Wiltshire Council Information Item

Subject:	Wiltshire Council draft Climate Strategy Consultation
Web contact:	www.wiltshire.gov.uk/climate

Consultations on both the draft Wiltshire Climate Strategy and Our Natural Environment Plan start on the 1st of September and run until 23.59 on the 17th of October 2021.

Information on both consultations are available as follows:

- Information about the Climate Strategy and to sign up for the online events see: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/climate

- Information about Our Natural Environment Plan see: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-bio-green-blue-infrastructure

Comments can be submitted through the two online surveys via the above links.

Climate Strategy

This strategy has been developed after Wiltshire Council acknowledged a climate emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030. The document has deliberately been kept simple to encourage a wide readership. The UK Climate Change Committee estimates that local authorities can influence one third of emissions in their area. This makes public engagement and buy-in from organisations and businesses critical to tackling the other two thirds – as well as advocating for strong government action. This high level strategy sets out our objectives and areas of focus while remaining flexible. As the world around us evolves in terms of knowledge, legislation and policy, technology and the market, we will adapt to take advantage of these opportunities. Detailed delivery plans will be developed, and in recognition that we are facing an emergency, we are already taking action on a number of fronts.

Our Natural Environment Plan - Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy

This strategy looks at the future for Wiltshire's natural environmental assets focussing on the need to address climate change adaptation and mitigation, halt and reverse biodiversity loss and contribute to the health and wellbeing of Wiltshire's residents.

'Blue infrastructure' means water courses such as rivers, lakes, canals, ponds and wetlands, while 'green infrastructure' covers plant life such as fields, woodlands, hedgerows and parks, and the GBI Strategy will set a clear vision, goals and principle to guide delivery through partnership working. Having a strong GBI will help mitigate against the effects of climate change through nature-based solutions such as, increased water retention in the land to

Wiltshire Council Information Item

reduce the risk of flooding, maintain and improve biodiversity, and help to provide improved access to the countryside.

A Community Environmental Toolkit is available to support communities wanting to develop local projects and can be downloaded here: https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/3854/Community-Environmental-Toolkit

The GBI strategy will inform the development of new polices in the emerging Local Plan and other council documents such as the Local Transport Plan and set the framework for a new Local Nature Recovery Strategy that will identify biodiversity net gain sites (a new requirement in the Environment Bill).

Consultation events

There will be a series of online and in-person events covering both strategies where people can find out more and ask questions. To join the online events, people must sign up in advance. The full schedule of events is as follows:

· 9 September, 6pm, online launch event with Claire Perry O'Neill.

· 15 September, 10.30am-11.30am, first engagement webinar.

· 30 September, 7pm-8pm, second engagement webinar.

Library drop-in sessions:

· 14 September, 10am-midday, Salisbury Library

· 23 September, 10.30am-midday, Devizes Library

· 27 September, 10am-midday, Chippenham Library

· 7 October, 10am-midday, Trowbridge Library

All Local Councils have been sent a letter and a poster regarding the consultation and events. Please publicise the strategy consultations in your communities and online.