

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Adoption of Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan

Date: 17 March 2022

Author: Head of Environmental Services

Wards Affected

Borough-wide

Purpose To update Members on the public consultation of the Carbon Management Strategy and to seek approval to adopt the final Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan.

Key Decision

This is a key decision as the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.

Recommendation(s)

THAT Cabinet:

- 1) Adopts the Carbon Management Strategy as it has now been consulted on with residents, partners, stakeholders and community groups. Appendix A
- 2) Notes the summary and analysis of the consultation Appendix B
- 3) Notes the Equalities Impact Assessment accompanying the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan Appendix C

1. Background

On 16th September 2021 the council approved the draft Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan for public consultation.

- 1.1 The council held a public consultation between 5th November 2021 and 4th January 2022.
- 38 responses were received via the website together with a small number of direct written responses to the council. The direct responses were from Natural England and two local Climate Groups.
 - Each issue raised has been reviewed and where possible is reflected within the strategy. As a result the strategy has been revised on page 3 the strategy now includes the deputy leader and the Chief Executive of Gedling Borough Council.
 - In section 2.2 Our Priorities Priority 1: The Built Environment (page 19), a table has been inserted to include the EPC rating for the properties within Gedling.
 - In Section 3.0: Delivering and monitoring the strategy, section 3.4 Officer and Member Governance (page 27) has been amended with named lead Officers.
 - In section 4.0 Action Plan (page 30 – page 50) each objective, action, timescale and lead key partners has been reviewed for each focused priority: the Built Environment; Transport, Energy Generation; Consumption and Behavioural Change; Waste Reduction & Recycling; Green Infrastructure – Carbon offsetting.
 - As a result the action plan has been revised to reflect consultation comments. As a working document, future revisions of the action plan will deliver more nuanced detail and stretched targets nearer the time as funding and relevant stakeholder partners are identified. At that stage we will clarify project ownership, lead partners and subsequent delivery mechanisms to ensure we meet the various action plan outcomes.
- 1.2 Climate Emergency UK also scored the council's strategy and action plan and awarded it the joint highest district council score in Nottinghamshire at 46%.
- 1.3 The council has appointed a dedicated Climate Change Officer to help the council and community on its journey to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the new officer started her role on the 1st December 2021.
- 1.4 As a key priority in the Gedling Plan, the final Carbon Management Strategy and associated Action Plan sets out the next steps to reduce the local authority's emissions.
- 1.5 The Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan builds on the Council's work to date on low carbon interventions and improve the local environment. It sets out how the Council will reduce its current carbon footprint across the borough, taking into account the fleet vehicle emissions, and the energy used to power and heat offices, leisure centres and other buildings, and encouraging sustainable travel for staff.
- 1.6 Alongside the ambition to reduce its own carbon footprint, the Council will also be playing a key role in working with partners to lead the borough to reach net zero emissions by 2030.

- 1.7 The Council will look to influence, educate and support residents and businesses to reduce their own carbon footprint through powers and activity such as using the planning process to influence how new houses are constructed.
- 1.8 It is important to note that carbon neutral is not the same as zero emissions, and it is expected that by 2030 there will still be some residual emissions from the Council's operations and that a degree of offsetting will be required.

2. Proposal

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Adopts the Carbon Management Strategy as it has now been consulted on with residents, partners, stakeholders and community groups. Appendix A
- 2.2 Notes the summary and analysis of the consultation Appendix B
- 2.3 Notes the Equalities Impact Assessment accompanying the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan Appendix C

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option is to not accept the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan and continue with initiatives on an ad hoc basis. However, this is not recommended as it will not deliver the target of being a carbon neutral borough by 2030. It is considered a sound plan to support our objectives and promote Carbon Management.
- 3.2 A different target date could be set for the Council to achieve carbon neutral status. However, a later date would be out of step with many other local authorities both locally and nationally. Given the scale of the challenge faced, an earlier target date would require a very significant increase in resources which would need to be balanced against the budget pressures to deliver other corporate priorities.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Sums of £100,000 were included in the Capital Programme in 2020/21 and 2021/22 for Carbon Reduction Initiatives. Expenditure of £10,900 was incurred in 2020/21 and the remaining £89,100 carried forward for inclusion in the 2021/22 capital programme.

- 4.2 The revised budget of £189,100 in the 2021/22 Capital Programme for Carbon Reduction Schemes consists of the following schemes:

- Gedling Country Park Charge Points	£65,000
- Civic Centre Charge Points	£20,000
- Arnold Market Solar Panels	£16,000

- Bee Pollinator Plan (Wildflower Planting)	£15,000
- Green Lung Tree Planting Project	£50,000
- Unallocated	£73,100

4.3 The 2021/22 Capital Programme also includes £784,800 for the provision of Green Homes Grants for which the Council is receiving external funding.

4.4 There is the potential for revenue savings to be achieved as a result of the implementation of these and other capital schemes. These may then be considered as a funding source for further carbon management schemes.

4.5 Expenditure related to the Carbon Management Strategy such as providing information to residents and businesses will be met from existing revenue budgets.

4.6 Going forwards, business cases for any project proposals arising from the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan will be produced and evaluated before approval is sought for including them in revenue and capital budgets.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 Achieving carbon neutral emissions of carbon dioxide by 2030 is not a legal requirement. However, Council has agreed a motion that establishes an expectation to deliver widespread carbon reductions. This report supports delivery of that expectation.

5.2 Whilst consultation on the draft Carbon Management Strategy is not statutorily required, it is best practice, and is in line with the public sector equality duty. The government has produced guidance on effective consultations which sets out a number of principles. In particular consultations should be targeted, should be clear and concise, should take account of the groups being consulted and should allow adequate time for responding. To assist in the preparation of an effective strategy, and to enable Members to be properly informed by residents and stakeholders prior to approval of the final Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan, consultation took place from 5 November 2021 to 4 January 2022. As a result the strategy has been updated to reflect some of the responses in the consultation as mentioned in section 1.1 of this report.

6 Equalities Implications

6.1 The Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan has been consulted on, this has given the opportunity for consideration of the views of residents and staff to be taken into account.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken – see appendix C.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 This report sets out in detail the carbon reduction / environmental sustainability implications from adopting the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan. It is a key priority for the Council and the Council Leader and Deputy Leader has been nominated as the lead councillors and the council Chief Executive as the lead officer for moving forward with this agenda.

8 Appendices

Appendix A - Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan

Appendix B - Summary and analysis of consultation responses

Appendix C - Equalities Impact Assessment

9 Reasons for Recommendations

- 9.1 To make progress against the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral across the borough by 2030.
- 9.2 To ensure the views of service users, residents and stakeholders are obtained.
- 9.3 To keep Members updated on the progress of the Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan.

Statutory Officer Approval

Approved by: Chief Financial Officer

Date:

Approved by: Monitoring Officer

Date: