

**Colchester Borough Council**

# **Climate Emergency Action Plan**

**January 2020**

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## Executive Summary

Taking action to tackle our Climate Emergency is an absolute priority for Colchester Borough Council (CBC). In July 2019 the Council was one of the first in the region to make a Climate Emergency declaration.

This Action Plan builds upon many years of achievement and environmental innovation, underlined by Colchester's status as one of the top performing Climate Friendly Council's in England & Wales by Friends of the Earth.

This is the first version of our Climate Emergency Action Plan, it is only a starting point in a ten year journey. We will adapt and update this plan regularly alongside the development of a new Environment & Sustainability Strategy and a Carbon Management Plan that will reflect many of the aspirations and actions from this plan.

Meanwhile we will continue to act boldly on climate change to ensure the whole organisation rises to the challenge of the climate emergency.

The Plan, in summary:

- Provides an assessment of CBC's emissions and their sources and begins to explore likely future scenarios for the next decade.
- Demonstrates that the Council has achieved its 2020 emissions reduction target one year early and sets a goal for the Council to be Net Carbon zero by 2030.
- Demonstrates what action has already been taken and how this crisis is being addressed through partnership via the Conservation Environment & Sustainability Task & Finish Group.
- Highlights our commitment to work with the whole community in responding to the climate emergency and to work with other local authorities and partners to share learning and knowledge.
- Sets out existing and new actions that will be delivered and where necessary developed further to:
  - Embed the Climate Emergency in Organisational Culture & Decision Making
  - Create a Roadmap to reduce our Carbon footprint to net zero by 2030
  - Provide for environmental sustainability through Planning, Development & Sustainable Travel
  - Embed sustainability through the Management of Waste and Recycling
  - Undertake Mitigation, Climate Adaptation and Environmental Stewardship
  - Build Community Resilience through Enabling, Behaviour Change & Partnership Working

## Introduction

Taking action to tackle our Climate Emergency is an absolute priority for Colchester Borough Council (CBC). In July 2019 the Council was one of the first in the region to make a Climate Emergency declaration.

The Council is committed to firm action, from setting an ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2030 to driving forward a significant programme of environmental stewardship to sustain and enhance biodiversity and invest in cleaner, greener, renewable energy projects.

This Action Plan builds upon many years of achievement and environmental innovation, underlined by Colchester's status as one of the top performing Climate Friendly Council's in England & Wales by Friends of the Earth.

The plan aims to address the urgent challenge faced by the Council; one which is made harder because, compared to most places, Colchester has already completed many of the 'easier', 'quick win' projects. This means that moving forward at pace to achieve our targets will require significant investment of time, money and energy from the Council, the government, our partners and citizens.

We are aware of growing public support for environmental action and this has been exemplified by groups such as Extinction Rebellion's People's Assembly & Festival and the work of Eco Colchester, with both groups presenting to the Council's Conservation, Environment & Sustainability Task & Finish Group in 2019.

It must be highlighted that opinion is divided on the pace required to meet this emergency; Extinction Rebellion state that we should aim for carbon net zero by 2025, The UK Committee on Climate Change along with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPaC) both reference dates of 2050 for carbon neutral, which the UK Government announced that it would adopt on the 12 June 2019.

Given the scale of the challenge to achieve a net zero carbon goal by 2030 it is likely that some future measures will entail radical steps that will require far reaching policy and societal changes. They will also rely on the measures taken at regional and national level to achieve an overall carbon reduction target. As was recognised in the agreed motion, the council cannot do this alone.

It is important to note this is the initial version of our Action Plan, it is only a starting point in a ten year journey. We will adapt as we go and update this plan regularly alongside the development of a new Environment & Sustainability Strategy and a Carbon Management Plan that will reflect many of the aspirations and actions from this plan. Meanwhile we will continue to act boldly on climate.

## Challenge and Risks associated with Climate Change

In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report which advised that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C, as opposed to the previous target of 2°C. The IPCC's review of over 6,000 sources of evidence found that, with a rise of 1.5°C, there would be risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth. A rise to 2°C would be even more catastrophic. It warned that there were 12 years within which to take the serious action required to avert this crisis and avoid the worst impacts.

CBC's Comprehensive Climate Risk Assessment outlines the climate change predictions for Colchester; it identifies risks and looks at existing and potential actions to reduce risks.

The short term climate change risks for Colchester are:

- Milder, wetter winters (central estimate shows an increase in mean winter temperature of 1.3°C and 6% increase in winter precipitation)
- Hotter, drier summers (central estimate shows an increase in mean summer temperature of 1.3°C and 7% decrease in summer precipitation)
- More frequent extreme high temperatures (central estimate shows an increase in the mean temperature of the warmest day of 0.9 °C)
- More frequent downpours of rain (central estimate shows an increase of 5% precipitation on the wettest day)
- Significant decrease in soil moisture content in summer
- Sea level rise and increases in storm surge height (central estimate for sea level rise in the East of England shows a 9.7cm increase under the medium emissions scenario and a 11.5cm increase under the high emissions scenario)
- Possible higher wind speeds.

It is clear that the climate of Colchester is very likely to change in the short term, with more significant changes likely in the longer term. Colchester currently has one of the highest average temperatures and lowest rainfall in the East of England. It is likely that Colchester will be more affected than other areas and it is therefore essential that adaptation measures are put in place to reduce Colchester's vulnerability to climate change.

## Benefits associated with Climate Change Action

Whilst there are significant challenges, taking action to mitigate and adapt to climate change could also bring multiple benefits for the environment, society and economy in Colchester. There are new opportunities to promote sustainable local development, enhance quality of life, stimulate investment and innovation, create jobs and reinforce stakeholder participation and co-operation.

## Action taken already

Colchester is not starting from scratch on its journey towards becoming net carbon neutral or adapting to climate change impacts.

The Council has made significant reductions in carbon through previous carbon reduction strategies. Over £1.5m has been invested in carbon reduction projects and from a baseline of 10,150 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2008 **the 40% reduction target has been met, one year ahead of the 2020 target.**

In July 2019, the Council passed a motion to declare a climate emergency and to:  
*Support the newly formed Conservation and Environmental Sustainability Task and Finish Group to consider the following actions:*

*Commission an environmental audit which identifies pollution hotspots, wildlife biodiversity and environmental health issues, and an urban impact assessment with an aim to identify areas of improvement across the borough.*

*Consult expert opinions in the field, as appropriate.*

*Collaborate with regional and neighbouring local authorities, as well as communities, to encourage practical measures to reduce emissions, reduce carbon footprints and develop community-based renewable energy projects.*

*Encourage all sectors of the economy across the borough to take steps to reduce waste and become carbon neutral.*

*Develop a roadmap for Colchester Borough Council to go carbon neutral by 2030.*

*Report to Cabinet and Full Council within six months with an action plan setting out conservation and environmental sustainability goals to address targets by 2030; incorporating proposals on the investment implications of this proposed activity.*

*Pledge to ensure future housing and community development projects meet a carbon-neutral standard by 2030*

*Call upon the Leader of the Council to write to the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth requesting that national policy is urgently developed to reflect the seriousness of the current emergency, and to release funds to local authorities, encouraging them to take the necessary measures at local level.*

Since the motion was passed, the Council has been working closely with a wide range of stakeholders to develop our approach to addressing the climate emergency as set out in appendix 1 and as reported to Cabinet in November 2019.

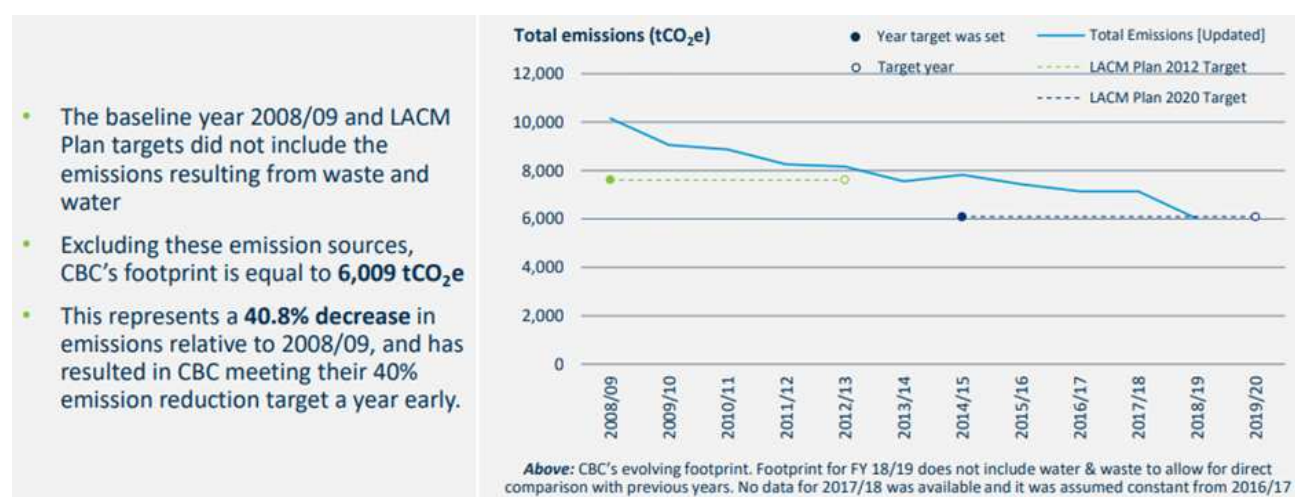
## **Carbon Emission Baseline**

Achieving a net zero carbon target depends on a sound understanding of not only where we have come from, but also where we are now and ultimately where our current plans are taking us.

The Carbon Trust was commissioned to provide the initial evidence base to help us ensure that Colchester Council's response to the climate emergency is informed by sound recommendations and expert guidance to ensure we deploy the most effective solutions to help us tackle climate change.

Analysis of CBC's historic Green House Gas (GHG) emissions was carried out using annual GHG emissions reports. Data was available from 2008/09 up to 2016/17. The emission reductions reported in the GHG reports indicate that CBC achieved its reduction targets with the majority of emission reductions attributed to purchased electricity and the Council's fleet. *(Note: During the Carbon Trust analysis, it became apparent that fleet emission data had been under reported since 2012. However even with this historical calculation error the Carbon Trust report states that in Colchester we have a 40.8% decrease in emissions relative to 2008/09 baselines. This equates to a reduction of 3,970 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e)*

**Figure 1 – 2018/19 Carbon Footprint**



## Scope of Carbon Emission Target

The GHG protocol is the most widely used and accepted methodology for GHG accounting. It is the method the Council has used since 2008 and is the method that has been followed to calculate CBC's footprint for FY 18/19.

Under the GHG Protocol, emission sources are divided into scopes 1, 2, and 3. Scopes 1 and 2 emissions are a result of an organisations' direct operations, whereas scope 3 emissions result from an organisations' indirect activities or value chain (for example, from the manufacturing of products used by the Council).

Scope 3 emissions are emitted by a third-party's operations and are generally more difficult to monitor, control and reduce. As a result, public (and private) sector carbon action has traditionally focused on scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Where scope 3 emissions have been included, organisations tend to only consider certain elements where there is a degree of influence or control. However, there is now increasing appetite to include more scope 3 emissions in footprints and to encourage carbon reduction in an organisations' value chain.

All previous carbon footprints for CBC have included:

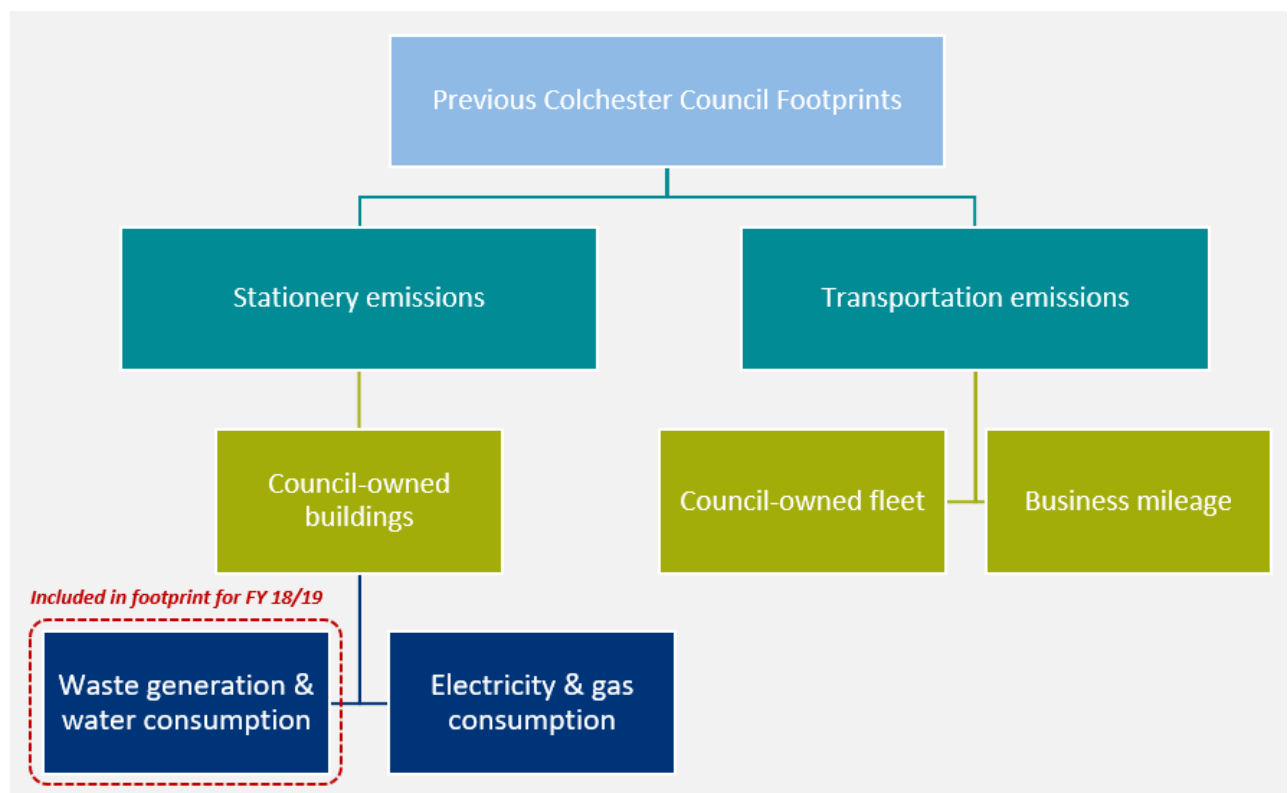
- Emissions from gas consumption for space and water heating in buildings (scope 1)
- Emissions from fuel consumption used to power the Council's fleet (scope 1)

- Emissions from electricity consumption (scope 2).
- Emissions resulting from business travel in non-Council operated vehicles (scope 3)

The Council's carbon footprint was recalculated for the financial year 2018/19 and the scope of the footprint was expanded to include further scope 3 emissions including:

- Emissions from the third-party disposal and treatment of waste generated in Council controlled operations (scope 3)
- Emissions resulting from the supply and subsequent treatment of water consumed by the Council's operations (scope 3)

**Figure 2 - 2018/19 Adjusted Carbon Footprint Scope**

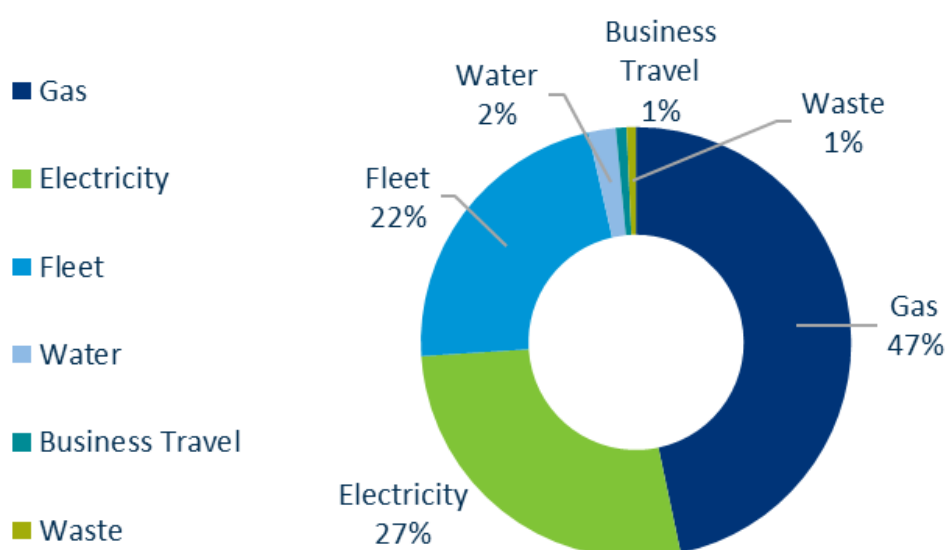


The total carbon footprint for CBC's own operations in the financial year 2018/19 within the scope above is equal to **6,180 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**.

The majority of this footprint is attributed to the Council's gas consumption for space and water heating in buildings. Emissions from electricity consumption and for fleet vehicles also form a significant portion of emissions.



**Figure 3. – Carbon footprint breakdown by scope**



**Figure 4. – Historic emissions, updated with data for 18/19.**

GHG emissions data – Total Tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> e										
	FY 18/19	FY 16/17	FY 15/16	FY 14/15	FY 13/14	FY 12/13	FY 11/12	FY 10/11	FY 09/10	FY 08/09
Gas Consumption	2,884	2,918	3,012	2,993	2,915	3,231	2,642	3,048	4,473	5,285
Owned Transport	1,383	1,589	1,350	1,461	1,363	1,395	1,173	1,157		
<b>Scope 1 Total</b>	<b>4,272</b>	<b>4,507</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>4,454</b>	<b>4,278</b>	<b>4,626</b>	<b>3,815</b>	<b>4,205</b>	<b>4,473</b>	<b>5,285</b>
Purchased electricity	1,687	2,583	3,036	3,326	3,224	3,484	4,390	4,603	4,516	4,798
<b>Scope 2 Total</b>	<b>1,687</b>	<b>2,583</b>	<b>3,036</b>	<b>3,326</b>	<b>3,224</b>	<b>3,484</b>	<b>4,390</b>	<b>4,603</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>4,798</b>
Business Travel	50	47	41	45	49	50	48	58	65	67
Waste <sup>1</sup>	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Water <sup>1</sup>	127	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Scope 3 Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Total emissions</b>	<b>6,180</b>	<b>7,137</b>	<b>7,439</b>	<b>7,825</b>	<b>7,551</b>	<b>8,160</b>	<b>8,253</b>	<b>8,866</b>	<b>9,054</b>	<b>10,150</b>

## Areas of Focus for Carbon Emission Reduction

The Council's 'stationary' footprint from buildings, public lighting/amenities etc. accounts for 76.7% of the overall footprint.

The stationary footprint was divided into use-types. Leisure and recreation is by far the largest contributor to the Council's stationary emissions, largely driven by Leisure World, the largest single emitter across the Council's portfolio accounting for 35.3% of all emissions.

The emissions associated with the Council's fleet are also substantial. As the grid continues to decarbonise and purchased electricity becomes 'greener' emissions from the Council's fleet will become an increasingly larger portion of the overall footprint.

Gas emissions, primarily from the space and water heating of buildings, make up the majority of the Council's stationary emissions (60.8%).

**Figure 5. Breakdown of Stationary Footprint 18/19**

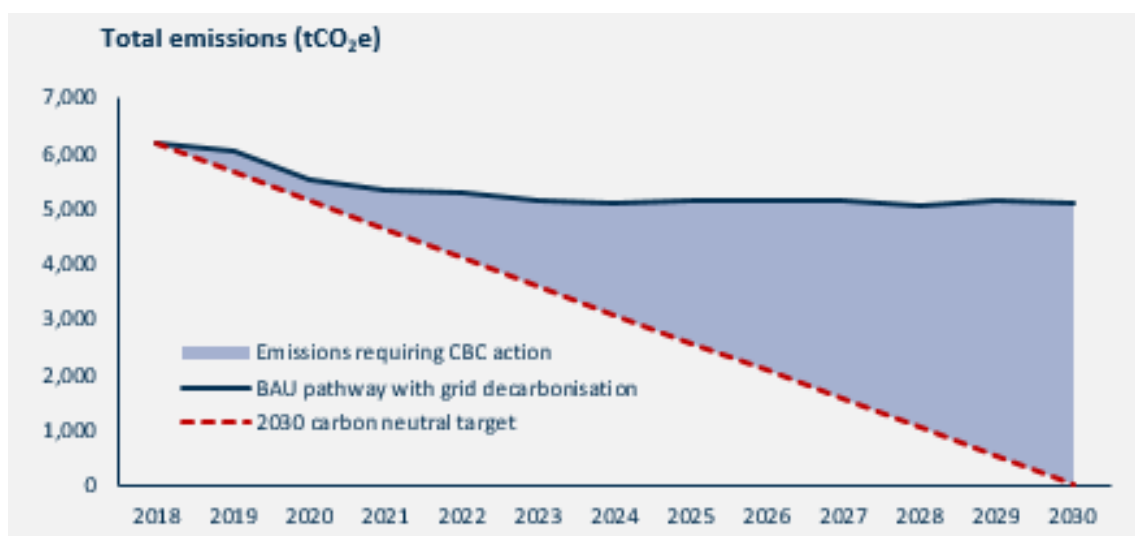
STATIONARY FOOTPRINT						
Ranking	Site Type	Electricity emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Gas emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Water emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Waste emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	TOTAL
1	Leisure and recreation	762	1,511	82	33	2,388
1.a	<i>Leisure World</i>	656	1,445	58	25	2,184
2	Residential buildings	467	928	25	0	1,419
3	Council buildings	148	209	10	9	376
4	Public conveniences	207	72	7	0	286
5	Cemetery / Crem	23	165	2	1	191
6	Street amenities	78	0	1	0	79
7	Pumping stations	3	0	0	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,687</b>	<b>2,884</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>4,742</b>

Maintaining a business as usual case, where energy consumption remains constant will still result in a decrease in electricity emissions as a result of grid decarbonisation.

In a 'do nothing' scenario, CBC's emissions are expected to reduce by 1,094 tCO<sub>2</sub>e as a result of the Council using greener electricity from the national grid.

Beyond this, a further **5,085 tCO<sub>2</sub>e reduction** must then be achieved by CBC to achieve the 2030 net carbon zero target.

**Figure 6 - 'do nothing' scenario – emission reductions come from the grid decarbonising.**



Further work will be required to ensure that emissions from electricity continue to fall, however greater emphasis will need to be placed on reducing diesel and gas emissions.

Future reduction in gas emissions will need to be largely driven by Council-led interventions as national trends between now and 2030 will not impact gas emissions as much as other emission sources e.g. electricity consumption.

## Action Planning

There is a need for a flexible and iterative approach to action planning our carbon reduction strategy and our overall approach to the climate emergency.

As a result, we will adapt and update this plan regularly with more detail on specific projects, costings, milestones for delivery etc as the whole programme of work develops, as new technology becomes available, as we continue to consult with expert partners, wider stakeholders and as we undertake further examination of evidence and best practice.

Alongside the Action Plan we will develop a new Environment & Sustainability Strategy and a Carbon Management Plan that will set out specific carbon reduction projects in greater detail that reflect the aspirations and actions from this overarching initial plan.

Environment and Sustainability is a New Strategic Priority for the Council and has been highlighted in the 2020/21 Budget Strategy to enable the right level of focus, governance and resourcing to be provided to deliver real progress against this action plan.

### 1. Organisational Culture & Decision Making

We will build on the strategy review undertaken by the Carbon Trust and start a process of aligning CBC's policies and governance to ensure the whole organisation rises to the challenge of the climate emergency.

To make decisions that reflect the declaration of a Climate Emergency the Council will undertake the following actions to ensure all decisions are informed by perspectives on climate change. This will include:

- 1.1** Development and consultation on a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy for Colchester.
- 1.2** Ensuring internal strategies and policies are consistent with the climate change emergency
- 1.3** Embedding environmental/ carbon priorities within the Council's core internal and external communications and narrative
- 1.4** Acknowledging environmental stewardship within the core values of the organisation
- 1.5** Strengthening our assessment of climate and environmental impacts in all decision making and reporting, including project development processes and our performance management framework
- 1.6** Work to improve our procurement processes to ensure that suppliers support our carbon neutral ambitions, for example through specification development and selection processes, in line with the Council's wider commitment to delivering social value.

Climate change adaptation requires universal strategic thinking, a deeper understanding of the challenge and risks, and the adoption of responses that will be

critical to the Council achieving its ambitions. As a result the Council will take steps to:

- 1.7** Develop and roll out a climate change learning and development programme for staff and members to improve understanding of carbon and wider environmental context. The skills programme will include basic training/awareness for everyone, with more targeted/ intensive training for decision-makers to enable them to adequately assess carbon impacts in their decisions.
- 1.8** Continue to develop and support the Council's Travel Plan, to encourage sustainable transport choices by our workforce for both the commute to work and for business travel through schemes such as the 'cycle to work scheme', discounts on public transport and the provision of facilities to support active travellers.

## **2. Roadmap to Carbon Neutral**

We will demonstrate leadership through ensuring that Colchester Borough Council operations will be net carbon zero by 2030.

- 2.1** Development of a new Carbon Management Plan based on insight and evidence gathered from a detailed pathway modelling of the current CBC footprint. Initial action areas for development and some likely measures to be include in the Carbon Management Plan are set out below:
  - 2.1.1** Take steps to ensure the council's future electricity supply is provided by 100% renewably generated sources
  - 2.1.2** Continue to review our estate and assets to investigate means of increasing energy efficiency of heating, lighting and cooling systems.
  - 2.1.3** Investigate options for acquiring or funding further renewable energy generating and/or storage installations in the Borough.
  - 2.1.4** Take a phased approach to renewal of our fleet as new technologies and associated infrastructure becomes available.
  - 2.1.5** Understand the role of carbon offsetting and explore opportunities to develop a robust strategy for offsetting emissions that will keep investment within and benefit the local community e.g. operating own solar farms to provide local energy using currently unused CBC land.

The target for net carbon zero by 2030 relates specifically to the scope of our current footprint scope 1 and 2 emissions i.e. emissions as a result of CBC's direct operations and some scope 3 emissions (see page 7 & 8). However, there is an ambition to go 'as far as possible' and explore the wider footprint outside of the Council's direct control (further scope 3 emissions) not currently included in the target. This includes contracts (e.g. grounds maintenance) as well as wholly-owned companies such as Colchester Borough Homes and Colchester Amphora. As a result, there is a need to measure and understand these emission sources to inform a future target that is ambitious but realistic.

- 2.2** Collect available data and measure relevant scope 3 emission sources to ensure the Council is going as far as possible in its efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

The Council needs to understand the impact of business as usual, national policies, local initiatives and current procurement timelines on the future carbon footprint. This will show what the make-up of the Council's emissions will be in 2030 on the current pathway, and in doing so provide steer on focus areas that the Council should prioritise for project implementation between now and then. In order to achieve this the Council will:

- 2.3** Commission and undertake macro-level scenario analysis, to overlay national and Council-level trends & policies to map CBC's emissions out to 2030. Perform pathway modelling to identify priority focus areas for the Council
- 2.4** Write and agree an internal data management plan which sets out roles and responsibilities for data capture and verification as well as a timetable for reporting.

### **3. Planning, Development & Sustainable Travel**

The Council will continue to play a central role in engaging communities and enabling environmentally friendly choices in everything from energy to active travel. The Planning system is one of the primary mechanisms for Colchester transitioning to a low-carbon society. The planning system does this by shaping new and existing developments in ways that reduce carbon emissions, sustains and enhances biodiversity and positively builds community resilience to challenges such as extreme heat or flood risk.

Central government changes to planning and building regulation legislation is required in order to enforce carbon neutrality on new developments.

Through the Conservation, Environment and Sustainability Task & Finish Group, a review has been undertaken of the measures that could be undertaken through the planning system to achieve carbon neutrality in new and existing developments. Although much work is already taking place, many opportunities have been identified as set out below. The full list of measures and actions to be explored can be seen in Appendix 2.

- 3.1** Pursue the table of actions and measures identified by the planning service (Appendix 2) that can be undertaken within existing planning legislation.
- 3.2** Respond to central government consultations that can influence changes to legislation in relation to increasing sustainability and carbon neutrality standards within planning and building regulations for future development.
- 3.3** Undertake visits to exemplar sustainable developments to better understand different financial models and approaches including for new development, retrofitting existing housing stock and innovative approaches to encouraging sustainable travel.

- 3.4** Investigate the opportunity for the Council to lead the way on its own forthcoming developments, where appropriate, such as Amphora led developments and the Garden Communities, as these provide opportunities to become exemplars of sustainable building and carbon neutrality.
- 3.5** Ongoing lobbying of central government for legislation which will enforce higher environmental standards and carbon neutrality for future developments.
- 3.6** Explore opportunities to develop and adopt shared standards with neighbouring authorities to provide consistency and set expectations on development set across the county.

## **4. Waste Management**

The way we manage waste in Colchester has a significant impact on our carbon footprint, and that of the County Council as the waste disposal authority. Changes in material consumption patterns and a shift towards more sustainable waste management not only saves money but will also have significant implications for reducing emissions.

Future options regarding the collection and recycling of waste need to ensure that a carbon accounting approach is taken towards all aspects of the service. While the Council has control over the method of collection, it is not the Disposal Authority but will work with Essex County Council to continue to encourage the most sustainable options for waste disposal.

Colchester already has an outstanding waste and recycling service, but further opportunities have been identified in the action planning process as set out below:

- 4.1** Further enhance the systems for household waste, recycling, food and garden waste collections across the Borough with a focus on waste minimisation, increased recycling and composting and reduction of residual waste.
- 4.2** Stimulate increased reuse as well as upcycling and repairing opportunities and the necessary skills and training to undertake these.
- 4.3** Reduce resource use, particularly paper for printing and single-use plastic. Seek to progress towards single-use plastic-free status and support community plastic-free initiatives.
- 4.4** Seek to minimise or cease the sale of single use plastics and encourage alternative materials throughout our retail operations
- 4.5** Explore the trial of smart waste technology to improve waste monitoring and collection efficiencies in the Borough.
- 4.6** Continue to communicate frequently with Colchester residents to improve participation in recycling and waste minimisation initiatives.
- 4.7** Review our trade waste collection service to develop additional commercial recycling collections.



- 4.8** Take an asset based community development approach to discovering and enabling existing and new community led initiatives associated with repair, upcycle and reuse social movements.

## **5. Mitigation, climate adaptation and environmental stewardship**

Local Strategic and Health & Wellbeing Partnerships carry out considerable planning to ensure that communities, especially the vulnerable, are supported during events that may cause an interruption to services and utilities, e.g. storms and flooding etc. The Council also has robust Flood Emergency Plans in place and climate related risks are taken into account in the Councils Risk Register.

Open green space and parks, how they are utilised, and the activities they support are a real barometer for 'community' with important links to volunteer and community led action and initiatives. Colchester's rural, urban and coastal geography means outdoor space is a strong factor in the biodiversity, character and attraction of our place. These spaces provide a critical backdrop to our ecological and environmental action. There is also cross over with other key strategic priorities for the Council including; health & wellbeing, increasing physical activity, and active travel. As such the Council will:

- 5.1** Plant 200,000 trees by 2024 as part of the Colchester Woodland Project
- 5.2** Undertake a review and update of the climate risks, actions and control measures set out in the Council's Corporate Risk Assessment and gain a better understanding of what further potential adaptation will be required.
- 5.3** Maximise opportunities to collaborate with and integrate the whole system change approach being implemented through the Essex Local Delivery Pilot (ELDP) including opportunities to lever funds for investment in sustainable local community led initiatives e.g. Community food growing and gardening projects already in development.
- 5.4** Undertake a review of Council Strategies for parks and green space ensuring opportunities to tackle climate change are embedded within the approach including measures to safeguard and enhance existing habitats and species.
- 5.5** Ensure biodiversity is prioritised in green space maintenance including Ceasing the use of glyphosate herbicides in Council operations through a phased approach, identifying and trialling alternative sustainable practices including 'wilding' of open spaces and lobbying and encouraging wider stakeholders with grounds maintenance responsibilities to take the same approach.
- 5.6** Work with partners to develop a vision for the upper, middle, and lower River Colne that prioritises its value as a unique natural asset to be carefully utilised, protected and enhanced.

## **6. Build Community Resilience through Enabling, Behaviour Change & Partnership Working**

Ensuring Colchester is a truly resilient Borough, where communities feel empowered and connected to take action on climate change will be a challenge. However we are aware of growing public support for environmental action, equally Colchester has excellent community partnerships that can be strengthened and nurtured to ensure a collaborative, innovative and inclusive approach to action can be taken by all:

- 6.1** Maximise opportunities to collaborate and support/promote local community led initiatives (including assistance to lever and source funding opportunities where needed) e.g. Wivenhoe Transition Town, Rowhedge Going Greener, Eco Colnes and Halstead
- 6.2** Ensure enabling action on our climate emergency is a key element of a new Community Enabling Strategy for the Council. As part of this undertake regular and ongoing dialogue with community groups across Colchester to ensure we make best use of the assets, skills, talents and creativity within our communities to tackle our climate emergency.
- 6.3** Utilise existing platforms, networks, and Groups such as Eco Colchester, Extinction Rebellion's People's Assembly and our own scrutiny processes to ensure that there is diversity in the development of solutions and proposals for climate action.
- 6.4** Take action to enable and support educational and awareness raising events e.g. Eco Colchester 2020 and the action of interested stakeholders, schools and businesses to promote behaviour change across our communities.
- 6.5** Work with town and parish Councils and seek to identify how we can work together optimally on this challenge, reflecting the wishes of the communities and residents we serve.
- 6.6** Develop a climate emergency communications and engagement plan to support delivery of our overarching action plan

Working with other Local Authorities across Essex will be crucial if we are to deliver against all of the aspirations within the motion, and in the coming months we will be continuing to seek dialogue with our neighbouring authorities and those throughout the UK who have also declared Climate Emergencies. There is already a growing appetite amongst other regional authorities to work together on this agenda, and we will support the principle that the climate change work should be one of the key priorities for the region.

- 6.7** Utilise existing partnering mechanisms to enable regional conversations with other Local Authorities across Essex and the Eastern region on joint climate emergency action.



## Ongoing Review

During the next phase of our approach, via the Conservation, Environment and Sustainability Task & Finish Group we will continue to work with expert partners, stakeholders and the community to consult opinion on and fully evaluate activity, options, their associated benefits, impacts, risks and barriers across the 6 action themes described in this first Climate Emergency Action Plan.

In parallel we will mobilise a delivery programme to accelerate the planning and delivery of projects for early implementation, a number of which sit within the Council's 'New Strategic Priorities' programme.

## Appendix 1 – Action taken as reported to Cabinet in November 2019.

<b>Climate Emergency Motion Target</b>	<b>What we've done</b>
Audit of pollution hotspots and environmental health issues.	<p>A full audit of pollution hotspots has been undertaken as part of our air quality management activity. Hot spot areas have been identified and continue to be monitored. As a result of the action taken to tackle air pollution in Colchester additional Government funding has been secured to deliver a two-year behaviour change project to tackle levels of pollution in the borough.</p> <p>We also have full details of all potentially polluting processes and the controls they have in place through Environmental Permitting. These processes are monitored regularly for compliance.</p>
<i>Audit of Wildlife/Biodiversity</i>	<p>Several specialist groups already undertaken audits. These will be assessed as we move forward with our plans to identify whether any gaps exist. Where this is the case a further audit will be engaged.</p> <p>A phased approach to cease the use of glyphosate herbicides has commenced based on the nature of the sites where herbicides are used, the need to encourage biodiversity where possible, and the availability of alternative sustainable practices.</p>
<i>Urban Impact Assessment</i>	<p>The local plan and resulting significant decisions all require a substantial impact assessment.</p> <p>Colchester's Cabinet agreed in November 2019 that environmental and carbon considerations are required to be taken into account in all decision making. All formal Council reports and decisions are now required to set out the environmental and sustainability implications of the decision, with particular reference to the definition of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>
Consult expert opinions in the field	<p>Several experts have been consulted or have attended the task and finish group including the Carbon Trust, Eco Colchester. Feedback has also been considered from Extinction Rebellion Colchester.</p> <p>Through the delivery of wider projects supporting our ambitions from clean air, active travel to woodland planting Colchester is working with a wide range of expert partners including Intelligent Health, Active Essex, Essex University the Woodland Trust and Forestry Commission.</p>
Collaborate with regional and neighbouring local authorities, as well as communities	<p>Joint transport strategy/projects to facilitate increased cycling and walking are being developed with Essex County Council. Community activation, social movements and active travel are the primary means by which the Council aims to increase levels of physical activity, walking and cycling through the Essex Local Delivery Pilot a significant piece of work involving a wide range of stakeholders including Tendring District Council and Basildon Borough Council.</p> <p>The Council is working closely with Essex County Council to coordinate tree planting in addition to Parish Councils and community groups on this project.</p> <p>In November 2019 Colchester's cabinet also committed to working</p>

	with other authorities, organisations and companies who use glyphosate herbicides within the borough to encourage them to cease their use.
Encourage all sectors of the economy across the borough to take steps to reduce waste and become carbon neutral.	<p>Work has continued with the Single Use Plastic reduction campaign across the Borough. The refill campaign has also been publicised and supported through the introduction of 5 new/refurbished public water fountains.</p> <p>A review of our trade waste collection service is also underway to develop additional commercial recycling collections.</p>
Develop a roadmap for Colchester Borough Council to go carbon neutral by 2030.	<p>The Carbon Trust were commissioned to undertake a carbon footprinting exercise and to identify the key areas of focus that will form the basis of a roadmap and strategy for Colchester to be net carbon zero. Workshops have been undertaken with Officers &amp; Members in December 2019 to inform our strategic approach moving forward.</p> <p>The Council has recruited a dedicated Climate Emergency Project Officer to coordinate the development of a new Environment and Sustainability Strategy, Carbon Management Plan and to support the wider delivery of climate emergency projects and ambitions.</p>
Pledge to ensure future housing and community development projects meet a carbon-neutral standard by 2030.	<p>A report was presented to the Environment &amp; Sustainability Task and Finish group outlining measures CBC are already undertaking through planning and a table of new suggested measures recommended to enhance the delivery of sustainable development. This table of new measures will be developed as part of our action plan.</p> <p>Building regulations provide the most robust way of ensuring new housing is carbon neutral. The Council responds to consultations to improve the Building Regulations and will lobby central government to ensure they aim for carbon neutrality.</p>
	The Leader of the Council has written to Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth requesting that national policy is urgently developed to reflect the seriousness of the current emergency, and to release funds to local authorities, in order that Borough Councils' like Colchester can take the necessary measures at local level.

## Appendix 2 - Proposed measures for implementation within existing planning legislation

Short term – within next 12 months

Medium term – within next 3 years

Long term – over 3 years

Measures Identified	Timeframe	How can this be achieved
Investigate the introduction of a Climate Emergency Checklist so decision makers can understand the sustainability of proposals & demonstrate compliance with these measures	Short term: Investigation Delivery: Medium term and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the incorporation of all of these measures into a Climate Emergency Checklist.</li> <li>Research examples of sustainability checklists from elsewhere.</li> </ul>
Dedicated Travel Plan Co-Ordinators for larger developments to ensure that Travel plans are successful	Short term: Investigation Delivery: Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile evidence to justify the need for Travel Plan co-ordinators</li> <li>Consider monitoring requirements, i.e. what monitoring data is available from ECC, identify monitoring gaps.</li> </ul>
Information on sustainable travel choices to be included in marketing of residential properties for developments where there are good sustainable transport options to encourage reduced car use and ownership.	Short term: Investigation Delivery: ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add informative to relevant applications as part of Transport &amp; Sustainability response/requests to planning permission consultations</li> <li>Consider how this would be monitored.</li> </ul>
Improve, enhance & expand the Colchester Orbital as a walking and cycling route	Short term: Ongoing Delivery: Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A scoping paper has been prepared, which identifies further work.</li> </ul>
Installation of electric vehicle charging points	Short term: Ongoing Delivery: Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with other departments.</li> <li>Request electric charging points as part of new development.</li> </ul>
Require developers to provide a Canopy Cover Assessment for each major app & maintain or increase canopy cover on site	Short term: Investigation Delivery: Short – Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance to be prepared outlining exactly what is required.</li> <li>Talk to local groups about their help in establishing baseline cover across Colchester.</li> </ul>
Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on allocated sites to safeguard canopy cover	Short term: Investigation Delivery: Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TPOs to be made on all allocated sites where appropriate.</li> </ul>
Produce guidance on small scale biodiversity	Short term: Investigate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate small scale net gain projects.</li> </ul>

net gain projects	Delivery: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare guidance document &amp; discuss planning conditions with DM</li> </ul>
Encourage sites or part of sites (e.g. Amphora & MOD sites & garden communities) to deliver exemplar buildings	Short term: Discussion Delivery: Medium to long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange a site visit for T&amp;F Group to passive house development in Norwich, and other local examples.</li> <li>• Research other local/national examples.</li> <li>• Discussions with developers.</li> </ul>
Consideration given to car free developments and other approaches to reducing car parking provision and encouraging car free lifestyles	Short term: Discussion Delivery: Medium-long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research car free developments &amp; travel plans &amp; discuss with the Highway Authority to inform discussion on future options.</li> </ul>
Introduce car clubs	Short term: Ongoing Delivery: Short - medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider further locations in Colchester to implement car clubs.</li> </ul>
Investigate measures to support sustainable modes of transport: investigate a workplace parking levy in the town centre	Medium term: Investigation Delivery: Medium-long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research examples of a workplace parking levy and consider its application in Colchester.</li> <li>• Work with other departments to consider incentives such as green number plates, access to bus lanes and parking levy</li> </ul>
Above ground SuDS to be designed as multifunctional features to form part of green infrastructure network	Medium term: Discussion Delivery: Medium – Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with ECC as the Lead Local Flood Authority &amp; other LPAs.</li> </ul>
Council to adopt or management scheme to be secured to maintain SuDS features where these are also adoptable open space	Medium term: Investigation Delivery: Medium-long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider maintenance and management costs for each SuDS feature. 2. discuss with Parks team.</li> </ul>
Require new dwellings to meet optional tighter water standard of 110 litres pppd	Short term: Investigation Delivery: Medium-long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research how this is implemented elsewhere (Environment Agency &amp; Anglian Water to advise).</li> <li>• Discuss implementation with DM.</li> </ul>
Encourage green roofs and green walls	Short: Investigation Delivery: Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at examples of good practice elsewhere.</li> <li>• Consider the benefits of producing a guidance note for applicants.</li> </ul>
Explore options for a long term, strategic biodiversity net gain strategy	Medium: Investigation Delivery: Medium - long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the progress of the Environment Bill &amp; Defra Metric 2.0.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the benefits and options for a strategic project &amp; how this conforms to legislation &amp; best practice.</li> <li>Discuss with other Essex LPAs.</li> </ul>
Raise awareness of Home Quality Mark (HQM)	Short term: Discussion Delivery: Medium - long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to ECC about how this is being promoted in Essex &amp; how we can raise the profile of the HQM in Colchester.</li> </ul>
Seek a proportion of homes to be built to lifetime homes standard	Short term: Discussions Delivery: Short - medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions with developers.</li> </ul>
Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy	Short term: Investigation Delivery: Medium – longer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at examples from other LPAs and the benefits this has brought.</li> <li>Discuss with Climate Emergency Officer as part of Carbon Trust project.</li> </ul>
Identify opportunities for development to draw its supply from decentralised, low energy sources	Medium: Discussion Delivery: Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss with Amphora.</li> <li>Look at allocations.</li> </ul>