

Cherwell District Council

Executive

6 January 2020

Climate Emergency Update Report

Report of Assistant Director Environmental Services

This report is public

Purpose of report

To update Executive of progress taken in responding to the Climate Emergency Declaration.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 to note the progress being made and advise officers to continue with their approach to tackling the Climate Emergency.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 It is widely understood that there is a rapidly closing window for action to tackle climate change.

- 2.2 The following motions were passed at Full Council on the 22 July 2019:

- 1 Declare a Climate Emergency
- 2 Pledge to make Cherwell District Council carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions
- 3 Call on Westminster to provide powers and resource to make the 2030 target possible
- 4 Continue to work with partners across the Cherwell and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies
- 5 Endorse the cross party position taken by the LGA, in particular to call on HMG to explore supporting domestic implementation of Sustainable Development Goals through funded partnership roles within each local authority area
- 6 Report to Council within six months with the actions the Council will take to address this emergency

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The Council has taken a number of steps to address the motions passed in responding to the climate emergency and is reporting back in January rather than December because of the general election.
- 3.2 A robust programme management has been setup, including the seconding of a sustainability expert from the award-winning Bicester team to help co-ordinate the Council's response. In order to reach the zero carbon target, it will affect what and how we deliver services in the future, ultimately affecting

Exemplar 1: NorthWest Bicester

NorthWest Bicester is a development of up to 6,000 homes which will be built to a true zero carbon standard, the largest development of its kind. It is part of the UK's Eco town initiative, however is the only Eco town which still retains the zero carbon standard.

all parts of the Council's activities but primarily the leisure, facilities, fleet, IT, planning, economic development, housing, communities and HR teams. Where possible, opportunities to link with the work being made at Oxfordshire County Council will be further explored to make best use of expertise, resource and any commissioning.

- 3.3 Following a competitive tender process, a consortium of local skilled consultants from BioRegional and Aether, who bring knowledge and best practice, have been appointed to provide guidance and assistance in producing an ambitious action plan to achieve zero carbon emissions from the Council's own operations and activities.
- 3.4 The response is not starting from scratch with a significant amount of work in this area having already been conducted in the first Carbon Management

Exemplar 2: ECO Business Centre

As part of the NorthWest Bicester ECO town development, Cherwell District Council have built a co-working and serviced offices for use by local residents and businesses. The zero carbon building is the first non-residential passivhaus-plus building in the country, which is a rigorous energy efficiency standard that also has significant health benefits for users of the property.

Plan. To date we have made greenhouse gas reductions of 32% and over £1,100,000 savings, income and avoided costs since 2008. Figure 1: Cherwell District Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions Breakdown, highlights the progress and breakdown of emissions over the previous 10 years. A number of exemplars are included in this report to demonstrate some of the ways Cherwell District Council already considers and implements initiatives and projects which seek to address the climate emergency.

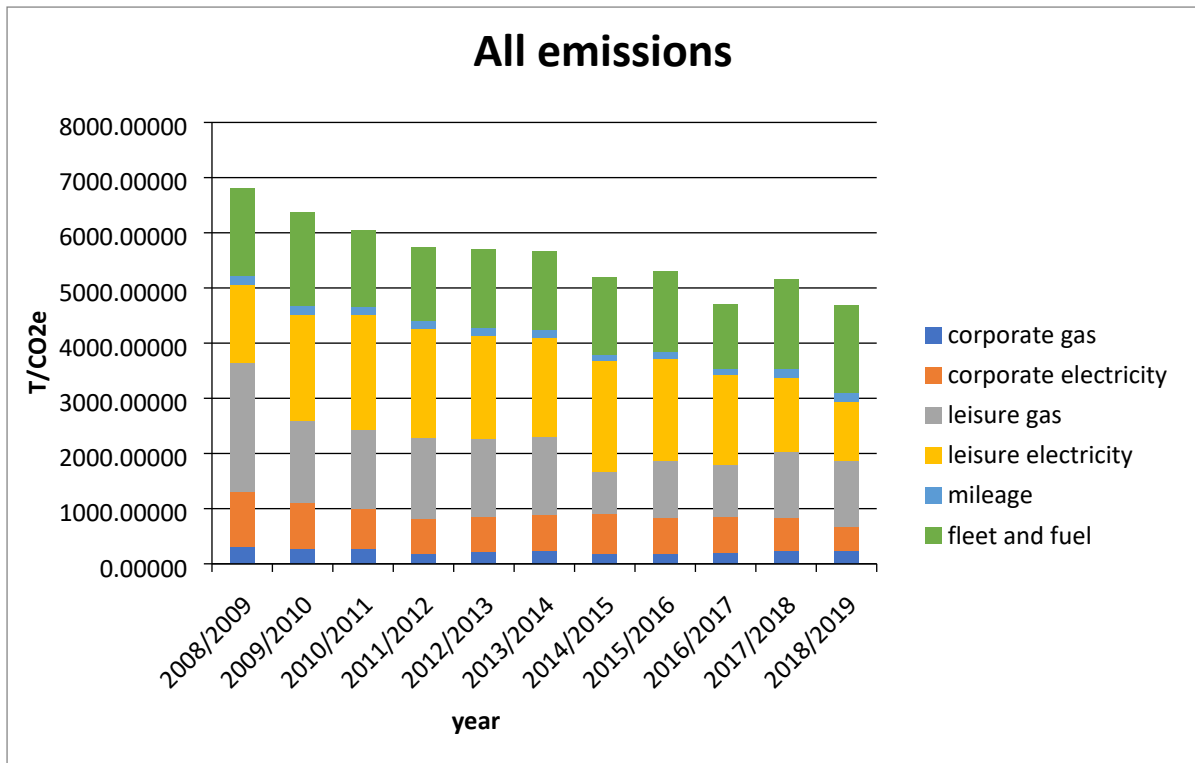


Figure 1: Cherwell District Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions Breakdown

- 3.5 The consultants will also scope an indicative list of actions to work with partners across Cherwell and the region to help to achieve the zero carbon by 2030 target.
- 3.6 The Council is maximising the opportunity with a planning expert witness in order to analyse our existing policies at a time of a changing political landscape and scope what could be possible in our future Local Plan, with a view to striving for higher house building standards such as BREEAM excellent or passivhaus.
- 3.7 With the Government consultations on proposed plans for the Future Homes Standard and the non-domestic Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards currently open, the Council intends to ask for powers and resources to help make the 2030 target possible.

Exemplar 3: Bicester Insulation Scheme

Cherwell District Council supported the use of a variety of government funding to support and make free loft and cavity wall insulation installation for Bicester. The scheme was successful in engaging with local residents and as a result over 1,700 homes benefitted from warmer homes and reduced energy bills whilst reducing carbon emissions and improving the air quality in Bicester.

- 3.8 A joint statement is also expected shortly from the Chief Executives of Oxfordshire Councils with a view to exploring opportunities to work together. Additionally, it is recognised that Parish Councils will have an important role, and it is intended to engage with them in due course.
- 3.9 Engagement with some local businesses has already started, with a focus on carbon off-setting through tree planting. This arrangement will be developed further as part of our climate action response in order to offer other businesses a similar opportunity to offset their emissions through local tree planting.
- 3.10 There are other workstreams across the Council which are already tackling carbon emissions, for example, efforts to encourage electric vehicles. These projects will be brought under the banner of this programme of work. Additionally, there is a lot of synergies with other programmes of work such as the air quality management plans across the district and the healthy place shaping work.
- 3.11 The Council has also produced a two page document summarising the actions we will take to address the climate emergency declaration. This can be found in Appendix 1.

Next Steps

- 3.12 A team of officers is being established to consider our internal carbon emissions, as well as a separate team to focus on the district's emissions. A successful officers workshop took place on 17 December which enabled officers to learn more about the climate emergency and contribute ideas.
- 3.13 A communication and engagement plan are also being developed with the help of the communications team.
- 3.14 As part of a communications plan, we will set up a mechanism to allow staff and residents to submit ideas to help populate the action plans. A workshop for Members to hear and discuss the climate emergency in more detail, and to start to gather ideas of how CDC can respond is scheduled for January.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 This paper updates Members on the initial steps the authority has taken to respond to the Climate Emergency. This initial work creates the framework and foundation from which further work can be undertaken to create an action plan for the district and the Council's operations.
- 4.2 It is recommended that Members note the report so that further work can continue as quickly as possible within the existing resources.

5.0 Consultation

Early, informal engagement has begun with local community groups, Parish Councils and Oxfordshire County Council. Further engagement and consultation will follow as Cherwell District Council continues to develop its response to the Climate Emergency. The input and contributions of stakeholders is welcome and essential for an effective response.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Members advise officers to take a different approach to that outlined in the report.

Option 2: Members advise officers to undertake no further work on this agenda.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. All costs so far are within existing budgets. Any future financial requirements will form part of the budget setting process for 2020/21 and beyond.

Comments checked by:

Dominic Oakeshott, Assistant Director – Finance (Interim)
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Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

Comments checked by:

Richard, Team Leader – Non-contentious
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Risk Implications

7.3 The next stage of this work is to create a project management framework to govern the work. Any risks will be identified within the risk register and managed appropriately escalating to the leadership risk register as and when necessary.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Greener and Cleaner

Lead Councillor

Cllr Daniel Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Cherwell 2030 – Climate Emergency
Background Papers	
None	
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