

31st January 2023

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Ben Plummer ☎ 508965
Title	Climate Emergency Action Plan Update		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report details key progress made with the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), and other relevant updates since the last meeting on 29th November 2022.
- 1.2 Progress update highlights for this meeting include a focus that:
- **6 Heat Decarbonisation Plans** identifying possible measures that can contribute to decarbonisation and increasing energy efficiency within Council assets have been received.
 - The **Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan** has been updated, alongside a 'What you can do' document for residents that is now on the Council's website. This fits alongside the 2021-2022 climate highlights infographic so information is available on the Council's climate action from past, present and looking forward.
 - **Climate Emergency UK** are going to be externally reviewing and scoring all UK Councils on their climate action from February 2023. The national review will specifically "score" actions carried out by each authority and publish results in the Autumn. More information about the process can be found [HERE](#).
 - Delivery of **£206,000 of funding** for energy efficiency improvements via the **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 3**, contributing to the installation of measures such as solar PV, cavity wall insulation and loft insulation.
 - The popular '**Trees for Years**' programme where residents can collect free trees and shrubs will be returning soon, with collection locations, dates and times to follow.
 - **Climate Action Challenge Fund** made available by Essex County Council for community groups, parish councils, charities and schools to apply for up to £20,000 to carry out projects that tackle climate related challenges, see [HERE](#). So far 11 applications have been received from organisations based in Colchester.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report and to provide any guidance on the progress being made with areas of the action plan, or ongoing work in these areas. Of particular interest, councillors are pointed towards the creation of the SPDs, and to advise on anything they would like reflected in these documents, in terms of guidance to developers.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure that the Panel is content with the progress made to date and has the chance to feedback on ongoing work.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not Applicable

5. Key updates

Heat Decarbonisation Plans

- 5.1 At the previous meeting, it was outlined that the Council had worked with Ingleton Wood to have building surveys completed at six Council buildings to identify opportunities for increasing the energy efficiency and reducing emissions of these buildings. These buildings were:
- Leisureworld
 - Town Hall
 - Crematorium
 - Natural History Museum
 - Hollytrees Museum
 - Castle Museum
- 5.2 Heat Decarbonisation Plans were produced for each building, detailing all the decarbonisation opportunities available alongside the associated costs, carbon savings and cost payback times. The aim was to scope what could be possible, but that is not to say that all of the works should be undertaken; however, for the first time it provides us with quantifiable data on the emission saving potential and the cost to achieve it. This will enable informed analysis and plan making over coming months, to enhance the existing pathway to net zero between now and 2030. It also enables us to start aligning works across our assets, including planning for any repairs and maintenance to consider this new information so that buildings can be dealt with holistically over a short, medium and longer term.
- 5.3 Headline results from the plans were that the total achievable emissions savings that could be achieved if all measures in the Plans were delivered would be **1,590.4 tCO₂e**. This would leave the Council with an emission footprint of **1,027 tCO₂e in 2030**. The cost of delivering every opportunity identified to decarbonise these buildings would be **£10.28m** of works.
- 5.4 The Council is now reviewing these plans to see which measures are appropriate, and to see how they can be sequenced and planned into a timeline. Many factors will influence this process including grant timelines, other planned building maintenance, payback times amongst others. Consideration also needs to be given to value for money, and whether in some case an individual element may not be the best way to mitigate the current carbon emissions; in which case this would feed into our Offsetting strategy. For example, some buildings are listed, and this is a constraint on making them retain heat, or install certain measures that would disrupt their fabric or affect their heritage value.
- 5.5 Related to this work, the Council has also advertised an Energy Manager role. The self-funding role would be to get a better understanding of the Council's energy usage and bills, to explore opportunities to save energy and emissions at the Council's buildings more intelligently. This includes exploring energy saving measures (like technology, submetering, motion sensors or timing controls, insulation, LED lighting) as well as opportunities to change staff behaviours to save more energy. The dedicated resource will be able to understand buildings, how they are used by service areas, and how to support those inside the buildings to change without harm to performance of their services. It also provides the individual service areas with a central point of contact responsible for these matters outside of their own daily operational work, and where lessons learnt can be coordinated and shared.

Climate Emergency Action Plan Update

- 5.6 The Council has published the updated version of its Climate Emergency Action Plan to highlight actions that are taking place during 2022-2023. This can be viewed on the Council's [sustainability webpages](#)
- 5.7 Alongside the CEAP, a 'What you can do' document for residents, outlining how they can take action to reduce their environmental impact, and a climate highlights infographic which shows key actions the Council took to reduce emissions and environmental impact across the organisation and borough in 2021-2022. Therefore, there is now comprehensive information on the Council's past, present and planned work on tackling climate change available to view.

Climate Emergency UK Review

- 5.8 All UK Councils will be having their climate action reviewed by Climate Emergency UK, a charity that support and lobby a range of organisations for further action on climate change. The organisation previously rated all [UK council Climate Action Plans](#) publishing results in early 2022 which can be seen here. An analysis of the Council's score can be seen [here](#), alongside a Council report that reviewed this [here](#) (page 6 onwards).
- 5.9 In the Council Climate Action Scorecards, climate action that has taken place from January 2019-March 2023 will be reviewed by Climate Emergency UK, using a publicly available draft methodology which can be viewed [here](#). The process will take place from February-Summer 2023 and will include a 'right of reply' period for the Council to respond to the draft mark for its climate action. The confirmed rating of the Council's climate action is scheduled to be published in Autumn 2023.

Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Scheme Phase 3

- 5.10 The Council has been supporting the delivery of £206,000 of funding for energy efficiency improvements to households on low incomes and living in energy inefficient properties. This funding has been delivered through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Scheme Phase 3. The grant funding has been spent on properties with installations completed up until the end of November 2022. Many more properties and measures are being moved forward, with further funding to be spent by end of March 2023.

Trees for Years'

- 5.11 The Council's 'Trees for Years' programme will be returning in 2023 to give out free trees and shrubs to residents to support the environment and wildlife. Trees and shrubs will be able to be chosen using an online form, and then collected from one of the available pick-up locations. A set of locations to collect the trees from are being determined, alongside collection dates and times and these will be published shortly on the Council's website and shared on social media.

Climate Action Challenge Fund

- 5.12 Essex County Council have launched a [Climate Action Challenge Fund](#) pot for communities to bid into to carry out projects that tackle a climate related challenge. Community groups, parish councils, charities and schools amongst others can bid for funding of up to £20,000 and is open until March 31, 2023 or until funds last. Further information about the fund and its guidelines can be found [here](#).

- 5.13 This information has been circulated with Community 360, Town and Parish Clerks and all councillors. So far 11 applications have been received from organisations in Colchester.

“No Idling” Enforcement

- 5.13 At previous Panel meetings an update on enforcing “no idling” engines near schools was requested. This update is provided via a confidential appendix as it contains sensitive financial information.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 This report has no equality, diversity and human rights implications.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 All of the updates provided in this report contribute to the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 theme of ‘Tackling the Climate Challenge and Sustainability’.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 There are no consultation considerations for this paper, although several of the projects referenced have consultation elements within them and success in tackling climate change will involve engagement and education of others to influence behaviour change more widely.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 There are no specific publicity considerations.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no specific financial implications from this paper. The Heat Decarbonisation Plans will enable financial considerations to be planned regarding which measures can be delivered in our buildings over the coming years and will be considered in future budget decisions and project planning (business cases etc).

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no specific community safety implications from this paper.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no health and safety implications from this report. The projects being undertaken will have positive impacts.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 There are no risk management implications from this update.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The updates mentioned in this report are all relevant to tackling climate change and/or improving the environment. Actions and projects highlighted in the report all have co-benefits outside of environmental improvements for residents.