

## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

02 February 2021

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**Subject:** Update on Council's Response to the Climate Emergency

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Richard Clewer - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing, Communities

**Key Decision:** Non Key

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#### 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'.

A commitment was made to provide six-monthly progress updates on actions the council is taking to reduce carbon generation in Wiltshire. This is the third progress report to Cabinet following updates in October 2019 and July 2020.

The update is once more structured against the following business plan priorities. The plan was updated by Full Council in July to include a Climate Emergency Addendum.

- Growing the economy
- Strong communities
- Protecting the vulnerable
- Working with our partners as an innovative and effective council.

Appended to this report is a discussion document. This sets out the proposed approach to developing a draft Climate Strategy and its outline content, navigating engagement and consultation through to final adoption. It also introduces the provisional delivery themes, which will shape the organisation's approach to realising its climate ambitions:

- Transport and travel
- Built environment
- Energy generation, storage and distribution
- Green and circular economy
- Natural environment, land use and farming
- Carbon neutral council

The discussion document includes a projection of the council's corporate emissions trajectory to 2030. Positively, clarification has been received that

the decision to switch to a green energy tariff since April 2020 (as reported in update 2), means electricity used through this contract can now be classed as carbon neutral. This change has resulted in significant immediate progress towards reducing council emissions. Overall, council emissions for 2020/21 are projected to reduce by 79% on 2014/15 figures and 68% on 2018/19.

### **Proposal**

1. That Cabinet notes the actions taken in response to the climate emergency following the last update in July 2020.
2. That Cabinet gives delegated authority to the Director of Economic Development and Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities, to proceed to:
  - develop and implement a Climate Engagement Plan based on the appended discussion document; and,
  - authorise a subsequent consultation on such draft proposals as may emerge from the engagement process; and,
  - return to Cabinet with a final draft Climate Strategy, seeking approval to submit to Council for adoption.

### **Reason for Proposals**

1. To provide Cabinet with an update on actions taken in response to the climate emergency.
2. To ensure Wiltshire has in place a strategy to structure its response towards its 2030 climate ambitions.

**Terence Herbert**  
**Chief Executive**

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**02 February 2021**

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**Key Decision: Non Key**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To ask Cabinet to give delegated authority to the Director of Economic Development and Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities, to develop and implement stakeholder/consultation plans on the draft Climate Strategy; and to provide the third progress update on actions taken in response to the climate emergency.

### **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 all four business plan priorities of:
  - i. Growing the economy
  - ii. Strong communities
  - iii. Protecting the vulnerable
  - iv. Working with our partners as an innovative and effective council

The update on the actions taken in response to the climate emergency is contained in paragraphs 10-42 and structured against these headings.

### **Background**

3. At its meeting held on 26 February 2019 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 online (see pages 21 to 24). Cabinet has also pledged to make Wiltshire Council carbon neutral by 2030.

4. As part of this motion, the council resolved that Cabinet should report to Full Council on a six-monthly basis regarding the actions the council is taking and will take to address the climate emergency. The second report was presented to Cabinet in July 2020.
5. A Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group has been established by Environment Select Committee, chaired by Councillor Graham Wright and made up of nine councillors. The task group is developing recommendations to seek to achieve the target of making the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030. Updates on the task group's work are reported to Environment Select Committee (and O&S Management Committee due to the special arrangements put in place due to the pandemic). The most recent updates were presented on [29 September 2020](#) and [13 January 2021](#).

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

6. Since the last update in July 2020, the council has finalised its 'Climate' governance structure. A Climate Programme Group has been created, chaired by the Corporate Director for Place and Environment; as has a Councillor Climate Working Group, chaired by the deputy leader and including the chair of the O&S Management Committee. These two groups are providing the steer for strategy development and delivery (see **Appendix 1, Annex A** for governance structure).
7. The council's Climate Team is now in place, reporting to the Head of Carbon Reduction. The immediate focus has been to produce a Climate Strategy discussion paper to underpin the forthcoming Climate Engagement Plan. To develop this document the team has met with a significant number of stakeholders, with the key learning summarised within **Appendix 1**. This document will enable extensive engagement during the coming months. The feedback from this will inform a draft Climate Strategy, for consultation during summer/autumn 2021.
8. Corporately, the decision to switch to a green energy tariff, combined with the other reported measures has resulted in predicted 2021/22 council emissions reducing by 79% on 2014/15 figures and 68% on 2018/19, when the council declared a climate emergency. The council has recently further demonstrated its commitment to climate by including the 'Green Agenda' within its key principles for organisational recovery. The focus will be on promotion of a green workplace and environmentally friendly behaviours, as illustrated by the recent introduction of an Eco Champion category in the staff recognition scheme, EPIC.

### **Growing the Economy: Highly Skilled Jobs (Employment)**

9. Through the auspice of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) Wiltshire Council officers have been working in

partnership with Severn Wye Energy Agency on the EU funded '[Target 2030 - Countdown to a low carbon economy](#)'. As part of the European Structural and Investment Funds programme, between October 2020 and June 2023, the project will work with 90 Small or Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) across Swindon and Wiltshire - with a target requiring 75% of supported firms to be rural. Target 2030 will offer the SMEs an energy survey and bills analysis, providing them with a report and funding 30% of any subsequent improvements. The programme plans to save 600 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions across Wiltshire and Swindon.

10. The council has been raising awareness with training providers and employers in order to positively address the potential skills shortage within the green economy sector. Actioned through the SWLEP Skills and Talent subgroup, the focus has been to address, through influence and partnership engagement, the imbalance of supply and demand in skills. Already the council's provider of the Skills Support for Redundancy (ESF) contract has requested further information to ensure that the provision of courses aligns to the county's needs within this area. According to the Local Government Association, Wiltshire is [projected](#) to require 6856 'green jobs' by 2030.

### **Growing the Economy: Housing and Environment**

11. The July update highlighted that the council's Housing Board was considering investing in existing council housing stock to increase its energy efficiency. In November 2020, Cabinet [approved](#) an investment of £50 million to raise council homes to an energy performance B rating, as a minimum, over the next 10 years. Improvements will include:

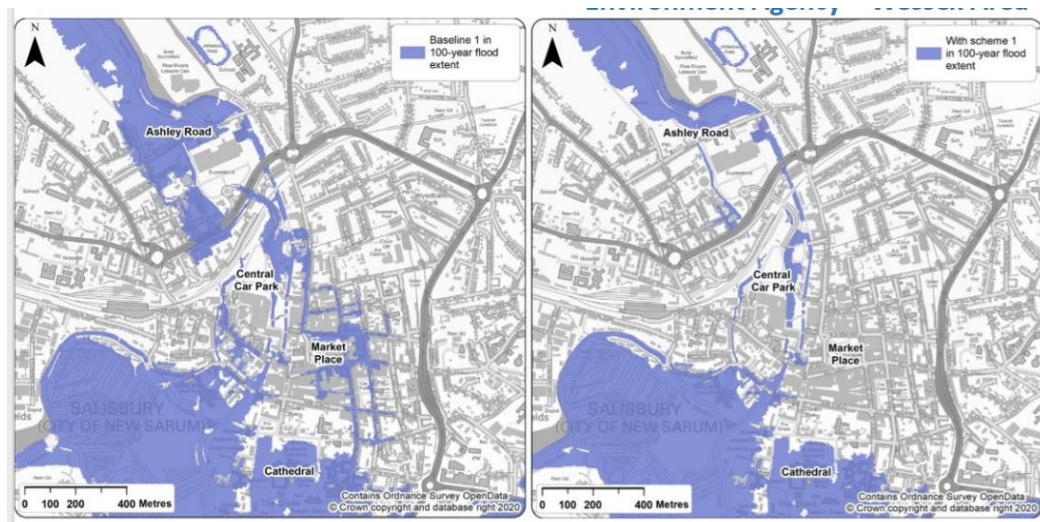
- the fitting of A++ windows
- efficient light bulbs fitted as standard
- non-fossil fuel heating and hot water solutions e.g. Air Source Heat Pumps or high heat retention Night Storage Heaters (combined with the installation of efficient unvented hot water cylinders)

It is forecast that the total programme could deliver a reduction in carbon emissions of between 15,000 and 20,000 tonnes per annum. Residents could also benefit from savings on energy bills up to £ 500-600 per annum

12. The council has also made an application to the Government's 'Green Homes Grant' Local Authority Delivery Scheme - Phase 1b. The grant, if successful, will provide £0.55m to target improvements to 100 homes with the poorest levels of insulation by September 2021. The focus will be on a 'fabric first' approach which will see the properties receiving the best thermal insulation with appropriate ventilation as necessary. This will increase the EPC rating, give better thermal comfort, reduce heating and hot water bills and in turn carbon emissions. The council will train existing staff / create the new role of Retrofit Coordinator, mandatory under PAS 2035. This is required if the council is to become accredited for the best possible and fully auditable results. The role of Retrofit Coordinator as well as Retrofit Designer can be partially funded from this grant.

13. The council has promoted the Green Homes Grant [Scheme](#) for owner occupiers and landlords via its internal and external communication channels. Staff, public and businesses have been made aware of the scheme, which means homeowners can obtain up to two thirds of the cost of energy savings measures, up to £5000. Lower income households, however, could be entitled to claim £10,000.
14. Cabinet, in November 2020, approved the first phase of the Salisbury River Park [Scheme](#), which will improve resilience to climate change. This will commence an £18 million package of investment provided by the Environment Agency and SWLEP. This flood prevention scheme will reduce the risk of flooding for existing residents and businesses in Salisbury City Centre. It includes additional flood defences, improvements for leisure and recreational uses, plus ecology and biodiversity enhancements. It will also enable the delivery of the council's wider regeneration goals for the Maltings and Central Car Park site and protect future development in the city centre.

### **'1 in 100' Year Flooding Impacts without/with River Park Scheme**



15. The council recognises the benefits to biodiversity of different management regimes and this year has been carrying out wildflower trials, both on highway verges and on amenity land. This work will be extended if successful. In these trials, there has been a reduction in the number of cuts from 9 to 2, avoiding the main flowering period from mid-May through to the end of August. Over time this will help develop a short flower-rich turf with clovers, trefoils, self-heal and other small species. These areas can provide a long continuity of flowers that are valuable for bees and other insects. Collection of clippings will be undertaken after each cut to reduce the build-up of organic material (a thatch of cut grass), keep nutrient levels low, and ensure plenty of bare ground for plants to regenerate from seed.
16. The July update recognised the importance of reviewing the policies within the Wiltshire Core Strategy, to make a positive contribution to managing greenhouse gas emissions and help shape communities that are resilient to the predicted impacts of climate change such as higher temperatures and increased flood risk. Consultation has now commenced on the [Local Plan](#)

[Review](#) and includes the consultation paper '[Addressing climate change and biodiversity net gain through the Local Plan - raising the ambition](#)' as well as the [emerging spatial strategy](#). A sustainable pattern of development that promotes self-containment and reduces the need to travel will be a central part of the plan and views are sought on the distribution of growth in the period to 2036.

17. Alongside the emerging spatial strategy, the aim of the consultation is to test the council's thinking and further develop evidence to inform policies in the draft plan. Five linked key policy themes, in addition to the Spatial Strategy, will help support the plan's objective in respect of adapting to and mitigating climate change:

- tackling flood risk and water management;
- enhancing green/blue infrastructure and biodiversity;
- delivering sustainable design and construction;
- encouraging sustainable, renewable energy generation and management; and
- promoting sustainable transport, active travel and improving air quality.

18. The consultation document builds on these themes and asks people to help us develop what we already know about the social, economic and environmental challenges facing Wiltshire in terms of a changing climate - e.g. understanding the viability of carbon neutral new development; delivering a decarbonised and sustainable energy strategy; tackling retrofitting of existing building stock; creating and sustaining a 'green economy'; reversing biodiversity loss.

19. Alongside the Local Plan Review, the council is preparing a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The strategy will both inform and support the implementation of policies within the Local Plan. It also plays an important role, as a corporate document, alongside the Climate Strategy that will be focused on delivering improvements to the natural environment and has shared objectives. An outline of the emerging strategy is attached at **Appendix 2**. It sets out a vision and is based on three goals: adaptation and resilience to climate change; halting the loss of and improving biodiversity; and contributing to health and well-being. These goals will help deliver strong and well-connected green and blue infrastructure across Wiltshire and across to adjoining local authorities. Such an approach is valued by communities and supports sustainable development. This has been developed following input from a workshop attended by a range of stakeholders including Natural England, the Environment Agency, neighbouring authorities, wildlife organisations and water utility companies. The strategy will continue to be developed through stakeholder engagement, which where possible will be joined up with the planned engagement to develop the draft Climate Strategy.

20. In 2019 the council approved 5 applications for solar farms and battery storage units across the county. The table below shows that these developments will contribute over 200 megawatts of electricity to support the county's energy demands.



Type	Number	Installed capacity (MWelec)
Solar	2	56
Battery Storage	3	149

21. Eunomia's [Local Authority Recycling Carbon Index](#) provides councils with an alternative measure of the environmental performance of their waste and recycling services to a purely weight-based measure, which is how "recycling rates" are typically calculated. The Index shows which local authorities' recycling activities are delivering the greatest carbon benefits based on an assessment tool created by Zero Waste Scotland. Eunomia calculates the total carbon savings generated from all the recycling reported by each authority via the statutory WasteDataFlow reporting framework, and encompasses their kerbside collections, household waste recycling centres and other recycling initiatives such as bring sites. Dividing this figure by the population served yields a carbon saving per capita, thereby allowing an effective comparison between authorities. The higher the value, the higher the theoretical carbon savings. Rating authorities in this way demonstrates that a high recycling rate does not necessarily result in the greatest carbon savings. Wiltshire for this year has been classed as a Good Performer and is outperforming the national average. England's Carbon Index performance remained close to last year (2019) at 69 kg CO<sub>2</sub>eq saved per capita. Wiltshire's Carbon Index (2019) performance was 82 kg CO<sub>2</sub>eq saved per capita. Categories are defined as follows:

- High Flyers – the top 10%
- Good Performers – the next 30%,
- Mid Performers – the next 30%, and
- Low Performers – the bottom 30%

22. Wiltshire has subsequently improved its recycling collection service, thus making it easier for residents to recycle a wide range of materials at the kerbside. It has also reduced the overall size of the collection vehicle fleet under new service contracts, and collection rounds are being further optimised to ensure vehicles are deployed as efficiently as possible. The new collection vehicles also utilise more efficient engines. In 2019/20, 94% of the waste collected by Wiltshire Council for recycling, composting or reuse was managed within the UK and was not exported abroad. All these measures would be expected to further improve the carbon impact of the waste service beyond that reported for 2018/19. Wiltshire Council's household waste recycling rate for 2018/19 was 42.69%, which increased to 43.45% by 2019/20. In 2018/19, 84.34% of the municipal waste managed by Wiltshire Council was diverted from landfill.

### **Growing the Economy: Transport and Infrastructure**

23. The council is currently rolling out a £12m programme to convert streetlights across Wiltshire to LEDs, with approximately 20,000 units replaced so far out of a total of 42,000. Since 2013/14 energy consumption has been reduced by 39% thanks to part-night lighting, dimming and the use of LEDs for new and replacement units. During this period carbon emissions have more than



halved despite a growth in the number of streetlights as new developments are built. The 42,000 new LED units are projected to reduce energy consumption by 67% and carbon emissions by 83% by 2022/23 compared with the 2013/14 baseline.

24. The council has been proactively engaging with the Energy Saving Trust to review its fleet/grey fleet in order to understand where emissions and costs can be reduced. Consideration has been given to opportunities where Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) can replace diesel. Funded by government, the Energy Saving Trust analysed the council's fleet data over 12 months from April 2019 to March 2020. This research has been instrumental in helping to shape the council's forthcoming Fleet Strategy. The council has also enabled Wiltshire College and Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue to engage with the EST.
25. The council has been awarded £0.68m from the second tranche of the Department for Transport's (DfT) Active Travel Fund, to progress cycling schemes in the county. The funding is intended to make it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to access shops, businesses and places of work without driving or using public transport, and also help people to maintain social distancing. The original bid was for £0.9m, and so to establish which schemes to take forward, the council is holding a consultation on the proposed options. It is also consulting on the first tranche of temporary schemes, which are already in place.
26. The council and SWLEP are planning transport improvements in the vicinity of New Road and Station Hill, Chippenham in early 2021. The improvements are part of the £1.98 million approved SWLEP Chippenham Station Hub redevelopment project. The aim of the improvements is to enhance junction capacity and provide better facilities for both cyclists and pedestrians.
27. Work is currently being undertaken with the Devizes Development Partnership to develop the Strategic Outline Business Case for the Devizes Gateway station (for completion by end of February 2021). Council officers are also liaising with a Wilton stakeholder/working group to develop a bid application for Wilton Junction station (submission date to be confirmed by the Department for Transport). The council has learnt that it was unsuccessful in its bid through the 'Restoring Your Railway' (RYR) fund to restore secondary train services on the Great Western Mainline. On the other unsuccessful bids in round 1 RYR (Westbury - reinstating the 4th platform; and improving capacity on the Swindon-Westbury route), the council is considering next steps with the rail industry (i.e., Network Rail, GWR and South Western Railway).
28. As part of the government's pledge to reduce carbon, it is committed to enhancing the public transport offer nationally. In doing so, it has allocated £5bn, which will largely be accessed through the National Bus Strategy to be launched in the late spring 2021. As a prelude the government made

available three grant pots for which local authorities can bid in early 2020. Wiltshire qualified for two of these grants:

- a. £0.67m was received last year to improve/enhance or reinstate bus services. A consultation was conducted through members and town and parish councils to ascertain community bus priorities. Due to the pandemic, the consultation exercise will be repeated in the summer of 2021 to reaffirm priorities in advance of rollout.
- b. The council has also been successful in moving to phase 2 of its £1.2m Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) bid to modernise and enhance the existing DRT scheme in the Pewsey Vale. Phase 2 is a justification of the original business case, rather than a competitive process. Confirmation will be provided by the DfT before the end of the current financial year 2020/21.

### **Strong Communities: Community Wellbeing**

29. The construction of Melksham Community Campus is due to commence early 2021. The scheme will incorporate sustainable construction methods and technologies. The fabric of the building has been designed with energy efficiency in mind; the U-values of the building are on average 20% less than current building regulations. Natural ventilation is the primary ventilation mechanism. The air-handling units will also be fitted with a heat recovery system. The building has an intelligent control system that will ensure heating and cooling technology is only utilised when needed to ensure optimum efficiency. High efficiency LED lighting will also be installed throughout. The previously proposed Combined Heat and Power (CHP) boiler will be replaced with Air-Source Heat Pumps. The roof design has also been upgraded so that photovoltaics can be installed. Officers are currently looking at funding options for the installation of photovoltaics; if secured, planning permission will be sought for their installation.

### **Strong Communities Protecting the Vulnerable: Early Intervention**

30. [Warm and Safe Wiltshire](#) is an energy advice service provided by Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council in partnership with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service and managed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy. The service provides residents across the county with information and support to help them live in warmer, safer and more comfortable homes. Between July - Sept 2020 Warm and Safe Wiltshire advised 578 households (4,383 since April 2018) on a wide variety of topics including: insulation and heating improvements, switching energy suppliers, claiming the Warm Home Discount, securing additional benefits and local grants like the Surviving Winter Fund. The demand for the service this quarter has increased significantly, in part due to prepayment meter vouchers and other funding that the Centre for Sustainable Energy has received. Also, the financial effects of the pandemic are now starting to be felt with residents contacting the service due to a change in their circumstances.

### **Working with Partners as an Innovative and Effective Council: Community Involvement**

31. Wiltshire's Conservation and Museums Advisory Service (CMAS), based at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, undertakes laboratory-based conservation services for external clients mainly from the heritage community. In a commitment to improve carbon emissions, a sustainability action plan has been developed. The plan focuses on the four main areas of; chemical usage, waste management, smart use of resources and energy usage. By implementing small changes in these areas and working towards a larger goal, the aim is to operate a sustainable laboratory and set a standard that others can follow. The intention is to communicate this plan through the council's website and collaborate with the wider heritage conservation community.
32. The council has been considering opportunities for reducing emissions within its libraries. An audit of recycling methods was undertaken, leading to good practice being rolled out across the estate. An ideas portal was developed with suggestions to emerge including making libraries a known place where water bottles can be refilled, reducing laminating to a minimum and moving to scannable digital cards (libraries have already stopped issuing new plastic cards every 3 years when membership is renewed). There is also an ambition for a poster campaign to promote sustainability tips to library customers.

### **Working with Partners as an Innovative and Effective Council: Performance**

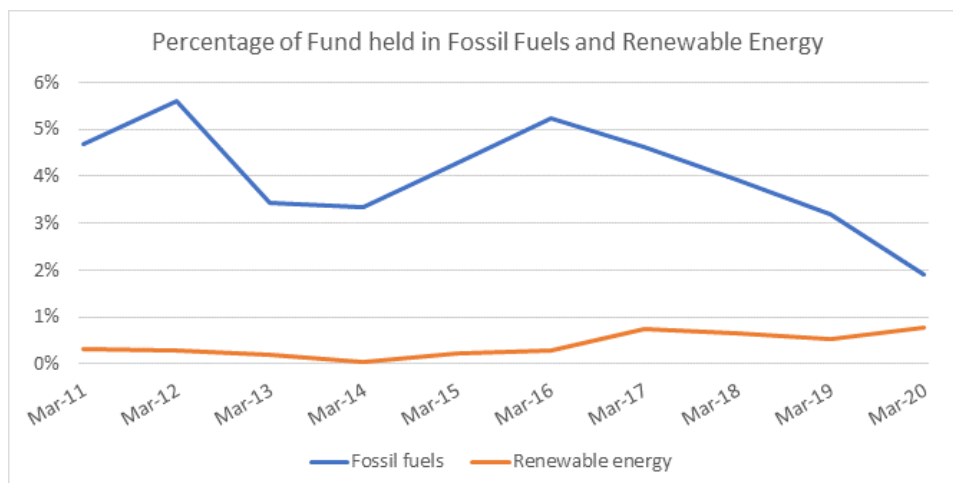
33. The council has commenced its Property Carbon Reduction Programme, focused on buildings where it is responsible for the energy related emissions from utility usage (the operational estate such as offices, leisure centres, libraries etc). The £5m programme aims to reduce carbon emissions from that portfolio by 25% over a 3-year timescale. The programme will concentrate on improving the energy efficiency of lighting and heating systems and, wherever possible, installing renewable energy systems. By reducing energy use within the buildings or generating renewable electricity on-site the council will be lowering the emissions associated with those buildings. As of December 2020, ten individual projects were underway, of which six were complete. They include LED lighting upgrades, building control systems upgrades and an Air Source Heat Pump installation. The cumulative carbon saving from those 10 projects is estimated at 120 tonnes. A further 12 projects are being assessed for cost and carbon saving and, if viable, will be completed within the first year of the programme.
34. Additionally, the council has been successful in a test bid submitted to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS). In a grant letter received in October the council was awarded £0.2m to be directed for improvements at Warminster library. The council has now put in its main bid for £4.5m with the works split into 4 technology areas:
- Replacing existing gas heating with Air Source Heat Pumps at 4 large leisure centres = £2.6m
  - Upgrading Air Handling units at 3 leisure centres = £0.4m

- Upgrading the motors/ fans at 7 large buildings = £0.1m
- Installing PV at 19 buildings = £1.1m
- There are also potentially some enabling works to increase electrical loads for the heat pump sites = £0.2m

If the bid is successful, improvements will be completed by September 2021.

35. The council's Programme 99 to improve its ICT infrastructure has achieved a reduction of 35% in data centre power and cooling consumption. Additionally, phase 2 of Programme 99 will seek to make further carbon footprint reductions.

36. In support of the council's climate aspirations the Wiltshire Pension Fund has transitioned funds into a low carbon passive equity portfolio. These assets represent approximately 20% of the fund's £2.7 billion total. The transition has taken place following a review of the pension fund's strategic asset allocation, led by Wiltshire's Pension Committee. The committee recognised that as long-term investors, it needed to take all risks into account, which included managing climate change risk alongside good governance.



37. The graph above demonstrates that the Fund's exposure to fossil fuels has decreased steadily over several years. For example, the Fund has committed £40m which will be invested exclusively in renewable infrastructure and has committed a further £100m to a fund which will invest in long-term renewable projects. One example of the type of investment made in this fund is two low carbon greenhouses in East England, heated by a new technology which takes warm, clean water from sewage treatment works, and uses a heat pump to heat the greenhouses. This has a knock-on positive impact in that the warm water is usually pumped straight into nearby rivers, so cooler water is better for the river ecosystem. Additionally, the greenhouses will be growing produce like tomatoes and peppers which will be sold in British supermarkets, and thus will have a lower carbon footprint compared to imports.

**Working with Partners as an Innovative and Effective Council: Commercialism**

38. The council is exploring the direct and indirect carbon impacts caused by the county's bus network. A carbon baseline is being established based on bus and coach mileage procured against supplier's vehicle types. Initial estimates show that a good number of buses and coaches are fitted with Euro VI engines, which are the highest emission standard engine available on the market. However, although these emissions will promote an improvement in air quality, they do not reduce the carbon footprint. Discussions with bus and coach operators are key and will take place in early 2021 to determine their understanding of how decarbonisation will affect their business and for Wiltshire Council to better understand how it can meet its carbon targets. The operation of three electric park and ride buses in Salisbury will allow bus operator 'Go South Coast' to understand long-term and whole life costs.

### **Working with Partners as an Innovative and Effective Council: Delivering Together**

39. Key external meetings were held in the last quarter of 2020 with both Wiltshire Public Service Board partners (NHS, Police, College, Fire and Rescue) and town and parish councils to ascertain how we can work together on our carbon neutral ambitions and the green recovery. The council also met with community energy groups and took part in two Wiltshire Climate Alliance workshops: one with adults in August 2020 and one with young people in November 2020 to hear their suggestions for a green recovery.

40. In addition to the [Countryside Climate Network](#) which promotes the voice of the countryside in climate change discussions, the council has signed up to:

- the new UK100 [pledge](#).
- the ADEPT [blueprint](#) for a green recovery.
- the Race to Zero global [network](#) of local authorities.

The council is also a member of the Local Government Association's Climate Action Group, the Collective for Climate Action public sector forum, Ashden's regional climate action learning hub and ADEPT's Environment Board. These networks promote the exchange of good practice with other councils and make the case for central government to transfer to councils more powers for tackling climate change. The council is also promoting the Let's Go Zero [campaign](#) to Wiltshire schools.

41. The council is committed to reducing carbon emissions in its schools through innovation and utilising the new greener technologies available on the market. These have been achieved through the installation of LED lighting, energy saving heating solutions, applications of warm roofs for replacement of flat roofing to increase the thermal values of each roof and moving closer to the installation of PV. Additionally, initial surveys are taking place with a view to replacement of gas / oil appliances with air source heat pumps. King's Gate Primary School and Wellington Eagles Primary School are new schools, built in the last two years. Both achieved Very Good BREEAM ratings (BREEAM is a third-party certification of an asset's environmental, social and economic sustainability performance). These schools have been designed to comply with the latest regulations on energy use and thermal modelling.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Engagement**

42. As part of the governance supporting the development and delivery of the Climate Strategy, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee now sits on the Councillor Climate Working Group. The executive continues to work closely with the O&S task group supporting this area and the recently published second set of recommendations were considered by the [Environment Select Committee](#) on 13 January 2021. The Global Warming & Climate Emergency task group will discuss the Climate Strategy discussion document in **Appendix 1** on 28 January 2021.

## **Safeguarding Implications**

43. There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

## **Public Health Implications**

44. There are no direct public health implications arising from the report itself. Some of the actions we are taking (for example travel) will, however, have the potential to have a positive impact on the health of the population.

## **Procurement Implications**

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

## **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

46. One of the key principles set out in **Appendix 1** is for the Climate Strategy to be equitable, ensuring the transition to low carbon, climate resilient future is fair (section 4.1).

47. The consultation and engagement approach for the Climate Strategy will be planned so that it is inclusive.

## **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

48. 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**

49. As Full Council recognised on 26 February 2019, the risks from climate change are such that Wiltshire Council cannot wait for national government to act where it can take action itself. If the council does not have an agreed strategy, there is a risk that the council will not be adequately prepared.

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

50. Without delegated authority to consult on the strategy, the council will face delays in finalising a structured response to fulfil its 2030 climate ambitions.

### **Financial Implications**

51. The council has committed £0.35m per annum to revenue fund its Climate Team. To date, the council has invested extensively in its carbon reduction programme, recently committing £50 million towards retrofitting its housing stock as well as £12 million funding to convert to LED street lighting and £5m to reduce emissions from its corporate estate. The council has also successfully secured £0.68m of government funding to support active travel and is awaiting news on a bid of £4.5m to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS), following a successful pilot bid of £0.2m to improve Warminster library. It is recognised that further funding will be required to continue this progression at both an organisational and at a county level. The council is committed to working with government and private sector partners to explore all opportunities to access the funds to facilitate this work.

52. As part of the Climate Strategy development, the council will begin to quantify how much the pathway to a carbon neutral council will cost.

### **Legal Implications**

53. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **Workforce Implications**

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

### **Options Considered**

55. **A shorter timeline for developing the strategy, resulting in limited consultation and engagement** - Developing a strategy without thorough stakeholder engagement would accelerate the process for adoption but would not speed up delivery, given that buy-in is vital. The council can only enable and facilitate change with support from stakeholders. Good engagement and consultation over the strategy will ensure agreement on priorities and support for delivery are much more likely.

### **Conclusions**

56. 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 and through the appended discussion document proposes a structured pathway to adoption of a Climate Strategy, developed in partnership with the community.

### **Sam Fox, Interim Corporate Director for Place and Environment (Interim Corporate Director - Place and Environment)**

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January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1:** Climate Strategy Discussion Document

**Appendix 2:** Towards a Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire -  
Outline of emerging strategy (January 2021)

## **Background Papers**

None.