

Harborough District Council

Report to Communities Scrutiny Panel Meeting of 16 February 2023



Title:	Climate Emergency Action Plan Update
Status:	Public
Key Decision:	N/A
Report Author:	Helen Chadwick- Environment Coordinator
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Bateman, Environment Communities Cabinet Member
Appendices:	A. <i>Climate Emergency Action Plan Annual Report 2021/22 (Draft)</i> B. <i>Climate delivery plan to end of 2022/23</i> C. <i>Communication Plan to end of 2022/23</i>

Executive Summary

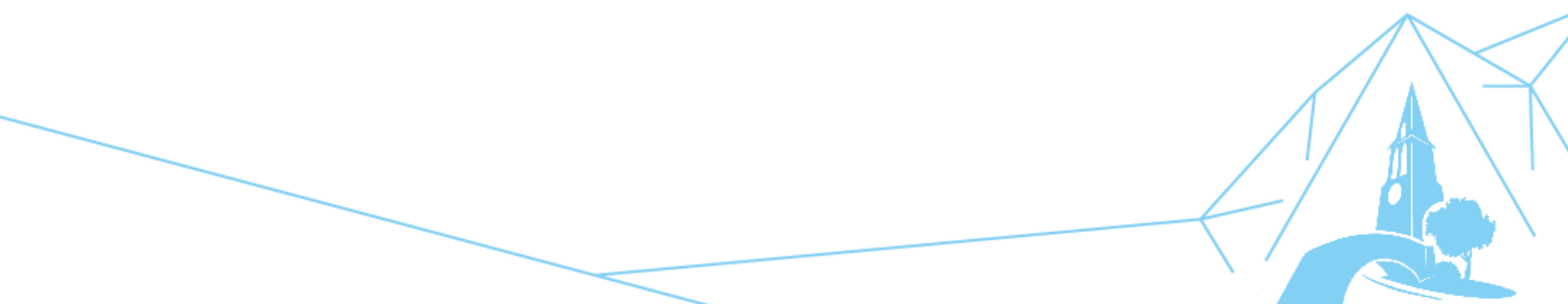
To review the delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan adopted in December 2021, as outlined in the report for 2021/22 (appendix A) and seek opinions on the communication of delivery to the community. Also, to present the use of performance monitoring data for monitoring climate related KPIs and other data.

Recommendations

That the Panel review and comment on the contents of this report.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this meeting is to present the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan report for 2021/22, to the Panel for comment and provide insight into the use of Pentana for gathering relevant data to help assess action on climate change.
- 1.2 Views are particularly sought from the Panel in respect of communicating the delivery against the plan to local communities and on the priorities for the next 1 to 3 years. Members are invited to note the action plan includes a goal for HDC emissions to reach net zero by 2030.



2. Background

2.1 In July 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency. A councillor working group was set up to support the development of a Climate Emergency Action Plan with the goal of delivering net zero emissions from Harborough District Council's own operations, as far as practical, by 2030.

2.2 The draft Climate Emergency Action Plan went out to consultation in the summer of 2021 and the final plan was adopted by Council in December 2021. The Climate Emergency Action Plan was amalgamated into the Corporate Plan in February 2022. Annual reporting is part of the requirement. The first draft annual report was completed in autumn 2022 and shared with the officer working group for comment and the Portfolio Holder. The draft report is attached as appendix A.

2.3 A cross council officer working group has been formed that meets at least quarterly to discuss the projects that contribute to the Climate Emergency Action Plan. The group has produced a more detailed project delivery plan (appendix B), and a communications plan (appendix C) to support delivery and engage with residents and businesses.

3. Details

3.1 The Climate emergency Action Plan gives an overarching view of the Councils approach to reducing emissions and also to preparing for the impacts of climate change that we will see.

3.2 The Plan lays out 6 commitments for action.

- The Council commits to demonstrate political and corporate leadership in acting on climate change
- The Council commits to managing its own assets and services, with the aim of reducing carbon emission to net zero by 2030, as far as practical
- The Council commits to working with residents and communities to support their actions in reducing emissions and help them increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change
- The Council commits to working with businesses to support their actions in reducing emissions and help them increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change
- The Council commits to ensuring that new development is designed to mitigate emissions and be resilient to the impacts of climate change
- The Council commits to working in partnership to promote resilient natural systems that will help to reduce the impacts of climate change.

3.3 Working across the council a delivery plan was brought together to see where projects could contribute to the commitments in the Action Plan. A cross council team of officers meet regularly (at least quarterly) to identify projects that should be considered part of the delivery against the Climate Emergency Action Plan and update actions. This approach has been successful in bringing forward some new projects and identifying future projects.

3.4 In addition, this group has been actively engaging with community groups, including supporting Sustainable Harborough on Great Big Green Week and supporting Harborough Woodland in site identification for new planting. These working documents are included as Appendix B.

3.5 In addition, the need to have a communication plan was recognised and key messages identified, including key dates, promoting HDC projects and highlighting issues and opportunities. This is included as Appendix C

3.6 In order to understand our impact, data on HDC action and national indicators has been drawn together in a Pentana dashboard. This gives an easy way to identify the impact of our actions. The dashboard will be further developed as relevant data is identified.

3.7 The key outcomes from the delivery against the plan are:

- Reduction in carbon emissions from the council's buildings and services (Inventory of Emissions)
- Additional EV charging points delivered.
- Funding for improvements in domestic energy efficiency achieved, with 76 properties improved through LAD 2 and a cross district partnership instigated to help deliver further projects.
- Solar Together project delivered with other districts and boroughs.
- Business support delivered including sponsoring businesses on a carbon emission reduction platform – Zellar.
- Delivering biodiversity improvements through tree planting and wildflower planting, both on HDC land and supporting partners

3.8 The climate emergency action plan is challenging. It is important to engage widely to get residents and businesses to achieve emission reductions across the district, especially as Harborough District has higher than average emissions per capita. The Council itself has a challenge of finding ways to reduce emissions from buildings and services to achieve the net zero target by 2030, which is only 7 years away. A plan to reduce gas usage and replacing waste vehicles with zero emission vehicles is essential for this.

4. Implications of Decisions

4.1 Corporate Priorities

Priority 1: Community leadership to create a sense of pride and belonging by leading by example and ensuring as far as reasonably practicable council activities have minimum environmental impact.

Priority 3: Creating a sustainable environment to protect future generations by looking to reduce the council's carbon footprint and manage resources in a sustainable way, as well as encouraging others to do the same.

4.2 Financial

There is no specific budget for Climate Change action. However, where individual projects or initiatives are identified and where specific funding opportunities are available, such opportunities are followed up as necessary. The committee should note the "environmental" capital schemes noted in the Final Budget report considered by Cabinet on the 6 February.

4.3 Legal

The Council has a duty to consider the Climate Change Act 2008, in reducing its own emissions and influencing emission reduction across the district.

4.4 Policy

The impact of climate should be assessed in all the council policies and council decisions.

4.5 Environmental Implications including contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Council by 2030

The Climate Emergency Action plan provides the approach to meeting our emissions reduction target.

4.6 Risk Management

Climate Change has a variety of risks for council activities and lack of progress has a reputational risk.

As set out in the financial implications section above, without the necessary external funding, the aspirational aims of the action plan may not be achievable which runs the reputational risk of the council.

The corporate risk register is to be reviewed to incorporate the impact of climate change and performance will be monitored against the actions in the plan.

4.7 Equalities Impact

An equality assessment has been completed as part of the consultation process and development of the action plan prior to its approval in 2019. Individual equality

assessments should be completed as part of the implementation of the individual projects within the action plan.

4.8 Data Protection

No data protection issues related to this report.

5 Summary of Consultation and Outcome

Not applicable for this report.

6 Alternative Options Considered

Not applicable for this report.

7 Background papers

Report to Council 24th June 2019 – [Declaration of a Climate Emergency](#)

Report to Council 13th December 2021 – [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)