big Green Week and COP26.
- o) Appointment to a new post of Climate Emergency Communication Officer has been confirmed.

- p) Consultants commissioned to prepare Biodiversity Net Gain and Carbon offsetting Action plan.
- q) Energy audit of the Civic Offices was undertaken, to identify energy efficiency and carbon savings.
- r) Successfully bid for £220k of Green Homes Grant as part of the greater south east energy hub consortium to deliver greener and warmer homes to low income and low energy efficient households in Hart, funding delivered in 21/22.
- s) Successfully bid for £800k of Sustainable Warmth Funding as part of the greater south east energy hub consortium to deliver greener and warmer homes to low income and low energy efficient households in Hart, to be delivered in 22/23.
- t) Successfully bid for £3k of workplace cycle parking grant to provide improved cycle parking at the Civic Offices.
- u) Members of cabinet and climate change working group, as well as key staff and leadership team underwent carbon literacy training.
- v) Continued support of the Sustainable Business Network in partnership with Rushmoor BC and Basingstoke DC. Events reaching over 400 local business, sharing best practice, ideas and building local working relationships.
- w) Meetings held with officers from Rushmoor and Eastleigh Borough Council's to review and compare planned work to respond to the climate emergency.
- x) Cabinet reports with carbon reduction implications included: -
- y) Capital Funding for Energy Efficiency Measures in New Affordable Housing,
 - a) Approval of Funding to Produce a Biodiversity and Carbon Offsetting Delivery Strategy for Hart
 - b) Approval of Funding for production of a Carbon Pathway Report for Hart.
- z) Overview and Scrutiny Committee were consulted on:
 - Revised planning guidance for Residential Cycle and Car Parking Standards.
 - Energy Efficient Development and Renewable/ Low Carbon Energy Generation.

3.2 Climate Emergency and Carbon reduction initiatives planned for the next 12 months include:

- a) Review and update the Climate Change Action Plan to incorporate the recommendations from the Carbon Pathway report.
- b) Solar PV to be installed on the Civic Offices, once operational it is anticipated that the system will meet 25% of the Civic Offices electricity needs the Civic Offices. With an expected CO₂e saving (Year 1) of 12.8tonnes
- c) Review and reduction of Council's energy consumption, upgrading of all lightbulbs to LEDs and sourcing clean energy from renewables.
- d) EV charging points to be installed in Hart Car Parks.
- e) Biodiversity Net Gain and Carbon offsetting action plan to be agreed.
- f) Strategy for reduced grass cutting and increased biodiversity to be agreed.
- g) Tree strategy and costing for public tree planting scheme to be agreed.
- h) Climate change communications plan for 2022/23 to be delivered.
- i) review and agree KPIs to measure Hart's carbon reduction performance.

- j) Work with private sector housing and external partners such as Housing Associations to support energy efficiency schemes, such as retrofit schemes in domestic and non-domestic buildings and encourage take-up of renewable energy.
- k) Street care service to submit proposal for fuelling vehicles with Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO).

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