

Environment and Sustainability Panel Meeting

**Online Meeting, Virtual Meeting Platform
Thursday, 28 January 2021 at 18:00**

The Environment and Sustainability Panel explores methods of conservation of natural habitats and biodiversity through adapting existing practices or creating new ecologically diverse environments. The Panel encourages renewable energy generation and carbon footprint reduction in both the public and private sectors by examining air and water quality, plastic and waste reduction and renewable energy generation. The Panel monitors the progress and implementation of the Council's Emergency Climate Action Plan and regularly reports to Cabinet and Full Council.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

You have the right of access to all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet which may be conducted remotely such as by live audio or video broadcast / webcast. You also have the right to see the agenda (the list of items to be discussed at a meeting), which is published on the Council's website at least five working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available here:

<https://colchester.cmis.uk.com/colchester/MeetingCalendar.aspx>.

Occasionally certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual have to be considered in private. When this is the case an announcement will be made, the live broadcast will end and the meeting will be moved to consider in private.

Have Your Say!

The Council welcomes contributions in the form of written representations from members of the public at most public meetings. One single contribution to each meeting of no longer than 500 words may be made by each person which must be submitted via the form accessed by this link, before noon on the working day before the meeting date: Environment and Sustainability Have Your Say!

If you would like to submit representations to a meeting and need to find out more, please refer to the Have Your Say! arrangements here:

<https://colchester.cmis.uk.com/colchester/HaveYourSay.aspx>.

E-mail: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk

www.colchester.gov.uk

Environment and Sustainability Panel - Terms of Reference (but not limited to)

1. To acknowledge our “Climate Emergency” and translate aspirations into actions.
2. To explore methods of conservation of natural habitats and biodiversity, whether through adapting existing practices and places or creating new ecologically diverse environments with sustainable practices built in.
3. To engage, communicate and collaborate with strategic partners, external bodies, Parish Councils and local communities, to encourage biodiversity enhancement and sustainable practices through their work.
4. To encourage environmental stewardship focusing on carbon footprint reduction by improving air quality, water quality, plastic and waste reduction and renewable energy generation in both public and private spheres across the Borough
5. To be a leading voice for environmental sustainability, promoting innovative environmental practices, having influence across the borough and beyond, including public and private sector policy, at regional and national levels.
6. To promote, monitor and regularly report to Cabinet and Full Council upon progress and implementation of the Council’s Climate Emergency Action Plan and it’s goal to be net carbon neutral by 2030.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
Environment and Sustainability Panel
Thursday, 28 January 2021 at 18:00

The Environment and Sustainability Panel Members are:

Councillor Mark Cory
Councillor Peter Chillingworth
Councillor Nigel Chapman
Councillor Robert Davidson
Councillor Mark Goacher
Councillor Sam McCarthy
Councillor Lee Scordis
Councillor Lorcan Whitehead

Chairman
Deputy Chairman

The Environment and Sustainability Panel Substitute Members are:

All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members or members of this Panel.

AGENDA
THE LIST OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING
(Part A - open to the public)

Please note that Agenda items 1 to 6 are normally dealt with briefly.

1 Welcome and Announcements (Virtual Meetings)

The Chairman will welcome members of the public and Councillors to the meeting and remind those participating to mute their microphones when not talking. The Chairman will invite all Councillors and Officers participating in the meeting to introduce themselves. The Chairman will, at regular intervals, ask Councillors to indicate if they wish to speak or ask a question and Councillors will be invited to speak in turn by the Chairman. A vote on each item of business will be taken by roll call of each Councillor and the outcome of each vote will be confirmed by the Democratic Services Officer.

2 Substitutions

Councillors will be asked to say if they are attending on behalf of a Committee member who is absent.

3 Urgent Items

The Chairman will announce if there is any item not on the published agenda which will be considered because it is urgent and will explain the reason for the urgency.

The Chairman has agreed to consider the following request that the Panel supports the motion below on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill as an urgent item. The urgency arises from the need for any decision on the adoption of the motion to be taken by

Cabinet, and this is the last meeting of the Panel before the last Cabinet meeting of the municipal year on 10 March.

Motion to Support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

Preamble

Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt in the UK and around the world. Global temperatures have increased by 1 degree Celsius from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm) and continue to rise. This far exceeds the 350ppm deemed to be a safe level for humanity.

Without more significant and sustained action, the world is set to exceed the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit between 2030 and 2040. Therefore the current UK target of net zero by 2050 is not satisfactory. It is too little too late.

The increase in harm caused by a rise of 2°C rather than 1.5°C is significant. This is described by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C published in October 2018. According to the IPCC, limiting heating to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector and local communities. The costs of failing to address this crisis will far outstrip the investments required to prevent it. Investing now will bring many benefits in the form of good jobs, breathable cities and thriving communities.

Council notes that

- i. This council has declared a climate and ecological emergency;
- ii. Many local authorities have established Citizens' Assemblies that are playing an important role in assisting them in their plans to achieve net zero by 2030 or before; and that
- iii. There is a Bill before Parliament—the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill (published as the "Climate and Ecology Bill")—according to which the Government must develop an emergency strategy that:
 - a. requires that the UK plays its fair and proper role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial temperatures;
 - b. ensures that all the UK's consumption emissions are accounted for;
 - c. includes emissions from aviation and shipping;
 - d. protects and restores biodiverse habitats along overseas supply chains;
 - e. restores and regenerates the UK's depleted soils, wildlife habitats and species populations to healthy and robust states,

maximising their capacity to absorb CO₂ and their resistance to climate heating;

f. sets up an independent Citizens' Assembly, representative of the UK's population, to engage with Parliament and Government and help develop the emergency strategy.

Council therefore resolves to:

- i. Support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill
- ii. Inform the local media of this decision;
- iii. Write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill; and
- iv. Write to the CEE Bill Alliance, the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, expressing its support (campaign@ceebill.uk).

4 Declarations of Interest

Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the agenda about which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the item or participating in any vote upon the item, or any other pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.

5 Have Your Say! (Virtual Meetings)

Members of the public may make representations to the meeting. Each representation may be no longer than three minutes (500 words). Members of the public may register their wish to address the meeting by registering online by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting date. In addition a written copy of the representation will need to be supplied for use in the event of unforeseen technical difficulties preventing participation at the meeting itself.

6 Sustainability in Planning

9 - 20

The Panel will consider a report outlining the new Planning Sustainability Check list as an explicit tool to identify the key sustainability credentials of proposed development, and will be invited to welcome the addition of the Checklist.

7 Colchester eCargo Bike Library project update

21 - 26

The Panel will consider an update on the Energy Saving Trust/Department for Transport funded eCargo bike trial project, and will hear that significant progress on implementing the project has been made, despite challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions.

8 Review of Environmental Sustainability Strategy

27 - 32

The Panel will consider a report setting out a review of the Council's existing framework for managing the programme for sustainability, climate emergency response and carbon reduction.

9 Climate Emergency Action Plan Update 33 - 38

The Panel will consider a report detailing key progress made with the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), and other relevant updates since the previous meeting on 17 December 2020.

10 Work Programme 2020-2021 39 - 42

The Panel will consider a report setting out the current Work Programme 2020-2021 for the Environment and Sustainability Panel.

Exclusion of the Public (not Scrutiny or Executive)

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

**Part B
(not open to the public including the press)**

28 January 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place & Client Services	Author	Simon Cairns ☎ 8650 Karen Syrett ☎ 506477
Title	Sustainability in Planning		
Wards affected	All		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Development, both in terms of fabric and spatial distribution, directly affects the carbon balance, biodiversity and future patterns of energy consumption. The planning system is driven by a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a plan-led system underpinned by national and local policies intended to secure optimal environmental outcomes from growth. The statutory process that leads to plan adoption is subject to rigorous Sustainability Appraisal. The Local Plan reinforces the commitment to sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and provides a specific strategy for delivery at a Borough level.
- 1.2 Planning applications are supported by a suite of reports to inform decision making. These include reports covering the potential environmental impacts of specific proposals and enable any adverse impacts to be effectively mitigated by the use of bespoke conditions, legal obligations and associated strategies. Officer reports on individual applications seek to evaluate proposals against the suite of relevant policies and reports. It is proposed to boost the focus on environmental impact within major planning applications by importing a new Planning Sustainability Checklist into the Local Validation list for planning applications in Colchester. This will require applicants to set out how the proposal responds to a range of relevant issues and will require them to consider a suite of sustainability measures. These credentials can then be set out in the officer's report to inform the council's consideration of proposals.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 That the statutory framework underpinning planning decisions is noted as a key pillar promoting sustainable development through a mosaic of individual decisions and that the use of the innovative Planning Sustainability Check list is welcomed as an explicit tool to identify the key sustainability credentials of proposed development. The checklist will be subject to public consultation prior to adding to the validation requirements and its impact will be reviewed after 6 and 12 months of adoption as part of the local validation scheme.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The statutory planning framework is underpinned by the key objective for planning being the promotion of sustainable development through positive environmental outcomes from the development process. Measures to reinforce this objective at a local level through adopted policies, guidance and process innovations will help to promote and sustain this objective.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not to adopt the Planning Sustainability Checklist or to make changes to it prior to consultation.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.2 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.3 These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 5.4 The planning process is often described as 'plan-led'. This is because a statutory duty exists to determine applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (s.38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 5.5 In essence, sustainable development is achieved via the plan-led system. Local plans should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains).
- 5.6 The NPPF also identifies that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It

should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. Plans and policies should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change,

5.7 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

5.8 However, despite these strong words there is little else in the NPPF to support the climate emergency. The section on Achieving Well Designed Places states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience does not mention sustainable construction.

The section does go on to say that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, **so long as** they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

5.9 The NPPF sends conflicting messages about transportation. Although priority is to be given to pedestrian and cycle movements, development should only be refused or prevented on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This does not assist in prioritising sustainable modes of travel in decision making.

- 5.10 The national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) provides further guidance on whether a local planning authority set higher energy performance standards than the building regulations in their local plan. It states that;

“Different rules apply to residential and non-residential premises. In their development plan policies, local planning authorities:

- Can set energy performance standards for new housing or the adaptation of buildings to provide dwellings, that are higher than the building regulations, but only up to the equivalent of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Are not restricted or limited in setting energy performance standards above the building regulations for non-housing developments.

The Planning and Energy Act 2008 allows local planning authorities to set energy efficiency standards in their development plan policies that exceed the energy efficiency requirements of the building regulations. Such policies must not be inconsistent with relevant national policies for England.

The Written Ministerial Statement on Plan Making dated 25 March 2015 clarified the use of plan policies and conditions on energy performance standards for new housing developments. The statement sets out the government’s expectation that such policies should **not be used** to set conditions on planning permissions with requirements above the equivalent of the energy requirement of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (this is approximately 20% above current Building Regulations across the build mix).

- 5.11 The PPG also states that the NPPF expects local planning authorities when setting any local requirement for a building’s sustainability to do so in a way consistent with the government’s zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards. Local requirements should form part of a Local Plan following engagement with appropriate partners, and will need to be based on robust and credible evidence and pay careful attention to viability. In this respect, planning authorities will need to take account of government decisions on the Housing Standards Review when considering a local requirement relating to new homes.

If considering policies on local requirements for the sustainability of other buildings, local planning authorities will wish to consider if there are nationally described standards and the impact on viability of development.

- 5.12 The Written Ministerial Statement accompanying the Housing Standards Review states that from the date the Deregulation Bill 2015 is given Royal Assent, local planning authorities and qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not set in their emerging Local Plans, neighbourhood plans, or supplementary planning documents, any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings.

- 5.13 Confusion also exists between the interplay of the planning system with Building Regulations. In terms of the sustainability credentials of the fabric employed in development, this is primarily a matter for consideration under the Building Regulations and not a planning matter per se. However, sustainable design is a material planning consideration and can be given weight in decisions.

- 5.14 Members will appreciate that the national policy framework set out above restricts what can be achieved at a local level. However, sustainable development is at the heart of the emerging Local Plan. Through the Local Plan the Council is seeking to create communities that secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through the location, mix and design

of development, provide resilience to the impacts of a changing climate, support the delivery of renewable energy technologies and district heating systems, and minimise waste. The Local Plan as a whole sets out a strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Examples of climate change mitigation are:

- Reducing the need to travel and providing for sustainable transport;
- Providing opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy technologies;
- Providing opportunities for decentralised energy and heating;
- Promoting low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings, such as passive solar design.

5.15 Examples of climate change adaptation are:

- Considering future climate risks when allocating development sites to ensure risks are understood over the development's lifetime;
- Avoiding areas that are most vulnerable to future flood risk;
- Considering the impact of and promoting design responses to flood risk and coastal change for the lifetime of the development;
- Considering availability of water and water infrastructure for the lifetime of the development and design responses to promote water efficiency and protect water quality;
- Promoting adaptation approaches in design policies for developments and the public realm.

15.16 New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how the scheme mitigates and adapts to climate change. Policy ENV3 includes detailed criteria relating to green infrastructure. Landscaping and tree planting are important climate change adaptation measures and new development should take every opportunity to enhance the Borough's green infrastructure network.

15.17 As well as new development, existing buildings can also play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through improved energy efficiency measures. Householders and businesses will be encouraged to make energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings as part of proposals for extensions/ alterations.

15.18 Emerging Policy CC1: Climate Change states;

Colchester Borough Council will continue to adopt strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In addressing the move to a low carbon future for Colchester, the Local Planning Authority will plan for new development in locations and ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adopt the principles set out in the energy hierarchy and provide resilience to the impacts of a changing climate.

A low carbon future for Colchester will be achieved by:

- (i) Encouraging and supporting the provision of renewable and low carbon technologies.
- (ii) Encouraging new development to provide a proportion of the energy demand through renewable or low carbon sources.
- (iii) Encouraging design and construction techniques which contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation by using landform, layout, building orientation, massing, tree planting and landscaping to minimise energy consumption and provide resilience to a changing climate.
- (iv) Requiring both innovative design and technologies that reduce the impacts of climate change within the garden communities.

(v) Supporting opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems, particularly those which are powered by a renewable or low carbon source. Supporting connection to an existing decentralised energy supply system where there is capacity to supply the proposed development, or design for future connection where there are proposals for such a system.

(vi) Requiring development in the Northern Gateway and East Colchester to connect to, or be capable of connecting to the district heating scheme where there is capacity to supply the proposed development and where it is appropriate and viable to do so.

(vii) Supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings in the Borough where appropriate.

(viii) Minimising waste and improving reuse and recycling rates.

(ix) Development will be directed to locations with the least impact on flooding or water resources. All development should consider the impact of and promotion of design responses to flood risk for the lifetime of the development and the availability of water and water infrastructure for the lifetime of the development.

(x) Green infrastructure should be used to manage and enhance existing habitats.

Opportunities should be taken to create new habitats and assist with species migration.

Consideration should be given to the use of green infrastructure to provide shade during higher temperatures and for flood mitigation. The potential role of green infrastructure as 'productive landscapes' should also be considered.

15.20 Against this background officers think the best way forward is to introduce a new Planning Sustainability Checklist as a requirement for the validation of planning applications. A draft is attached as an appendix to this report. This will require applicants and their agents to think about the sustainability credentials of their scheme and allow officers and members to see what is being proposed. The introduction of the Checklist will reinforce focus on this key issue and provide a summary of the environmental credentials of new development. This check list will require developers to consider how their scheme addresses a series of key facets of sustainable development and will promote positive change. The check list will form an important means of adding value to officer reports and will help inform the council concerning the key sustainability attributes embedded in each scheme.

5.4 All officer planning reports, regardless of whether these are committee reports on major development or minor delegated decisions, consider the degree of compliance with the national and local plan policy framework. By allocating major development sites through the local plan process this ensures that development is sustainably located and well-connected in terms of access to sustainable modes of transport so trip generation is minimised and positive behaviour change promoted. Developer contributions are also used to ensure investment can be made where required to improve the connectivity of sites. The wider framework of policies in the adopted plan provides a sound foundation to ensure that proposals are inherently sustainable securing and avoiding irreversible adverse environmental impacts whilst providing effective mitigation for any harm identified.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

6.1 The achievement of sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF, will deliver improved outcomes for the natural environment but also wider social and economic benefits for the whole community. Improved environmental outcomes deliver positive outcomes for biodiversity and improve the long-term well-being of the community. These positive outcomes improve equality of life chances for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

6.2 The delivery of sustainable development does not impact adversely upon Human Rights.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 A key objective of the [Strategic Plan 2020-23](#). Is 'Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability'. Under the heading titled Respond to the Climate Emergency, the Council commits to:
- Reduce carbon emissions to help achieve a net zero Carbon footprint for Council Services by 2030.
 - Environment and sustainability embedded within all Council decision making and the adaptation and recovery from Covid-19.
 - Air quality across Colchester is improved.
 - Continue to support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The plan-led planning system is underpinned by multiple cycles of community engagement as part of the statutory plan making process. The proposed addition of the new Planning Sustainability Checklist to the local validation check list will be subject to a further period of consultation prior to adoption as a core document for major development.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The adoption of the new Planning Sustainability Checklist into the scheme of local validation is likely to generate publicity and views are expected to be mixed. Some people will see the Checklist positively whilst others may see it as adding to the bureaucracy and costs.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 None explicitly although enhanced sustainability credentials may add to development costs whilst delivering unquantifiable dividends for the future communities of the Borough.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Health and wellbeing is positively enhanced through delivery of sustainable development including factors such as access to green infrastructure, improved air quality. Sustainable development promotes community cohesion and safety. Improved equality of access to life chances and lessening of inequalities in communities tends to be reflected in improved community safety and lesser crime or fear of crime.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 None

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 Delivery of enhanced sustainability and mitigation of climate change will help to reduce risk of extreme weather events and promote more predictable outcomes for communities through climate stability.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The delivery of sustainable development via application of national and local planning policies strictly aligned to the objectives of sustainable development through the plan-led development process will ensure that even small scale development is inherently sustainable; whilst major development is able to maximise opportunities for positive responses to the climate emergency and arresting the allied decline in biodiversity and environmental quality. The renewed focus of the objectives of Borough planning to the delivery of positive environmental outcomes will make a significant contribution towards arresting climate change through local action.
- 14.2 The National Planning Policy Framework can be found [here](#). The definition for 'sustainable development' can be found in Section 2 of the Framework.

Appendices

Appendix A – [Planning Sustainability Checklist](#) 

Background Papers

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and allied National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) [LINK](#)

Adopted Colchester LDF and allied DPD's [LINK](#)

Emerging Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033 Submission Draft [LINK](#)

Colchester Local Validation List Feb 2017 – [LINK](#)

Planning Sustainability Checklist for Planning Applications

This checklist should be completed and submitted with all planning applications. It is designed to assist Development Management Officers and Planning Committee in assessing the sustainability of planning applications.

Paragraph 13.48 of the emerging Local Plan states:

“New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how the scheme mitigates and adapts to climate change. In particular proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken account of flood risk, water efficiency, biodiversity, landform, layout, building orientation, massing, tree planting and landscaping to minimise energy consumption and provide resilience to a changing climate.”

All Council reports require the author to set out the environmental and sustainability implications of the decision and this checklist will help with this by highlighting positive environmental and sustainability implications. It may also identify simple measures that could be incorporated into the development to result in environmental improvements, which could be a condition of planning consent.

Environmental and Sustainability Issues to Consider	Further Information	Yes/ No / N/A and Comments
1. Does the scheme include a Travel Plan?	Travel Plans are required for residential schemes over 250 units or where there are concerns around pollution, congestion and pressures on the existing road network and commercial schemes of 50 or more employees or the development will have a significant impact on the local road network or there are existing transport, infrastructure, congestion or pollution problems. Further details available from Essex County Council: Sustainable travel - Essex County Council	
1.a. If yes, will a dedicated Travel Plan Co-ordinator be funded?	Funding a Travel Plan Co-ordinator will ensure the Travel Plan is monitored. This is only appropriate for large sites.	
1.b. Does the Travel Plan include a car club?	The Sustainability & Transport team are considering further locations for car clubs.	
2. Will cycle parking be provided?	If so, how many spaces, what type and where are they located?	

3. Does the scheme include green infrastructure?	Please include details of this. Examples include open space, cycle and pedestrian links, wildlife areas, green roofs/ walls.	
3.a. Does the scheme include links to the Colchester Orbital?	The Colchester Orbital is a 14 mile walk around the edge of Colchester. Sites on the edge of Colchester have the potential to link to the Orbital providing improved sustainable travel and wellbeing benefits.	
4. Does the scheme include electric vehicle charging points? If so, how many and where are these located?	For larger developments details of how electric vehicle charging will be allocated, located, and managed should be included within the TA.	
5. Does the application include a canopy cover assessment?	It is widely acknowledged that properly managed trees and woodlands in urban and semi urban areas make a significant contribution to planning, design and management of sustainable, resilient landscapes. Increasing tree cover is one of the quickest and cheapest ways of combating climate change globally. Canopy Cover Assessments should be submitted for all major applications, with an expectation that tree cover is increased by a minimum of 10%.	
5.a. If yes, what is the existing canopy cover, proposed canopy cover & percentage increase.	Canopy cover should increase by a minimum of 10%.	
6. Will the scheme result in biodiversity net gain?	The Environment Bill requires a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net-gain.	
7. Will any of the buildings in the scheme exceed Building Regulations in terms of energy efficiency requirements?	If yes, please provide details about how increased energy efficiency will be achieved. For example, what types of insulation and glazing will be used?	
7.a. Are any dwellings certified under the Home Quality Mark?	The Home Quality Mark is a national scheme developed by BRE which demonstrates a home's environmental footprint. Home Quality Mark	
7.b. Has the development considered passive solar design principles?		

8. Does the scheme include Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)?	All development should incorporate SuDS appropriate to the nature of the site. The Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide prepared by ECC in April 2016 is a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document and is a material consideration in determining planning applications. suds-guide april-2016.pdf (essex.gov.uk)	
8.a. If yes, does the SuDS feature(s) provide multiple functions, e.g. open space, biodiversity?	Opportunities should be taken to integrate sustainable drainage within the design of the development to create amenity space, enhance biodiversity and manage pollution.	
9. Does the scheme meet the optional tighter water standard in Building Regulations of 110litres per person, per day?	Policy DM25 of the ELP requires residential development to incorporate water saving measures in line with the tighter optional requirement of Part G2 of the Building Regulations of 110l/p/d.	
9.a. What water saving measures have been introduced?	Please include details. For example, rainwater collection, water saving showers, provision of water butts.	
10. Does the scheme include green roofs and/or green walls?	These have benefits for biodiversity, sustainable drainage and reducing the urban heat island effect.	
11. Does the scheme include renewable, low carbon or decentralised energy technologies?	Please include details. For example, solar PV/thermal, heat pump technologies.	
11.a. If yes, what percentage of total energy requirements is expected to be provided?		
11.b. Will energy efficient appliances and fittings be installed?		
12. How will construction waste be reduced and/or recycled?	It may be appropriate to prepare a waste management plan.	
12.a. Will there be provision of composting facilities?		

13. Will locally sourced and/ or sustainable materials be used?		
Are there any further comments you would like to make about the environmental and sustainability benefits of the scheme?		

It may be that following this checklist has highlighted environmental and sustainability improvements that could be incorporated into the scheme or attached as a condition of planning consent. Some simple measures can have a big impact, e.g. biodiversity net gain measures, and the checklist helps to shows the linkages between measures.

28 January 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place & Client services	Author	Emily Harrup
Title	Colchester eCargo Bike Library project update		☎ 506476
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This is an update on the Energy Saving Trust/Department for Transport funded eCargo bike trial project. Significant progress on implementing the project has been made, despite challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions.

1.2 Key areas of progress include:

- All 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers delivered by mid November 2020.
- Eleven eCargo bikes and one eTrailer given on long term loan to nine project champions
- Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park provided with an eCargo bike and eTrailer
- Induction and training session for 10 Highwoods volunteers and 2 Highwoods staff took place on December 19th 2020
- Transport & Sustainability team using eCargo bikes in delivery of project and for other work related needs
- Monthly feedback is provided by champions on number of miles, number of journeys, operation of the bike and infrastructure.
- Feedback to date shows our Champions have replaced 1,229 miles worth of car/van journeys by eCargo bike between August and December 2020.
- From January 2021 we will be using the monthly data to calculate carbon and emission savings. This emissions saving data is compared to had these journeys been made by car or van to demonstrate the positive contribution the eCargo bike project is making towards our climate emergency commitment.
- Maintenance contract tendered and awarded to Repair, Reuse, Recycle CIC who are also one of our project Champions
- Over 50 people including CBC staff, CBC Cllrs, (Cllr Cory, Cllr Goss and Cllr King) nine project champions and their staff, Council volunteers and potential pool users trained to Bikeability level 3 by Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP)
- Colchester eCargo bike library branding designed, printed and installed on bikes
- Web pages further developed to promote short term loan scheme
- Project launched via press release on 15th December 2020
- Free 'hire' agreement formulated for short term loan of six pool bikes to external organisations
- Initial interest in a short term loan from University of Essex, Colchester Borough Homes maintenance team, Ellisons Solicitors, QGO, the Food Bank and Enform
- Ideas for how eCargo bikes can support town centre businesses being discussed with the BID

1.3 Key next steps include:

- Complete roll out of CBC bikes to CBC teams, including training and induction
- Roll out pool bikes for short term loans and promote further to increase interest

- Support champions to increase the usage of their bikes
- Work with the BID to use eCargo bikes to support local businesses
- Develop the Local Delivery Pilot aspect of the project which focuses on delivery drivers and put together a funding bid to the LDP.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 That the content of the report be noted.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 As above

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options are required.

Page break after Section 4.

5. Background Information

5.1 Energy Saving Trust/Department for Transport grant

In May 2020 the Council were successful in a bid to the Energy Saving Trust for the provision of 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers. A further additional grant was secured for a frame and tarpaulin for one of the eTrailers bringing the total grant to £137,452.90. This grant was the 3rd highest across the country behind Sheffield City Council (32 eCargo bikes) and Cambridgeshire (30 eCargo bikes). The grant was capital only to fund the bikes and trailers. All other costs to implement and run the project are the Council's

5.2 Delivery of eCargo bikes/trailers

By November 2020 all 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers had been delivered. One eTrailer and eleven eCargo bikes have been provided to our nine external project champions. They have all signed a legal agreement giving them long term loan of the bike/trailer in exchange for monthly feedback and help with publicity, marketing and breaking down the barriers to eCargo bike use/take up.

5.3 Security and Storage for Council bikes/trailers and pool

Security enhancements to an external building were completed in November and the Council bikes and pool bikes are now being stored between Rowan House, Highwoods Country Park, Castle Park, Culver Square and in due course Ipswich Museums. Two gold standard locks have been purchased for each bike/trailer. A presentation was made in December at a webinar arranged by the Energy Saving Trust focused on our approach to storage, maintenance and security.

5.4 Maintenance

A maintenance contract was put out to tender and the contract has been awarded to Repair Reuse Recycle CIC who are also one of our project champions. The contract includes annual and interim servicing, a breakdown recovery service and ad hoc repairs.

5.5 Bikeability

The grant requires that all riders of the eCargo bikes have to be trained to Bikeability level 3. To date Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) have trained over 50 CBC staff, (including 3 of our Councillors, Cllr Cory, Cllr Goss and Cllr King) our nine champions and their staff, Council volunteers particularly at Highwoods country park, and potential pool users.

5.6 Publicity and Branding

Branding for the Colchester eCargo Bike Library has been developed by our communications team and installed on the bikes. The branding is also being installed on Champion bikes but is smaller so that they can add their own branding as well. The web pages www.colchester.gov.uk/ecargobikelibrary have been further developed to include photos of the pool bikes and a demonstration of the carrying capacity of each one.

The project was launched on November 15th with a press release and photo of Council staff on branded eCargo bikes. A physical launch was delayed due to the lock down restrictions.

Champions have provided publicity through their own social media feeds and newsletters.

5.7 Champions

The bikes/trailers are being used by our champions for many different activities. For example Norwegian Bakers are using their Christiana for local deliveries 3 times a week. Repair Reuse Recycle are using their Tender 2500 to attend Dr Bike services they provide and to collect and deliver bikes. Wivenhoe Town Council are using their Urban

Arrow Shorty daily for litter picking, maintenance jobs and opening/closing facilities. Colchester Hospital have used their Butchers & Bicycle and Tender 1500 Post & Parcel for transporting waste, transferring equipment and samples around the site. Feedback on performance of the bike and infrastructure is collected each month and is giving us valuable insight into the practical usage of eCargo bikes in Colchester.

5.8 Council bikes

A bike and trailer are based at both Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park. The bikes have been used a little so far but not the trailers, as it is intended that these will mainly be used by volunteers and with the Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns it has been difficult to carry out inductions.

On December 19th the first induction and training session was carried out with 10 Highwoods Volunteers and 2 Highwoods country park council staff. It went very well and the volunteers were very enthusiastic.

Now that the other bikes and trailer are accessible from Rowan House, discussions will take place with the zones and other team about using them.

Ipswich Museum staff are awaiting Bikeability training which needs to be provided by Suffolk County Council, however some of the staff do not have bikes or helmets to do the training on, and with the continual changes in restrictions with Covid-19 this is taking some time to arrange and coordinate.

The Transport and Sustainability team have been using the eCargo bikes for example delivering the branding, delivering bikes to champions (and cycling back on the folding Brompton) delivering inductions, providing demonstrations to those interested in short term loans etc

5.9 Usage

The majority of our champions are now actively using their bikes, though the pandemic and restrictions are impacting on some of them. The table below shows the number of eCargo bike miles to December 2020 against active champions each month.

So far 1,229 miles of car/van miles have been replaced by eCargo bikes.

Now all of our champions have their bikes and are in the main using them. From January 2021 we will start a more in-depth analysis of the numbers and feedback including calculating the positive environmental impact the eCargo bikes/trailers are having in replacing car/van journeys.

Month	Total miles replaced by eCargo bike	Active Champions (inc CBC)
August	66	2
September	148	7
October	254	8
November	415	10
December	346	7
Total miles to date	1,229	

5.10 Pool Bikes

There are 7 pool bikes currently available for short term loans (an extra one due to one of our champions dropping out)

A free 'hire' agreement has been developed with the legal and insurance team, for use of the pool bikes.

The pool bikes will be loaned out for 1 to 3 months depending on usage. The only cost to the organisation trying out the bike will be to fund their Bikeability training (currently £10 with SERP) and a monthly £25 fee to the council to cover insurance for the bike. Public Liability and goods they are carrying will need to be covered by their own insurance.

To date the following organisations have expressed interest in trialling an eCargo bike/trailer, University of Essex, Colchester Borough Homes maintenance team, QGO, the Food Bank, Ellisons Solicitors and Enform. We have also had 3 emails expressing interest following the press release.

We are also discussing with the town centre Business Improvement District Manager the potential for a cargo bike to be based at their offices to support local small business with home delivery.

5.11 Next Steps

Complete roll out of CBC bikes to CBC teams, including training and induction

Roll out pool bikes for short term loans and promote further to increase interest

Support champions to increase the usage of their bikes

Work with the BID to use eCargo bikes to support local businesses

Develop the Local Delivery Pilot aspect of the project which focuses on delivery drivers and put together a funding bid to the LDP.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 None though it is intended to put together an Equality Impact Assessment. Also there is a Local Delivery Pilot element to the project which will focus on harder to reach audiences which is yet to be explored.

7. Standard References

- 7.1 There are no particular references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Appendices

There are no appendices.

Background Papers

There are no background papers

28 January 2021

Report of	Assistant Director Place & Client Services	Author	Maggie Ibrahim ☎ 508965
Title	Review of Environmental Sustainability Strategy (proposal for new framework)		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Colchester Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to become zero net carbon by 2030. This report sets out a review of the Council's existing framework for managing the programme for sustainability, climate emergency response and carbon reduction.
- 1.2 The review was initiated to assess the need for a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy following expiry of the most recent strategy (2015-2020) and to review the content of the Climate Emergency Action Plan; to ensure it was up to date and relevant. The review concludes that minor gaps could be addressed through a revised strategic framework that ensures the priorities of the Council's Strategic Plan (2020-2023) and current Climate Emergency Action Plan (also 2020) are adequately reflected.
- 1.3 In the revised framework, the proposed overarching strategic themes will be set out in a 'Climate Emergency Strategic Response (CESR) 2021-2023' document. Separating strategic themes from subsequent action planning (within the Climate Emergency Action Plan) in this way allows for more appropriate reviews of strategy and a distinct measurement of tangible actions. This is consistent with the existing approach to reporting progress against the Council's Strategic Plan, where detailed actions and reporting are done via the Strategic Plan Action Plan (also separate documents).
- 1.4 It was always the intention to review the existing Climate Emergency Action Plan regularly. The proposed CESR 2021-2023 will inform a review and update to Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) for 2021-2023. This allows the CEAP to be a true action plan, one that is agile and flexible; enabling changes responsive to both national and local initiatives. It will include a set of quantifiable actions that sit under the strategic themes outlined in the CESR, allowing for greater accountability and effective outcome reporting.
- 1.5 If agreed, a draft CESR 2021-2023 and a resultant revised CEAP will be updated and shared with the Panel at the next meeting in March.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To agree the sustainability and climate emergency response framework outlined in this report, including:
 - the development of a 'Climate Emergency Strategic Response (CESR) 2021-2023' document.

- a revised Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) that sits beneath the strategic themes of the CESR 2021-23 and sets out the detail

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To create a strategic framework for the programme of work linked to the current Strategic Plan priorities, with themes that run directly from the Council's current Strategic Plan, through to actions outlined in a reviewed Climate Emergency Action Plan. This will allow greater measurement and accountability for the programme in future.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Panel could consider an alternative framework to replace the now expired Environment Sustainability Strategy.
- 4.2 The Panel could consider an alternative timeframe for the CESR document and subsequent CEAP update.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 In 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency, committing to become net zero carbon by 2030. In meeting this challenge, there is a need to review and update the existing frameworks for the Council's sustainability and carbon reduction strategies.
- 5.2 A review of existing frameworks and documents has been undertaken and a new framework is proposed for the Council's sustainability and carbon reduction strategy. This includes the development of a Climate Emergency Strategic Response (2021-2023)' document (see Figure 1 below for diagram).
- 5.3 A principal aim in undertaking a review of existing documents was to:
- replace the outdated Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2015-2020 which recently expired; and
 - create a separation between the strategic approach and the actions and detailed plans that sit beneath.
- 5.4 The process to develop the Climate Emergency Strategic Response 2021- 2023 document included:
- a review of strategic documents related to sustainability and climate change (see Background Documents Table 1 below)
 - a review of plans related to sustainability and climate change
 - a gap analysis of any themes missing from current plans and the previous Environment & Sustainability Strategy.
- 5.5 The review of the documents highlighted four existing documents:
- The Council's **Strategic Plan (2020-2023)**: during 2020 the Council developed a Strategic Plan which includes the theme 'Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability' as one of its six strategic themes. Its development was supported by a review of evidence.
 - The Council's **Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS)** covered a period until the end of 2020. This strategy was updated with evidence, plans, and progress.
 - The **Carbon Management Plan 2015-2020** provided actions for carbon reduction and progress updates we are included in the ESS Progress Reports.
 - In 2020 the Council developed a **Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP)** to set out an initial strategy and plan for the Council's climate emergency response. This plan articulated strategy through six themes. It also included actions to be taken up and reviewed in the short term.
- 5.6 The review highlighted opportunities for a new sustainability and carbon document, the Climate Emergency Strategic Response (CESR) 2021-2023, to improve connections between the Council's current Strategic Plan (2020-2023) by including a section on 'Build community resilience through our organisational behaviour change & Partnership working'. This will mean the proposed themes in the CESR then broadly capture all themes from the current suite of documents.
- 5.7 The following potential themes have been identified so far from all documents and are intended to be included in the Climate Emergency Strategic Response document:
- I. Carbon emission reduction
 - II. Conserve and enhance biodiversity
 - III. Walking and cycling around Colchester
 - IV. Organisational culture & decision Making
 - V. Ensure sustainable planning, development & housing

- VI. Sustainable Waste Management and supporting residents to reduce, reuse and recycle.
- VII. Adaptation & Environmental Stewardship Partnerships and Community Action

Work will be undertaken to group and organise these themes in the most effective manner so they link strategic priorities to resulting actions in a new Climate Emergency Action Plan.

- 5.8 The intention is not to create a detailed and lengthy document, rather a concise yet impactful articulation of the Councils approach. It is proposed that a draft version of the Climate Emergency Strategic Response (CESR) 2021-2023 will be presented to Panel at the next meeting (March) for review.
- 5.9 Concurrently, the Climate Emergency Action Plan will be revamped according to the CESR priority headings for clear alignment. alongside a review of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020).
- 5.10 This creates a framework that ensures plans remain action based; and links back to the themes of the strategy. The approach is outlined as a diagram in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Current and proposed strategic framework:



6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 The CESR 2021-23 will continue to support the importance of equality and diversity in all aspects of borough life. Through its component parts, the current Strategic Plan and CEAP have been subject to equality impact assessments.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The strategic framework outlined above and the programme of work the framework manages, underpins and contributes to all areas of the Council's Strategic, but

particularly builds on the themes: 'Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability' and 'Creating safe, healthy and active communities'.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 No formal consultation is required as this document is a rearticulation of strategic priorities that have already consulted on. However, consultation and engagement will be a fundamental part of the work programme (as outlined in previous reports) and will be included in the action plan and strategy and actioned under each of the themes.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The development of this framework and the Climate Emergency Strategic Response (CESR) document and Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) will be updated on our website. In addition, once the CESR is produced future promotion will be undertaken to ensure continued promotion of climate related strategic activity via new and existing communications channels including direct, in person, in the media, on social media platforms and on its website.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 There are no financial implications directly related to the production of the documents. The wider actions will require individual budgets.

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 Council has declared a climate emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. This is one of the key reasons why the Sustainability Strategy, which recently expired, needs to be replaced with a Climate Emergency Strategic Response 2021-23 and the Climate Emergency Action Plan updated to align with this strategic response.

Background Documents

A review of Council's existing key sustainability and carbon related strategic documents identifies there are a number of past and current documents that are background to this.

Existing Documents	
Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan Action Plan	The plan sets out how the Council will address the key challenges facing the borough through five strategic priority themes. The Strategic Plan Action Plan contains the actions and is progress communicated bi-yearly.

Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020) CEAP	Strategic priorities and key activities to promote sustainability and carbon reduction.		
Climate Risk Assessment (2009)	Assessment of climate impacts on the Borough.		
Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2015-2020	<p>PLANS</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability Strategy Delivery Plan 2015/16</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan Update 2015/16</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan 16/17</p> <p>No Delivery Plans or Updates after 2017</p>	<p>PROGRESS</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability Strategy Progress Report 2015/16</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability Strategy Progress Report 2017 final</p>	<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability Strategy Evidence Base</p> <p>Update for ESS Evidence Base July 2016</p> <p>Evidence Update 2017</p>
Climate Emergency Declaration 2019	Commitment to zero net carbon by 2030.		
Local Authority Carbon Management (LACM) Plan	Updates were provided through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Progress Reports.		
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report (annual) 2019	Comes out yearly April-March.		
Pathway modelling and scope 3 footprint analysis.	One off and fed into the CEAP.		

28 January 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 17th December 2020.

1.2 Progress includes:

- The Council has received a proposal from the Carbon Trust for the new Carbon Management Plan for 2021-23 for review. Work will begin on creating this plan in February 2021, with the plan expected to be completed by June 2021.
- Update on Air Quality Project, including response to questions and comments from Panel members. Information gives updates on signage, mobile pollution sensors and traffic light timers.
- The Council will be refreshing its Asset Management Strategy for April 2022-March 2027, which will reflect the Council's Climate Emergency declaration.
- The Council will be going out to tender for the installation of electric vehicle charge points in Rowan House.
- Council has submitted greenhouse gas emissions data to Local Government Association to take part in an emissions benchmarking exercise with other local authorities.
- Highwoods team have purchased an electric chainsaw to replace their petrol chainsaw.
- Formation of a Climate Opportunities Working Group (COWG) and revamping of membership and mandate of the Sustainability and Climate Challenge Project Board. Terms of Reference are finalised and first meeting scheduled of the COWG is for January 21, 2020.

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 This report is for information only.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Not applicable

5. Background Information

Carbon Management Plan

- 5.1 As discussed at the previous Environment and Sustainability Panel (ESP) meeting on 17th December 2020, the Council is working with the Carbon Trust to create a new Carbon Management Plan for 2021-23.
- 5.2 The Carbon Management Plan produced will identify key actions the Council will carry out between 2021-2023 to reduce carbon emissions from its operations. Other key elements of the Carbon Management Plan include:
- Setting an emissions reduction target for the Council for 2023, relative to 2018/19 baseline emissions. An additional milestone(s) for emissions reductions will also be set for interval years up until 2030 to ensure the Council stays on target to reach net zero emissions by 2030.
 - Review of options for offsetting carbon emissions, based on existing practice from other local authorities and in the private sector. The Council will also seek to establish some key principles in our approach to offsetting.
 - Consideration of broad areas of action beyond 2023 for reducing carbon emissions.
- 5.3 The Carbon Trust will work with the Council to collect relevant data to inform the creation of the Carbon Management Plan. This work will begin in February 2021 with the final Carbon Management Plan expected to be finished by June 2021.

Air Quality Project

- 5.4 At the ESP meeting on the 29th October 2020 officers provided an update on the DEFRA funded Clean Air Project with a focus on the CAREless Pollution no idling campaign launched on 8 October 2020. During the meeting, a number of questions relating to road-side signage and traffic light timers were raised. An update on these elements of the project has been provided below.

Signage

- 5.5 The signage project aims to test the effectiveness and long-term impact road-side signage, based on psychological messaging, has on vehicles idling. The project builds on research carried out on road-side signage in Norwich and Canterbury. The signage will be fixed to existing street furniture, the locations of which have been checked for suitability and agreed by Essex County Council, on Brook Street and East Street (East Gates Rail Crossing). All locations sit within an Air Quality Management Area.
- 5.6 A planning application for the signage was granted in October 2020 and a project plan, timeline, methodology and training have been developed with the University of Essex, the appointed Research and Evaluation Partner for the project. A bank of casual staff has been recruited and trained as research assistants to collect traffic data to monitor, on a monthly basis, the effectiveness of the signs. Baseline traffic counts are expected to take place at the start of February with the signage going up shortly after.

Mobile Pollution Sensors

- 5.7 As part of the signage project, mentioned above, CBC received funding from DEFRA to buy portable pollution monitors. The aim is for the monitors to be worn by the research assistants when they are at the signage locations. This will provide us with real-time

roadside pollution levels to supplement readings from the diffusion tubes and the traffic count data. This means we can start to build up an accurate picture of how effective the signs are and what impact they are having on pollution levels within the AQMA. Six portable monitors have been purchased in preparation for the signage counts. The monitors will be made available for use by schools when they are not being used by the research assistants.

Traffic Light Timers

- 5.8 The Council was awarded a second round of funding from DEFRA in March 2020 for a feasibility study into countdown timers on red traffic lights. It was following findings from CBC's community engagement in which 56% of people said they would regularly switch their engine off if they knew how long they would be waiting at red lights.
- 5.9 The feasibility study has been carried out in liaison with Essex County Council and the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) who are the developers of the SCOOT technology which runs on traffic lights across Essex. The feasibility work has concluded that it will not be possible to integrate a timer onto traffic lights in Colchester. A timer will only work on 'fixed sequence' traffic lights and not SCOOT operated lights.
- 5.10 This is because SCOOT automatically adjusts the traffic signal timings to adapt to current traffic conditions, using flow data from traffic sensors. This means the timings change making it impossible to give an accurate per-second countdown. The example given by TRL to explain what would happen with a timer on SCOOT controlled lights is:

"There is always the possibility that you get a 'countdown' which goes 7,6,5,0 or 7,6,5,8,7,6.... Which could naturally cause some confusion for drivers".

We also received confirmation from Essex County Council that the lights could not be changed to a fixed time pattern and would be required to stay under SCOOT control.

- 5.11 Alternative options have been explored, including the upgrade of SCOOT technology to link traffic lights on Brook Street to an electronic message board that gives drivers information on estimated wait times at the traffic lights, based on information from the traffic light operating system.

This option has been fully explored with input from Essex County Council and due to cost and the need for TRL to take over control and monitoring of the lights for the duration of the trial it has been concluded that the cost would far outweigh the expected air quality benefits.

- 5.12 There is an option to include approximate wait times at the traffic lights into messaging planned for future road-side signage, timings will be dependent on the testing of the initial messages for which we have received planning permission.

Other items

- 5.13 The Council is refreshing its Asset Management Strategy for the housing stock, and this will reflect the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in its design, whilst also being affordable and achievable. The refreshed strategy will go to Cabinet in September 2021 and will run from April 2022-March 2027.

- 5.14 The Council is due to go out to tender shortly for the installation of electric vehicle charging points in Rowan House, which will support the Council's fleet transition to electric vehicles.
- 5.15 The Council has submitted data on its greenhouse gas emissions into an emissions benchmarking exercise being conducted by the Local Government Association. This can then be used to compare the Council's performance on this agenda against other local authorities.
- 5.16 Recently the Highwoods team purchased an electric chainsaw to replace the petrol chainsaw that was stolen from the premises. This is a good example of staff considering the opportunity to switch to greener products to carry out their work.
- 5.17 The mandate and membership of the Sustainability and Climate Challenge Project Board (S&CC PB) has been updated alongside the creation of a Climate Opportunities Working Group (COWG). This is to ensure that sector and project leads of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) are the ones to update and drive the creation of the new CEAP 2021-23, innovate and share knowledge together, while the Board focuses on ensuring progress, considering proposals, addressing any issues that arise, and strategic direction of the CEAP in relation to other opportunities.

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.

Environment and Sustainability Panel

Item
10

28 January 2021

Report of	Assistant Director Corporate and Improvement Services	Author	Matthew Evans ☎ ext. 8006
Title	Work Programme 2020-2021		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the current Work Programme 2020-2021 for the Environment and Sustainability Panel. This provides details of the reports that are scheduled for each meeting during the municipal year.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of the Work Programme for 2020-2021. Panel Members are asked to note the addition of a standing item for all future meetings, to provide an update to the Panel in relation to action taken in support of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The Work Programme of this Panel is kept under review throughout the municipal year to ensure that business is progressed and Members have the opportunity to review upcoming agenda items.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference and, as such, no alternative options are presented.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Environment and Sustainability Panel deals with existing and emerging environmental issues, and will focus on carbon footprint reduction and monitoring and supporting the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- 5.2 The Panel's Work Programme will evolve as the Municipal Year progresses and items of business are commenced and concluded. At each meeting the opportunity is taken for the Work Programme to be reviewed and, if necessary, amended according to current circumstances.

6. Standard References

- 6.1 There are no particular references to publicity or consultation considerations; or financial; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety, environmental and sustainability implications or risk management implications.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 Environmental Sustainability is integral to the delivery of the Strategic Plan's priorities and direction for the Borough as set out under the four themes of growth, responsibility, opportunity and wellbeing.

WORK PROGRAMME 2020-21

Environment and Sustainability Panel
Meeting date / Agenda items -
Environment and Sustainability Panel - 17 September 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Climate Emergency - One Year On2. Greening Colchester
Environment and Sustainability Panel – 29 October 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability & Community Engagement2. Air Quality Project Update3. Positive Parking Strategy4. Safer, Greener, Healthier update
Environment and Sustainability Panel - 17 December 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Developing a Carbon Management for Colchester (Carbon Trust)2. Decarbonising our Fleet (EST)3. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update

Environment and Sustainability Panel - **28 January 2021**

1. Sustainability in Planning
2. Ecargo bike update
3. Developing an Environmental Sustainability Strategy
4. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update

Environment and Sustainability Panel – **11 March 2021**

1. Woodland Project Update
2. Town Deal
3. Discussion of an Interim Action Plan (for 2021)
4. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update

