

11 March 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Ben Plummer and Maggie Ibrahim
Title	Climate Emergency Action Plan Update		☎ 508965
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 previous meeting on 28th January 2021.

1.2 Progress includes:

- Confirmation of £528,250 of grant funding received for decarbonising Rowan House. Works include the installation of an air source heat pump, LED lighting, roof insulation, mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system and building management system which will produce an overall emission saving of 139.6 tonnes of CO₂e.
- Securing grant funding in consortium bid led by Essex County Council in Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme to upgrade the energy efficiency of homes in Colchester.
- Launch of the Council's 'Hero for Zero' behaviour change pilot to encourage staff to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours.
- Launch of resident survey to understand how residents currently hear (and would prefer to hear) about the Council's work on the climate emergency action plan.
- Production of '[A householder's guide to sustainability and energy efficiency improvements](#)', which gives information to advise householders on ways to increase the energy efficiency of their home.
- Beginning to support Colchester Business Centre (Colbea) to update their corporate strategy to include information on corporate environmental responsibility.
- Clean Air for Colchester featured in Clean Air Day 2020 insights and celebration [report](#)
- Progress made in management of Castle Park, including planting native trees, conducting litter picks, researching options for purchasing an electric gator vehicle and developing plans for managing the riverside lake and island near Castle Park.

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of the report and to provide any guidance on the progress being made with areas of the action plan.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 The report is for information only.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Not applicable

5. Background Information

Decarbonisation of Rowan House

- 5.1 The Council has made a successful grant bid of £528,250 to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to increase the energy efficiency of and to decarbonise Rowan House. The technologies and measures being funded through the grant are:
- An air source heat pump to replace the current gas boiler – This will be powered by electricity, providing a source of low carbon heating to the building.
 - A mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) system – This system will recover heat from warm air within the building and use this to pre-heat cooler air entering the building. The system will thus provide a good source of ventilation to the building, preventing heat being lost from having to open windows to provide ventilation.
 - A building management system – This will help to monitor the temperature within the building, ensuring this is kept at suitable levels which will help to ensure the air source heat pump is used efficiently.
 - Extra roof insulation – This will help to further reduce heat loss from the building.
 - LED lighting – To replace existing external and internal lighting to increase energy efficiency.
- 5.2 These changes to the building are estimated to produce an overall emission saving of 139.6 tonnes of CO₂e.
- 5.3 Works to decarbonise Rowan House will occur as part of a wider project to refurbish and conduct basic repairs in the building. These changes are being made in line with a changing use of office space so that Council will occupy one level of the building and will allow space for staff collaboration alongside greater levels of working from home.

Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme:

- 5.4 The Council has been involved in a successful consortium grant bid led by Essex County Council to secure grant funding through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme phase 1a. This will provide funding of up to £10,000 per household to fully fund the installation of various types of insulation primarily which will help to improve the energy efficiency of homes where the residents are on low incomes/benefits and the energy performance certificate rating of their home is below an E rating. The programme will run until 30th June 2021 and funding is being distributed on a first come, first serve basis.
- 5.5 Essex County Council have produced a communications toolkit to advertise the opportunity to residents in Essex. The Council has is sharing this through our social media. Resources have also been shared with Community 360 to advertise as appropriate.
- 5.6 When the scheme ends, figures can be made available on the number of households in Colchester that have benefitted from this scheme.

- 5.7 A second phase of this scheme will be launched in March 2021, and the Council will await further details of the scheme to emerge before looking at how it can get involved in accessing this funding to improve the energy efficiency of resident's homes.

Other updates

- 5.8 The Council recently launched its pilot behaviour change challenge, 'Hero for Zero' on the 8th March, which aims to encourage staff to adopt an environmentally friendly behaviour for a month. At the end of the month, staff who took part in the challenge will receive a reward from other staff members.
- 5.9 The Council will be launching a survey on the 8th March to understand how residents hear about the Council's work on the climate emergency, and to make them aware of opportunities for residents to engage with the Council's work on the green agenda. The survey will help to inform the Council's future communications on the climate emergency. The survey will close on the 5th April at midnight.
- 5.10 Officers have produced ['A householder's guide to sustainability and energy efficiency improvements'](#). The guide has useful information on measures people can take within their home to increase energy efficiency and lower its environmental impact.
- 5.11 Colbea are developing their corporate strategy, with one element to include corporate environmental responsibility in order to reduce the environmental impact of their operations. Officers from CBC are working on developing a KPI for this work to be included in the strategy and as part of the lease of the North Colchester Business Incubation Centre.
- 5.12 The Clean Air for Colchester project featured in the [Clean Air Day 2020 insights and Celebration Report](#), recognising the action taken on the launch of the no idling campaign in October 2020.
- 5.13 The ranger team have been undertaking several actions in the last few months to manage the Castle Park and reduce the environmental impact of the team's work. This includes conducting litter picks along the river Colne in a canoe and planting 1600 native trees to form hedgerows as part of the Woodland and Biodiversity Project. The team have also been researching purchasing an electric gator vehicle for carrying out their work to be used in conjunction with an eCargo bike, as well as developing plans to improve the riverside lake and island just outside Castle Park for wildlife and carbon capture.

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 In this section show that consideration has been given to the timing and method of consultation. Also give an indication of what will happen to the responses.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 There are no publicity considerations.

10. Financial implications

10.1 There are no financial implications.

11. Community Safety Implications

11.1 There are no community safety implications.

12. Health and Safety Implications

12.1 There are no health and safety implications.

13. Risk Management Implications

13.1 There are no risk management implications.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

14.1 The updates mentioned in this report all relate to the climate emergency declaration and aim to reduce the environmental impact of the Council's operations.