

Cherwell District Council

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

6 September 2022

Climate Change – Carbon Management Plans

Report of Assistant Director Environment Services

This report is public

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to set out the Carbon Management Plans for the period of 2022-2025 to guide the Council towards its net zero target

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the significant progress in the Council moving towards net zero by 2030
- 1.2 To support the proposed carbon management plans in making further steps to reach net zero by 2030.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council has been committed to reducing its emissions for many years. Between the period 2008/09 to 2020/21 the emissions of the Council have been reduced by 51%. This has been achieved through a varied programme of projects including improving insulation, installing solar panels on most council buildings and embracing new technologies to reduce energy usage.
- 2.2 In 2019 the Council declared a Climate Change emergency and committed itself to achieve net zero by 2030. This is an ambitious target and will be challenging to achieve. However, officers continuously review progress and develop plans to move towards this goal.
- 2.3 Key to moving towards net zero are the Carbon Management Plans which set out projects, investment and resource needs, and the estimated reduction in emissions by successfully implementing the projects.
- 2.4 The carbon management plans are divided into the four main sources of emissions Corporate buildings, Leisure centres, Fleet and Staff travel.

- 2.5 The Carbon Management Plans cover the financial year 2022/23 and the two subsequent years
- 2.6 The Carbon Management plans set out the Lead officer and the associated Lead Member responsible for the delivery of each project. Overall, the plans are expected to reduce the emissions, over a period of time, so that by 2024/25 emissions will be reduced by 65% from the levels at 2008/09

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 This Council has been committed to the Climate Change agenda for many years and has embraced change to improve environmental performance, improve energy efficiency and reduce the emissions from the operation of the Council.
- 3.2 Most of the actions have been centred on reducing the emissions of the Council from its own operations. The operations are divided into four key areas- Corporate buildings, Leisure centres, the Council's Fleet and Staff travel. The largest area of emissions has been the leisure centres, followed by the Council's vehicle fleet, then corporate buildings with the smallest area of emissions being staff travel.
- 3.3 Emissions from the Council operations make up a very small percentage, much less than 0.5%, of the overall district emissions. The Council has no direct control over district wide emissions but can influence overall reductions through leadership and supporting projects which benefit all. An example of such a project is the installation of charging points in the Council's car parks. Over the last twelve months charging points have been installed at five council car parks (2 in Banbury, 2 Bicester & 1 in Kidlington). This was achieved through a joint partnership project with other councils in Oxfordshire, government grants and a local company in Bicester, EZ-Charge and has been at no financial cost to the Council. Further government funding is being sort by the partnership to increase the amount of charging facilities at more of the Council's car parks
- 3.4 The Carbon Management Plans (Appendix 1) set out the key projects between 2022 -2025. These plans are constantly reviewed and updated when required.
- 3.5 Good progress has been made in reducing emissions in corporate buildings and at our leisure centres following the success of securing £6 million from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. This scheme has seen the installation of air source heat at seven buildings including the leisure centres. In additional a solar heat array has been installed at Woodgreen leisure centre and photo voltaics (PV) car ports have been installed at Bicester leisure centre. Further projects delivered via this scheme include LED lighting at the leisure centres and battery storage at Thorpe Lane depot so that usage of power generated from the extensive PV arrays can be better utilised. These projects were delivered on time & under budget at £5.2 million.
- 3.6 Some areas of decarbonisation are proving to be challenging in the short term. The Council has invested in electric vehicles with 10% of the fleet fully electric (nine electric small vans). The nine electric vehicles are popular with users as they are very easy to drive. However, reducing emissions from the council's fleet is difficult in the short term due to the large housing growth which requires more refuse collection vehicles

- 3.7 Each refuse collection vehicle emits 35-40 tonnes of CO2 per year. In comparison each small van which changes from diesel to electric saves around 2 tonnes of CO2 per year.
- 3.8 Hence emissions from the fleet will not fall significantly until the refuse collection vehicles are decarbonised. There are a number of obstacles which are delaying the rapid transition. These obstacles to achieving this change, include the very significant extra capital cost, the uncertainty of the capability of such vehicles operating in a mixture of urban and rural areas and the charging infrastructure required to charge the 300kw batteries which are used on an electric refuse collection vehicle.
- 3.9 The charging infrastructure at both depots is insufficient to deal with charging larger vehicles. Charging facilities of 50kw or above will be required to charge the batteries on refuse collection vehicles. The current incoming electricity supply at both depots is too small to accommodate such charging equipment. To address this issue a new updated electrical supply will be installed at Thorpe Lane Banbury in the autumn 2022 and will allow chargers to be installed in future years as the fleet transfers over to electric vehicles. It is expected that the change to electric refuse collection could commence from 2024/25 and other potential solutions are actively being explored.
- 3.10 The leadership of the climate change agenda is in the process of change. The joint climate change team with Oxfordshire County Council was decoupled at the end of May. A recruitment process is underway to get the right person to fill a key post in leading the organisation towards net zero. Once in post the postholder will not only lead the organisation towards net zero but will also co-ordinate activities such as One Planet Living and support the review of the Local Plan
- 3.11 Finally although not directly part of the carbon management plans a number of other projects are being developed to reduce district wide emissions. These projects include tree planting at Burnehyll Community Woodland. Burnehyll Community is a large piece of land owned by the Council where community tree planting commenced last autumn. Much more community tree planting is planned this autumn helping create an area which not only supports the climate change agenda but also promotes Health & Wellbeing for residents to be physically active and use this attractive facility.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Carbon Management Plans set out plans for this year and future years to reduce the overall emissions of the Council in its journey to reach net zero by 2030.

5.0 Consultation

The public are consulted from time to time regarding climate change issues often through informal routes. Update reports on the progress of climate change issues are regularly brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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: To adopt the proposed carbon management plans as set out in Appendix 1

Option 2: To reject the proposed carbon management plans and ask officers to reconsider the overall management plans

7.0 Implications

7.1 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

Proposals with revenue or capital implications are either included within the relevant budgets or will have to be considered as part of the 2023/24 budget process to determine if they are adopted.

Comments checked by Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance. Telephone: 01295 221845, michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

Comments checked by Helen Lolas, Legal Services Team Leader. Telephone: 07801 400 941, Helen.Lolas@cherwell-DC.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.3 The Council has set an ambitious target of reaching net zero by 2030 and there is public interest in addressing the climate emergency. Consequently, it is important that the Council continues to progress towards its net zero target by 2030. Risk related to this matter are managed through the service's operational risk register, and they will be escalated to the leadership risk register as and when deemed necessary.

Comments to be checked by

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus. Telephone: 01295 221556 Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities & Climate Implications

- 7.4 There are no direct equalities issues associated with this report Our climate action commitments are at the core of our Carbon Management Plans for the period of 2022-2025.

Comments checked by
Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus. Telephone 01295 221556, Celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A as not an Executive report

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Supporting Environmental Sustainability

Lead Councillor

Councillor Dan Sames Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener Communities

Document Information

Appendix number and title

Appendix 1 Carbon Management Plans 2022-25

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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