

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

8 October 2019

**Subject: Wiltshire Council Carbon Reduction
Update on actions to reduce carbon generation in Wiltshire**

**Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and MCI**

Key Decision: Non Key

Executive Summary

At its meeting held on 26 February 2019 full Council resolved to acknowledge that there is a climate emergency and to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

This report provides updates on actions the council is taking to reduce carbon generation in Wiltshire in the following areas:

Renewable energy generation, energy use and efficiency
Planning
Transport and air quality
Waste
Land use
Business and industry
The council's greenhouse gas emissions
Carbon audit and renewables audit
Working with partners to deliver this goal.

Proposals

That Cabinet notes the actions taken and proposed to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

Reason for Proposals

To provide Cabinet with an update on actions to reduce carbon generation in Wiltshire.

**Alistair Cunningham OBE
Executive Director - Growth, Investment and Place**

Wiltshire Council

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Key Decision: Non Key

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Cabinet with an update on actions taken to plan to reduce carbon generation in Wiltshire.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The programme of work to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 will contribute to the business plan goals of:
 - (i) Housing and Environment (Sustainable Development)
I live in a good home I can afford
Development where it is needed
Reaffirm our commitment to continue delivering our policies on the environment and carbon reduction
 - (ii) Working with our partners as an innovative and effective council
We recognise that there is a need to work innovatively and effectively with partners to get maximum value for public sector spend in Wiltshire and also reaffirm our commitment to continue working within our policies on the environment and carbon reduction.
One Wiltshire Estate
We take a strategic approach to reducing the carbon footprint of Wiltshire Council, including considering renewable and energy efficient opportunities for our facilities when appropriate

Background

3. At its meeting held on 26 February 2019 full Council debated the following notices of motion:
12b) Acknowledging a Climate Emergency and Proposing the Way Forward;
12c) Environment and Global Warming.
The council resolved to acknowledge that there is a climate emergency and to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030. The minutes of the meeting are available via this link
<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/g11678/Public%20minutes%2026th-Feb-2019%2010.30%20Council.pdf?T=11> see pages 21 to 24. Cabinet has also pledged to make Wiltshire Council carbon neutral by 2030.

4. A Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group has been established, chaired by Councillor Graham Wright and made up of eight councillors. The areas they are considering are:
 - Renewable energy generation, energy use and efficiency
 - Planning
 - Transport and air quality
 - Waste
 - Land use
 - Business and industry.

Main Considerations for the Council

Renewable energy generation, energy use and efficiency

5. There is a report to Cabinet at its meeting on 8 October 2019 on the Corporate Property Energy Efficiency and Generation Programme which sets out proposals to increase renewable energy generation and energy efficiency within the council's estate.

Planning

6. The Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 contains a number of policies which should contribute to the achievement of the goal of seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030. Chapter two describes six key challenges, one of which is climate change.
7. Climate change is a central issue that is addressed by the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This necessitates both adapting to the consequences of unavoidable climate change and mitigating the causes by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The basis of this strategy is to achieve sustainable patterns of development in order to reduce carbon emissions by minimising the need to travel and encouraging the use of alternative modes to the car.
8. Chapter three of the Core Strategy describes a series of strategic objectives designed to marry up with the key challenges identified in chapter two. Strategic objective 2: addressing climate change is set out below.

Climate change is possibly the greatest long-term challenge facing the world today. Tackling climate change is therefore a key government priority for the planning system. Local authorities are uniquely placed to act on climate change and the planning system can help by contributing to delivering the most sustainable development and shaping communities that are resilient to the unavoidable consequences of climate change.

9. Chapter six contains a number of policies which are required to deliver the strategic objectives. In respect of climate change these include policies on sustainable construction and low carbon energy; encouraging standalone renewable energy installations; protecting and enhancing Wiltshire's green infrastructure; tackling air quality and encouraging modal shift through sustainable transport schemes.

10. This strategy offers a significant opportunity to influence greenhouse gas emissions and has an important role in shaping communities that are resilient to the predicted impacts of climate change such as higher temperatures and increased flood risk.
11. Officers are currently reviewing policies to determine their effectiveness and whether changes are required to improve conformity of the Plan with the National Planning Policy Framework and associated Planning Practice Guidance. This may lead to the need to commission additional evidence. A best practice review is also underway which will focus in particular on those policies, adopted by other councils, that have been prepared more recently than the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Once this exercise is complete the information obtained will inform discussions held by a member and officer focus group which will debate and propose any policy changes which are required.

Transport and Air Quality

12. The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the council's objectives, plans and indicators for transport in Wiltshire. As a document developed through partnership working and extensive consultation, the LTP also provides the framework for all other organisations with an involvement in transport in Wiltshire. The current plan is Wiltshire's third local transport plan (LTP3) and covers the period from March 2011 to March 2026.
13. The Department for Transport's 'Guidance on Local Transport' (July 2009) sets out five overarching national transport goals:
 - Support economic growth
 - Reduce carbon emissions
 - Promote equality of opportunity
 - Contribute to better safety, security and health
 - Improve quality of life and a healthy natural environment.
14. In addition, the transport White Paper 'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon: Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen' (January 2011) has two main themes:
 - Offering people sustainable transport choices, particularly for shorter journeys, that will stimulate behaviour change
 - Demonstrating how localism and the big society can work for transport.
15. Work on the fourth LTP (LTP4) has now commenced with a draft evidence base being prepared for review which will include the existing position on carbon generation. Discussion will then take place with members on options for policies based on the evidence. LTP4 is being prepared in parallel with the review of the Local Plan referred to in paragraph 11 above which will enable the council to ensure that policies in both plans support and complement each other in achieving the council's objectives.
16. Local authorities are responsible for monitoring local air quality and implementing action plans to improve air quality where this is necessary. The majority of air quality action plans concern road transport emissions. Good cooperation between transport planning, air quality and spatial planning, as well as with partner organisations, is essential to ensure a strategic approach to improve quality of life for those living near busy roads and junctions.

17. There is a report to Cabinet at its meeting on 8 October 2019 on the Wiltshire Air Quality Strategy asking that Cabinet approves the draft strategy and refers it to full Council for final approval. The draft Air Quality Strategy was considered by Environment Select Committee at its meeting on 23 April 2019. The Health and Wellbeing Board also reviewed the strategy on 23 May 2019. There are currently eight air quality management areas in Wiltshire. The importance of working collaboratively with local communities and other relevant organisations to improve areas of poor air quality was noted.

Waste

18. There was a report to Environment Select Committee at its meeting on 3 September 2019. Appended to the report was an updated draft of the Household Waste Management Strategy, a performance report for 2018-19 and an action plan for 2019-20. There will be a report to Cabinet at its meeting on 19 November 2019 asking that Cabinet approves the draft strategy and refers it to full Council for final approval.
19. The waste hierarchy upon which the strategy is based continues to remain central to environmental legislation and prioritises those waste management practices which are more environmentally sustainable than sending waste to landfill, which is the option of last resort. The performance report sets out that in 2008-9 the council landfilled just over 56% of its household waste and by 2018-19 had reduced this figure to less than 16%.
20. The action plan for 2019-20 includes the introduction of a comingled collection of dry recyclable materials with paper, cans, cardboard, plastic and cartons being collected from the blue lidded bin and glass being collected from the black box. The council should reduce its air quality and carbon impacts due to the net reduction in the number of vehicles required to deliver the service.
21. In selecting this collection system the council carried out an assessment of the carbon impact of the proposed service. The table below sets out the carbon impact of collecting, transporting, sorting and reprocessing the recyclable materials. These calculations were based on a number of assumptions made in 2015, especially on the tonnes of each recyclable material which would be collected once the service changes. The carbon equivalent was calculated using emission conversion factors published by Defra for greenhouse gas reporting at that time. The waste management service is assessing the resource implications of considering CO₂e reporting in addition to the statutory requirement of reporting on tonnes of materials collected and treated.

Process	Tonnes of CO₂e
Collection and haulage to transfer station	654
Transportation and haulage from transfer station to materials recovery facility	21
Transfer station operation	79
Materials recovery facility sorting operations	671
Reject disposal through sorting at materials recovery facility and reprocessing	472
Transportation and haulage from materials recovery facility and transfer station to reprocessors	183
tCO ₂ e benefit of closed loop recycling	-28,004
Total tCO₂e	-25,924

Land Use

22. Land use planning will be addressed through the work on the Wiltshire Core Strategy outlined in paragraph 11 above. As Wiltshire is a large rural county there may be opportunities for biomass production, reforestation and tree planting.
23. A meeting has taken place between NFU Mutual and members of the Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group to discuss climate change and agriculture in Wiltshire. The NFU has recently published a report entitled Achieving Net Zero: Farming's 2040 Goal. The NFU intends working in partnership with government and other stakeholders to improve efficiency to reduce emissions, improve land management and change land use to capture more carbon, and to increase renewable energy and bio-energy. This may contribute to achievement of Wiltshire Council's policy of protecting and enhancing Wiltshire's green infrastructure and should contribute to the target of seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

Business and Industry

24. There was a report to Cabinet at its meeting on 17 September 2019 reporting progress made by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Partnership in preparing the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). The report stated that the strategy includes commitments to improving the strategic energy infrastructure, decarbonising our economy and helping to deliver the national climate change targets. The LIS focuses on the development of clean, flexible and resilient power systems, exploring hydrogen uses in various applications and new energy vehicles. It also addresses decarbonisation and digital connectivity.
25. The LIS has been informed by an energy strategy which builds on the area's strengths to grow the low carbon economy. One of the energy strategy's objectives is to make a contribution towards our national climate change commitments, ensuring Swindon and Wiltshire help meet the carbon target.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2018-19

26. The council publishes an annual report on the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions arising from its own estate and operations as requested by government. The report is prepared in accordance with guidance published by Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. In order to measure and report on these emissions the council records or estimates activity data, such as the amount of electricity used or the distance travelled by vehicles, then multiplies it by an emission (conversion) factor that gives an estimate of the GHG emissions.
27. Emissions included arise from council owned or controlled estate or buildings, council operational fleet, streetlights and business travel. The figures exclude emissions from schools and academies, social housing and outsourced operations. In 2014-15 total gross emissions were 26,438 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent and in 2018-19 were 15,869 tCO₂e. The council's GHG emissions fluctuate from year to year due to acquisition and divestment of buildings, change of use of buildings, seasonal weather conditions which affect the need for heating and cooling buildings, and improvements to energy efficiency made during the year.
28. The council is engaged in a range of work to deliver savings in emissions and costs. Examples include rationalisation and improvement of the council's property portfolio, investment in energy efficiency measures within the remaining estate such as lighting and heating equipment upgrades, investment in appropriate renewable energy technologies and the replacement of street lighting units with LED lights which use considerably less energy.

Carbon Audit and Renewables Audit

29. The council is able to report on its current baseline for GHG emissions as set out in paragraphs 26 to 28 above. In terms of renewable energy, the council currently owns 31 photovoltaic systems installed on its buildings which, on average, generate 294,992 kWh of electricity per annum and saves 89.92 tCO₂e per annum. There are a further 94 installations on domestic homes owned by the council which generate an estimated 168,000 kWh per annum.
30. The bigger challenge comes in trying to develop a carbon baseline for the county of Wiltshire when the council does not control the activities which release emissions into the atmosphere. Similarly, the council is aware of renewable energy installations on its own buildings and estate but not of those which are not on its estate. The council is currently in discussions with a local university on how to approach establishing baselines for the county of Wiltshire.
31. In the absence of a county of Wiltshire baseline, a local authority focussed emissions tool, SCATTER, has been accessed to produce a greenhouse gas report. As the acronym suggests (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction) this tool was developed for use in city areas, initially Greater Manchester, through a project funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. **Appendix 1** contains a graph generated using SCATTER showing the greenhouse gas inventory for emissions within the county of Wiltshire boundary. This is based on data published by central government departments across a range of activities, mainly for 2017.

32. No work has been done to test the robustness of the data but the graph should give an indication of the source of the highest levels of emissions. These are on-road transport and residential buildings. The total level of emissions is 3,465k tCO₂e. Based on a population of 498,000 this gives emissions per head of 7 tCO₂e.
33. An alternative source of data is the government's UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2017 published by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The numbers stated are lower than those produced from the SCATTER model in respect of industrial and commercial emissions, domestic fuel use, transport and land use. In addition, the SCATTER model includes emissions from waste disposal and waste water which are not referenced in the national statistics. The total level of emissions based on this report is 2,717k tCO₂e or 5.5 tCO₂e per head. The difference between the figures in the two reports is 750k tCO₂e or 1.5 tCO₂e per head.
34. This demonstrates the challenges in establishing a robust, credible baseline. While further work is done to try to achieve this it is essential that the council continues to focus on its work to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency and deliver renewable energy capacity.

Working with partners to deliver this goal

35. While the council is able to plan to ensure it is carbon neutral by 2030, in seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral we will need to work with national government, other local authorities, private sector organisations, the voluntary and community sector and residents of the county.
36. The Local Government Association (LGA) has recently declared a climate emergency as have many other councils. The LGA has recently published a briefing on the next steps that councils which have declared a climate emergency could consider, with a focus on initiatives which have been implemented in Scandinavian countries and in France. One of the key points is the importance of engaging residents in considering the impact they have on climate change.
37. The chair of the Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group attended a recent meeting of the chairs of Wiltshire Council's community area boards (CAB) to talk to them about arranging meetings, workshops or other events to address the climate emergency, ensuring that they engage with those groups and individuals across the county who are knowledgeable on this area of work. Bradford on Avon CAB have already held a successful meeting and several other CABs are in the process of planning similar events. The Community Engagement Managers are compiling lists of relevant organisations within their community areas which the council will seek to engage with.
38. The council will work with Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Partnership to engage with businesses and industry in Wiltshire. The Wiltshire Public Service Board brings together key, public sector organisations so would provide a forum to discuss all members' carbon reduction plans. The Wiltshire Assembly has organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors and Wiltshire's communities working together on key priorities for the county, one of which is

clearly the acknowledgement of a climate emergency and the goal of seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

39. As set out in paragraph 4 of this report, a Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group has been established, chaired by Councillor Graham Wright and made up of eight councillors. The members of the task group are working on the areas set out under Main Considerations for the Council.

Safeguarding Implications

40. This report provides an update for members to note. There are no safeguarding implications arising.

Public Health Implications

41. As this is an update report there are no direct public health implications arising from the report itself. Some of the actions we are taking (for example on air quality) will, however, have potential to have a positive impact on the health of the population.

Procurement Implications

42. There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

43. There is no equalities impact arising from this report.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

44. This report sets out the council's response to environmental and climate change considerations following the acknowledgement of a climate emergency and agreement by full Council to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

45. The paper is for Cabinet to note and does not require a decision to be made.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

46. The paper is for Cabinet to note and does not require a decision to be made.

Financial Implications

47. The paper is for Cabinet to note and there are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

48. The paper is for Cabinet to note and there are no legal implications arising from this report.

Workforce Implications

49. There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Options Considered

50. The only option considered is to note the report.

Conclusions

51. Since full Council resolved to acknowledge that there is a climate emergency and to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 a number of areas of work have been progressed. This report provides an update as set out in paragraphs 5 to 38 above.

Alistair Cunningham OBE (Executive Director - Growth, Investment and Place)

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction

Background Papers

None