

# Environment and Sustainability Panel Meeting

**Online Meeting, Virtual Meeting Platform  
Thursday, 11 March 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 email to [democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk) before noon on the working day before the meeting date:

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](mailto:democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk)

[www.colchester.gov.uk](http://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, 11 March 2021 at 18:00**

**The Environment and Sustainability Panel Members are:**

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

**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.

**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 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Councillors will be invited to confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2021 are a correct record.

**Environment and Sustainability Panel draft minutes - 28-01-2021** 7 - 18

## 6 **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.

## 7 **Year 2 – The Woodland & Biodiversity Project** 19 - 26

The Panel will consider a report setting out and reviewing the progress that has been made through the Woodland and Biodiversity Project which is now in year 2 of its five-year programme.

## 8 **New Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes (previously named the Climate Emergency Strategic Response) and Midterm Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP 2021-23)** 27 - 54

The Panel will consider a report outlining the New Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes (previously named the Climate Emergency Strategic Response) and Midterm Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP 2021-23).

## 9 **Government emergency authorisation of use of neonicotinoid based pesticides** 55 - 60

The Panel will hear a report presenting information on the Government's decision to grant emergency authorisation for the use of thiamethoxam, a neonicotinoid based insecticide, for treating beet yellows virus in 2021. The UK Government previously banned the use of this insecticide in 2018

## 10 **Climate Emergency Action Plan Update** 61 - 64

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 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

11 **Work Programme 2020-2021**

65 - 68

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)**

# Environment and Sustainability Panel

28 January 2021

**Present:** Councillor Peter Chillingworth  
Councillor Mark Cory  
Councillor Paul Dundas  
Councillor Mark Goacher  
Councillor Pauline Hazell  
Councillor Sam McCarthy  
Councillor Lee Scordis  
Councillor Lorcan Whitehead

**Substitutes:** Councillor Pauline Hazell for Councillor Nigel Chapman

## 18. Urgent Items

Councillor Cory introduced the item, explaining to the Panel that they were being asked to consider supporting a motion that had been proposed in relation to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill. The motion had been proposed by the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill Alliance, and a representative of the Group, Juliet Heller, was in attendance at the meeting to address the Panel. Councillor Cory confirmed that the proposal had been circulated to members of the Panel ahead of the meeting, and explained his desire for the Panel to consider the item with a view to determining if cross-party support could be obtained prior to requesting Cabinet to consider the motion.

Juliet Heller addressed the Panel, explaining that members of the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill Alliance, were calling for more substantive action to be taken both globally and in the United Kingdom to stop the planet heating more than 1.5 degrees centigrade, and to halt the destruction of ecosystems and wildlife. The Panel heard that scientists had predicted temperature rises of up to four degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels, which could bring catastrophic consequences for the planet. The Panel heard that the world was facing an ecological emergency including massive erosion of species diversity and ecosystem services such as pollination, food and water resources, with up to one million species were faced with extinction, according to the United Nations. Within the United Kingdom, it was stated that over 40% of species had declined since the 1970s, and that over the last century, over 97% of wildlife meadows had been removed. Juliet explained that the CEE Bill had been drafted by a group of scientists, lawyers, academics and campaigners with the aim of helping to prevent future damaging changes, and to take steps to replenish biodiversity, and was due to have its second reading before Parliament on 26 March 2021. Juliet stated that the government was not on course to meet its stated target of zero net emissions by the year 2050, and the new Bill would oblige the government to develop an emergency strategy with legal obligations, including reducing the United Kingdom's carbon footprint including

manufacture and trading of goods from overseas was accounted for, providing for the regeneration of depleted soils, habitats and species, and the setting up of an independent Citizens Assembly which would be guided by experts to help set up coherent strategies and policies.

Juliet explained to the Panel that the CEE Bill Alliance was asking Colchester Borough Council to pass a motion declaring its support for the CEE Bill, together with writing to local Members of Parliament to request that they too support the Bill. She summarised the position by saying that the world was facing its greatest threat in thousands of years in climate change, and that the pandemic had demonstrated that when governments were required to act quickly and decisively, they were able to do so, and the CEE Bill was an important step to ensure that the government recognised the seriousness of the challenges ahead, and would step up action on the climate and ecological crisis.

At the invitation of Councillor Cory, Maggie Ibrahim, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager, addressed the Panel and explained that it was not her position to suggest to the Panel whether or not they should support the proposal but that she would briefly provide an overview of the current position. The Panel heard that the proposed CEE Bill set out changes to the existing Climate Act of 2008, and provided some different avenues for helping to achieve ambitions for carbon reduction, with the key changes proposed to require strategies to be drawn up to be accountable by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, together with the formation of a Citizens Assembly and more detail around what could and could not be considered when reporting on carbon offsetting. She explained that the CEE Bill provided a way for government to legislate to achieve the carbon reduction goal by way of offering improvements on the Climate Act 2008, but that the final consequences of any such Bill would be subject to further debate in Parliament.

Councillor Cory likened the proposal to Colchester Borough Council's declaration of a climate emergency, and said that it was now time to have clear actions in terms of both a strategy and a plan to deliver this on a national level. He believed that it would be useful to support the CEE Bill, and cited the need for a collective approach to the environmental challenges ahead.

Councillor Chillingworth made the point that the Environmental Minister had spoken against the CEE Bill, which he felt was unfortunate, as with cross-party support, the CEE Bill would have presented no issues, but as things stood the government did not support the CEE Bill and felt that it was actually getting in the way of actions they wished to take. He pointed out that the Environmental Bill had been delayed, and wondered whether this would also impact on the proposed CEE Bill?

Officers supporting the Panel were not able to confirm what impact the route through Parliament would have on the two proposed Bills, and Mandy Jones, Assistant Director Place and Client Services, explained to the Panel that the urgent nature of the request had not afforded Officers the necessary time to consider the proposal in the required level of detail.



Councillor Cory explained that it was his understanding that the CEE Bill offered amendments to the Environment Bill, and therefore did not feel that the delay of the Environment Bill would impact on the CEE Bill.

Councillor Davidson explained that he was quite sympathetic to the views expressed by Juliet Heller at the meeting, and suggested that all Panel members shared a desire to improve the environment and act against climate change. He confirmed that the government's Environment Bill had been recently withdrawn, and explained that the reason for this was twofold. The proposed Bill had been bringing in various environmental targets and would now be brought back to Parliament in May 2021 and was expected to obtain Royal Assent by the autumn. He explained that the reason for this withdrawal was that Members of Parliament from various political parties were all backing various amendments to the Bill, and that the government was committed to reaching the targets it had set by the year 2030, and wished to be able to provide a robust proposal at the United Nations Climate Conference 2021. Councillor Davidson was open to the Panel debating the issue, but felt that until the improved version of the Environmental Bill had been received the Panel was not able to make a constructive comment on the issue. Councillor Cory acknowledged the points that Councillor Davidson had made, but added that in his opinion there was still value in supporting the CEE Bill to demonstrate support for going as far as possible with the Environment Bill.

Councillor Whitehead confirmed his support for the proposed motion and the CEE Bill, commenting that Local Authorities needed the support of Central Government to take the scale of action needed to address environmental issues. He felt that the fact that the CEE Bill did not have cross-party support made it all the more necessary for Colchester Borough Council to demonstrate its support for the CEE Bill.

Councillor Goacher addressed the Panel, and confirmed his support for the proposed motion and CEE Bill. He stated that it was important to push the government to go as far as possible, and was pleased to note that the CEE was not only concerned with the climate emergency, but also the ecological emergency, including sections on air pollution which Councillor Goacher was particularly keen to support. He felt that Local Authorities should be concerned with prompting central government to take action themselves, and for this reason he would offer support to the Bill, although he felt that some of the measures proposed were not actually strong enough and his overall impression was that the CEE Bill was a very moderate one.

Councillor Hazell said that the issue being discussed was a very serious global issue, and it was up to each individual to do what they could to reduce resource consumption, and to recycle and repair. She stated that encouraging local commitment to the aims of the Panel was a very positive thing, but she felt that she could not support the proposed CEE Bill and, in her opinion, it was not needed. She explained that she felt that it was premature and would add layers of bureaucracy to the processes which would hinder and not help dealing with the issues. She did not agree with Councillor Whitehead's comments, and felt that local councils were able to make a difference without central government support and that locally the council could do a great deal. She felt that it was right to push the government where appropriate, but noted that over the next five years, there was a commitment to

spending at least three billion pounds on addressing ecological issues, and she felt it was appropriate to wait to see what the government was actually proposing via the Environment Bill before acting. Although Councillor Hazell confirmed that she could not support the proposed CEE Bill, she would fully support working under the Terms of Reference of the Panel to make whatever local improvements were possible. In response to this point, Councillor Cory pointed out that the Terms of Reference of this Panel also made reference to stewardship and leadership on a wider level than just local issues, and repeated his belief that government needed the support of Local Authorities in tackling urgent issues.

Juliet Heller offered the Panel some further clarification on the delay to the Environment Bill or approximately six months which had just been announced due to issues with the Covid-19 pandemic which she felt was disappointing. She repeated her belief that the requirements of the CEE Bill would be more useful by enshrining government targets in law as opposed to simply aspirational pledges for the future.

Councillor Chillingworth confirmed his agreement with everything that Juliet had said to the Panel, save for the means of implementation. He believed that the government was already taking extreme steps to ameliorate climate change, and that now that there was new leadership in the United States, over the coming year the United Kingdom and the United States would lead the world towards a better environment. He further felt that the delay to the Environment Bill may allow some of the extra elements proposed by the CEE Bill to be incorporated into the final legislation. Councillor Chillingworth pointed out that in the year 2020 17% of the United Kingdom's power had been provided by nuclear power and 42% by renewable energy sources, with only 41% from fossil fuels, and he felt that this was illustrative of great progress being made. He believes that the government is doing what it can, and confirmed that he could not, therefore, support the proposed CEE Bill.

Summarising his position on the proposed CEE Bill, Councillor Cory confirmed his belief that it could only add to the government's agenda in combating the exponential decline of the natural world, and felt that the CEE Bill would help and not hinder this aim. Councillor Davidson made his final point that the government's Environment Bill was going to set legal targets to hold the government to account, and he felt that although the CEE Bill was well intentioned, he was not sure what it would achieve in the bigger picture. Councillor Cory took this on board but still felt that could do no harm, and would only serve to drive up standard of improvement and accountability.

*RECOMMENDED TO CABINET* that the following motion on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill be approved and adopted:-

### **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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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](mailto:campaign@ceebill.uk)).

## **19. Sustainability in Planning**

Karen Syrett, Planning and Housing Manager, attended to present the report and assist the Panel with their enquiries. The Panel heard that it was possible to assume that Councils had a potential opportunity to support the green targets set by government through Local Plans and planning decisions in terms of the infrastructure, location and design of new developments, but that over the years decisions taken at a national level had created some uncertainty within the system.

The Panel heard that the forthcoming Environment Bill had been delayed until August, and that what the Bill was seeking to do was introduce a biodiversity net gain requirement for all new development, as well as the need for Councils to produce spatial strategies to protect and enhance the natural world, with such strategies being informed by two new strategies to be produced by Natural England; protected species strategies and protected site strategies. The legislation would also seek to enshrine key environmental targets in law as well as establishing a new environmental regulator.

Karen advised the Panel that in 2019, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government published a consultation on future home standards, which would provide updated targets for energy efficiency in new homes and would be regulated via building regulations. As part of this consultation, views were sought on whether or not to restrict Planning Authorities from setting higher energy efficiency targets in Local Plans. The Panel heard that as part of a deregulation exercise carried out in 2015, Government stated that there was an intention to stop Councils setting higher targets in Planning Policies, and although this restriction was never enacted in legislation, it did set out intended policy, and as a result most Councils avoided anything which might cause a problem at Local Plan examination. A response to the 2019 survey which had been recently published recognised that there had been uncertainty for local Planning Authorities and builders, and there was a need to provide Local Authorities with a renewed understanding of the role they were expected to take to assist in creating greener environments. In the short term, central Government has confirmed that it is not intended to amend the Energy Act 2008, and this means that local Planning Authorities will be allowed to set higher standards. The document goes on to state that as there is a move towards ever higher levels of energy efficiency standards for new homes, with updated building regulations, it is less likely that Local Planning Authorities will need to set local energy requirements in order to achieve the net zero goal. The expected response to the Planning White Paper will provide more certainty on this point.

The Panel heard that policies had been included in both the adopted and the emerging Local Plan on climate change, and these policies encourage and support the provision of low carbon and renewable energies and encourage design and construction techniques which contribute to climate change mitigation. Within the Garden Communities policies, however, this encouragement and support changed to a requirement. The Panel were advised that the upcoming review of the Local Plan was the perfect opportunity to implement new policies and to seek policies that require higher standards than those expected to be implemented through Building Regulations.

Karen explained that it was necessary to get the Local Plan adopted, and it may be then be possible to provide some additional supplementary planning policies in the short term to promote new technologies available to developers and builders, although these could only provide guidance. The Panel were advised that it was intended to introduce a checklist which would encourage people to address environmental issues when submitting planning applications, and would enable the Planning Committee to be advised on what elements of the checklist were being

incorporated into any scheme. It was intended to consult on the checklist, together with other proposed changes to the local Validation List, and the checklist would be adopted following this consultation.

Councillor Cory voiced his frustration when seeing new developments which were not constructed in an ecologically friendly way, and spoke of the importance of using the Local Plan to ensure that as much was done to address this locally as possible.

Councillor Chillingworth felt that it was very important that attempts were made to persuade developers to adopt more environmentally friendly practices before they were required to do so by Building Regulations, and wondered whether the checklist could be incorporated into the Supplementary Planning Guidance. He commented that new houses being built today would have to be retrofitted to bring them into line with future standards, and thought that developers should be encouraged to make housing compliant now, even if there was an initially great cost to buy the housing. Councillor Chillingworth expressed his support for the proposed checklist.

Councillor Scordis commented that he had seen issues with new developments in his ward, and noted that sadly it was often the affordable housing that was left behind in terms of some of the energy efficient options that were available. He asked whether the proposed checklist covered properties that passed through permitted development without the need for planning permission.

Councillor Goacher expressed his full support for the proposed checklist, and noted that he had been made aware of developments in Colchester where there was no pavement which in his view was designed to encourage car use. He felt that anything that could be done to encourage developers to think about these issues before submitting an application could only be a good thing. Although Councillor Goacher did support the checklist, he expressed his reservation that it was still part of a growth agenda and gave an implied permission to continue development if the checklist was adhered to. He felt that it was extremely important to make all new developments as green as possible and although there were areas where he may encourage a stronger stance to be taken the checklist was a good start. He made reference to the 10% biodiversity net gain requirement listed in the checklist, but felt that this was not a helpful requirement. Supporting this stance, he cited the example of fields of wheat which would have low biodiversity, and if houses were built on the land a biodiversity net gain could be achieved by simply planting some trees of different varieties. Councillor Cory supported this view, and felt that it would be useful if the biodiversity elements of the checklist were re-examined with a view to potentially improving them.

Councillor Hazell confirmed her view that anything that the Council could do to improve building standards was very welcome. She noted that Council developments were already being constructed to higher standards, and welcomed encouraging private developers to do likewise.

Councillor Whitehead accepted that the checklist could not be enforced, but questioned whether the Council could encourage good development by highlighting good practice to encourage future development through its communication channels.

Councillor Davidson expressed his opinion that the proposed checklist may not go far enough, and sought reassurance that the principles of wide streets, trees and grass verges could be incorporated into the checklist. He also requested that the checklist should also be used when modifying existing buildings to improve the standards of these, and to encourage the implementation of higher building standards across the Borough.

Karen Syrett agreed that updating the Supplementary Planning Guidance was a good idea, but one which would take some time to implement due to the commitments of Officers on other projects. She confirmed that with regard to permitted development, unfortunately the Council had very little control over this, even where prior approval was needed. She confirmed that the checklist would be required for as many forms of application as possible. The Panel heard that biodiversity net gain would be a requirement of the Environment Bill in due course, but that it would be possible to include more information on this subject in the Supplementary Planning Guidance. Karen agreed that communication promoting good developments was a good idea and was potentially something that could be linked into future developments such as the environmentally friendly Elfreda House development. In terms of adopting the principles of wider roads and spaces, Karen commented that these were not suitable in every location and that in some cases higher density developments were necessary. This was something that could be looked expanding upon in future Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

Councillor Cory supported setting as high a standard as possible through SPDs, and queried whether it was possible to request standards for conversion works carried out as part of permitted development, but Karen explained that legislation determined what could be taken into account with these developments and there was no scope for local standards to be introduced.

Andrew Tyrrell, Client and Business Manager, addressed the Panel and advised them that the Council's current housing developments were being built to the principle of Future Homes 2025 which included the use of air source heat pumps as opposed to gas boilers, and commented that the Council was attempting to lead by example in its developments. He also confirmed that some funding had been obtained to support retrofitting existing housing stock in ways that would benefit tenants by bringing down their bills as well as the environmental gains this entailed.

Councillor Davidson queried whether provision could be made in the budget for bringing in more staff to assist with the production of new SPDs, commenting that over a thousand houses were being built a year and it would therefore be better if these could be built to a higher standard as soon as possible.

*RESOLVED* that the contents of the report be noted.

## **20. Colchester eCargo Bike Library project update**

Councillor Tim Young attended the meeting as a visiting Councillor to address the Panel. He stated that the eCargo bike initiative was a very positive one, which was to be supported, but did voice a concern around the marketing and publicity of the scheme, commenting that until a couple of weeks ago he knew very little of the scheme. Councillor Young praised the work of the Panel to date, but said that as a representative of Greenstead ward he was keen that the environmental message was shown as being relevant to everybody, even those in more deprived areas. The Panel heard that Councillor Young had been working with a local food bank making deliveries by car, but that use of eCargo bikes would be much more environmentally sound and could be used to take food both to the food bank, and then delivering it out again. Councillor Young called for the scheme to be rolled out to charities community groups and not just businesses.

Councillor Cory agreed with the sentiments expressed by Councillor Young, and commented that he had undertaken the level three bikeability training that was required to use the eCargo bikes and was happy to support others to do so. He explained that part of the strategic vision of the Council was not only to improve the natural environment but to make our economy fairer for all and to stimulate and support more deprived areas.

Councillor Julie Young, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance, addressed the Panel as a visiting Councillor. She expressed her enthusiasm for supporting the project and in particular linking it to the food bank in Greenstead which was the second most used food bank in Colchester. She explained to the panel that she had obtained funding from Essex County Council to support Lee Pugh in his work with the eCargo bike project and suggested that other Councillors might like to consider this if they had money left in their budgets. Councillor Young had not been aware of the training offered to Councillors in respect of the eCargo bikes, and suggested that if this were to be offered to Councillors again then there would be significantly more interest.

Emily Harrup, Project Officer (Transport and Sustainability) attended to present the report and assist the Panel with their enquiries. The Panel received a presentation outlining the use that had been made of the eCargo bikes and Emily confirmed that following the initial setting up of the project, pool bikes were now ready to be distributed, which would lead to more publicity for the project. A number of the eCargo bikes had been handed over to the champions of the scheme, and also to High Woods and Castle Park Rangers. The scheme was supported by developed branding on the bikes and further development of relevant web pages to incorporate a short term hire agreement. The Panel heard that champions of the scheme had used the eCargo bikes, cutting the use of petrol vehicles and providing fitness and wellbeing boosts for staff. Emily gave examples of some of the business using the bikes, including hospital staff and Repair, Reuse, Recycle CIC, Colchester Borough Homes, Millwheels, Norwegian Bakers, Wivenhoe Town Council, Colchester Bike Kitchen.

Emily explained that the next steps for the scheme were to make pool bikes available for use and interest had been shown in these from organisations such as Colchester Borough Homes maintenance team, University of Essex, and the Food Bank, but unfortunately it was not possible to provide the necessary bikeability training to new riders at present due to the lockdown. The Panel heard that Lee Pugh intended to use an eCargo bike to provide Colchester's first eCargo bike delivery service and he intended to offer local businesses low cost eco-delivery options as well as working with vulnerable residents and local charities to collect and deliver essential items.

Emily outlined the next steps for the scheme, including using the bikes within the Council's own teams and working with other partners such as En-Form and the Colchester Business Improvement District. It was intended to refine the data which was currently being collected to calculate the reduction in carbon emissions that the scheme had provided.

Councillor McCarthy expressed his support for the scheme, and enquired what work had been done with partners so far, and where the information gathered on emissions would be shared. Emily confirmed that discussions with partners had been undertaken but disrupted by lockdown and would be recommenced shortly. She confirmed that she provides a monthly report to the Energy Savings Trust which included feedback from the champions on the number of journeys and miles travelled, to allow accurate calculations to be made on carbon and emission savings which could be presented to the Panel in the future.

Councillor Chillingworth considered that even though the scheme was at an early stage, much could be made of the excellent progress that had been made by advertising through the Council's communication channels.

Councillor Davidson noted that some of the companies that had expressed an interest in using the bikes were commercial companies that may be able to afford to source their own bikes with support from Officers. He hoped that there would be scope to expand the scheme to Tiptree and West Mersea where he felt that the Parish Councils would find the bikes extremely useful. Councillor Davidson's final point was that traditional recycled push bikes could also be used as with a trailer attached some of these would also have a carrying capacity and would have less environmental impact than even an eCargo bike would.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Whitehead, Lee Pugh addressed the Panel and explained that it was extremely easy to navigate throughout Colchester on the bikes with routes of up to thirty miles. He expressed his enthusiasm for the scheme and praised the work of Officers and Councillors for both their financial and practical support.

In relation to points raised in relation to publicising the scheme, Emily Harrup explained that one of the roles of the champions was to promote the scheme, and they had been loaned a bike on the basis that they would assist with promotion. Although the current situation had hampered traditional promotion the team were ready to step up their promotional activities using stories of the use of eCargo bikes



to support this. Emily explained that the purpose of the pool bikes was to be available for short term loans of up to three months, with the intention being that if commercial companies found them useful they would then source their own in future from a variety of eCargo bikes ranging in cost from approximately £2,000 to £9,000. The Panel learned that contact had already been made with West Mersea Parish Council and Officers were keen for the bike to be used by as wide a variety of people as possible, potentially expanding the scheme to include local residents if funding could be obtained. Emily confirmed that there were seven pool bikes available and advised the Panel that she would happily advise anyone who was interested in taking one on trial on a flexible loan basis.

*RESOLVED* that the contents of the report be noted.

## **21. Review of Environmental Sustainability Strategy (proposal for new framework)**

Maggie Ibrahim, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager attended to present the report and assist the Panel with their enquiries. The Panel heard that there was the need for a new framework that drew work around sustainability, carbon reduction and climate change, particularly as the Environment Sustainability Strategy of the Council had ended in 2020. Maggie appraised the Panel on the work that had been undertaken to prepare the framework, including the review of key documentation, and explained that this review had highlighted themes, and the need to include an element in the framework on monitoring and accountability. The Panel were requested to agree that the Sustainability and Climate Emergency Response Framework be developed for the next Panel, together with an updating of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Councillor Cory spoke in support of the proposed themes of the Sustainability and Climate Emergency Response Framework, and the rationalisation of drawing the different strategies together into one clear strategy with one clear action plan.

Councillor Chillingworth added his support to the approach being proposed, and felt it important that the current different strategies were codified into one document, and supported by an action plan which would deal with quantifiable actions whose progress could be monitored, a sentiment that was echoed by Councillor Hazell.

*RESOLVED* that the Sustainability and Climate Emergency Response Framework outlined in the report be agreed, to include the development of a 'Climate Emergency Strategic Response (CESR) 2021- 2023' document, and a revised Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) that sits beneath the strategic themes of the CESR 2021-23.

### **23. Work Programme 2020-2021**

*RESOLVED* that the contents of the work programme be noted, and that additional agreed items be presented to the next meeting of the Panel.

11 March 2021

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Assistant Director of Environment</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Rosa Tanfield</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Year 2 – The Woodland &amp; Biodiversity Project</b>		 03300538047
<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out and reviews the progress that has been made through the Woodland and Biodiversity Project which is now in year 2 of its five-year programme.

## 2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

## 3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 This report is for information only.

## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not applicable.

## 5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Woodland Project (as it was initially called), launched in 2019. The project, part of Colchester Borough Council's Better Colchester campaign, was to support the Council's ambitions to make the borough an even more attractive place to live, work and visit. The Woodland Project was one response of many to environmental concerns and the climate emergency announcement. Its ambition was to help offset 32,000 tonnes of carbon over the lifetime of the trees.
- 5.2 In its first year, residents, volunteers and community groups helped plant trees in over 18 locations including Spring Lane Park, Greenstead Slopes and Pondfield open space as part of the initiative to plant more than 200,000 trees across Colchester over the five-year programme. At the end of Year 1 the target to plant 11,760 trees was achieved.
- 5.3 In 2020, a new Strategic Plan 2020-23 was launched and demonstrated a clear commitment to "tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability" and one of the priorities set out to "conserving and enhancing biodiversity". In considering this focused direction, reviewing the impact and lessons learnt of Year 1, along with responding to feedback and challenge from key stakeholders, the project was reviewed and further evolved. As a result, the project was relaunched; promoting a wider approach to the project, supported by clear principles and objectives that aligned to greater sensitivity to Colchester's environment and biodiversity.

### **Year 2 – Principles and Objectives**

- 5.4 As an impact of the evolution of this project, the project description changed:

Year 1:

#### 'The Colchester Woodland Project'

'Over the next five years, we plan to plant 200,000 trees across the borough as part of the Better Colchester campaign. Trees and woodlands are a vital part of our eco-system, and we are committed to preserving them and helping them to flourish. This is at the very heart of the Colchester Woodland Project. We want to make our borough even greener, and we want to help our community know, love, and use our woods and parks'

Year 2:

#### 'The Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project'

We plan to plant 200,000 trees across the borough in the next 5 years, as part of the Better Colchester campaign, as well as to encourage natural recovery networks that help wildlife and biodiversity. Trees and woodlands are a vital part of our eco-system. We are committed to planting trees and to helping them and wider biodiversity to flourish. We want to make our borough even greener. We want to help our community know and love and care for our environment, from wildflowers and meadows, to our woods and parks, old or new.

- 5.5 A new core set of principles were agreed, aligning strongly to the priorities of the Council's strategic plan. These principles are considered and incorporated on each workstream developed by the Project Team, and at each stage of the work programme:

#### Principles:

- We strive to make our borough even greener.
- We are committed to planting trees and to helping them and wider biodiversity to flourish.
- We will plant and manage our sites and spaces without harming existing habitats.
- We will enhance environments to create more space for nature to grow and thrive.
- We will encourage our community to love and care for our environment, from wildflowers and meadows, to our woods and parks, old or new.

- 5.6 As a result of the revised objectives and setting of key principles and development of the Council's strategic plan, new aims were developed for Year 2:
- Plant 20,500 trees and shrubs.
  - Green the Colchester Orbital, better connecting people with green space.
  - Phase out the use of Glyphosate weed killer in Council operations.
  - Identify the gaps in our nature recovery networks to help wildlife and biodiversity.
  - Build and develop our networks and relationships to create strong advocates and partners of the project.
  - Provide help, support, and prepare Colchester for the future changes that may come forward from the new Agriculture and Environment Bills.
  - Proactively work within communities to make Colchester greener.
- 5.7 The project has focused on 5 core workstreams to meet these aims:
- Planting and greening
  - Urban planting, including Colchester Orbital
  - Public engagement
  - Stakeholder development
  - Planning
- 5.8 Unfortunately, the Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project has not been unaffected by the impact of Covid-19. This impacted Year 1, as the Mayors Woodland and the Community Orchard had to be rescheduled, and it has meant unfortunately that public events in Year 2 could not go ahead as planned and engagement activities had to be moved online. However, several activities have been achieved and these are summarised below.
- Planting and greening**
- 5.9 In a move away from just planting trees as approached by the team in Year 1, this workstream now encompasses planting of trees, shrubs and hedgerows, and other activities that aim to reduce environmental impact on green spaces, ecology, and biodiversity, such as meadows and reduced chemical use.
- Planting achieved
- 5.10 Whilst public planting days could not be achieved this year, planting and tree distribution has still gone ahead in some form, and by the end of March 2021, the Council will have achieved 14,000 trees planted. So far in Year 2, the Project has planted 145 standard trees on public green spaces, 12,125 tree whips in our parks and countryside sites and 1,840 whips were supplied to local Town and Parish Councils for planting on their green spaces. With each site, assessments have been undertaken to ensure the right balance and minimal impact on biodiversity, ecology, and existing use of the space. Whilst planting has been on existing public open space, the planting has ensured that these areas can continue to be used (e.g. dog walking, sports use), whilst being enhanced by tree/hedge planting and habitat creation.
- Self-generating sites
- 5.11 The Council identified 14 sites for self-generation and estimates that this could generate approximately 4,700 trees based on one successful tree every 3m<sup>2</sup>.
- Trees for Years
- 5.12 Whilst the traditional Trees for Years event could not proceed this financial year owing to the Covid-19 restrictions it has been rescheduled to commence at the revised date of

November 2021, National Tree Week and it is intended that this will launch the new planting season for 2021/22. The last Trees for Years event took place in 2020 and so it will still in effect be an 'annual' event.

#### Greening Colchester Policy

- 5.13 A policy document was submitted and supported by the Environment and Sustainability Panel on 17 September 2020 that set out a new approach for the Council with regards to verge and weed maintenance. As part of the Council's commitment to the phased removal of the use of glyphosate-based products, this policy also set out to stop or reduce grass cutting in specific areas. The intention being that changing the management regime in this way can improve the biodiversity and visual amenity of the grass verges, whilst also enabling the Council to manage these areas to be left to re-wild and be developed as wildflower areas or left to naturalise as woodland. Across 14 open spaces approx. 1.5ha in total will be left to naturalise with the potential to establish 4,700 trees at 1 tree per 3m<sup>2</sup> over the next 10 years. The cutting frequency of the grass verges on some of the main routes into Colchester e.g., Avenue of Remembrance, Clingo Hill and Cymbeline Way will be changed to one grass cut per year and managed as wildflower verges.

#### Edible Community Orchard

- 5.14 A small number of residents in Greenstead have planted up wooden troughs outside the community centre with fruit and vegetables. There is scope to plant fruit trees on Magnolia Fields when the volunteer group grows.

#### Wivenhoe Project

CBC were approached by Wivenhoe Town Council (WTC) who have been working on areas in Wivenhoe that they would like to see left to grow as wildflowers, and then cut and cleared at the end of September. The following sites were identified: -

- Elmstead Road / Broadfields Junction
- Henrietta Close Open Space
- Boudica Walk
- Frances Close
- De Vere Lane verge
- Coop Triangle
- Bobbits Way and roadside

- 5.16 Working with WTC, a template document is being produced which can enable and guide Town and Parish Councils in changing grass cutting regimes to develop wildflower areas and improve biodiversity. The document takes organisations through the various aspects of changing the grass cutting regime, identifying any potential concerns, outlines the project brief, how the changes can be monitored and recorded, and how any data collected can be documented.

#### **Urban planting, including Colchester Orbital** Colchester Orbital

- 5.17 The Colchester Orbital is the cycling and walking route around Colchester that connects with existing green spaces and countryside. Consultants Plumb Associates were commissioned in March 2020 to look at opportunities for its improvement including tree-planting and other greening opportunities. The draft Action Plan has identified a range of opportunities that fit within the Woodland and Biodiversity vision including restoration of acid grassland at High Woods Country Park, reimagining Cymbeline Meadows to include more native tree and hedgerow planting, naturalisation of grasslands and wetland creation and a range of small-scale planting opportunities such as at Bergholt Road Allotments. The final plan is anticipated in March 2021. Funding and sponsorship are also being

sought to create way-finding signs around the route and remove or replace some obstacles to movement in the coming months.

#### Town Centre

- 5.18 New public realm developments now explore opportunities for greening the High Street and Town Centre. For example, £1m funding from the Accelerated Town Deal will create new public spaces in St Nicholas Square and Balmerne Gate next to the Mercury Theatre. This will see the addition of more greening elements than existing, with new trees planted across both schemes as well as encouraging sustainable travel and improved spaces accessible spaces for pedestrians. Across the wider town centre the introduction of parklets (a partnership project with Our Colchester Business Improvement District) will see the introduction of trees supported by the Woodland and Biodiversity Project in the High Street.

#### Fixing the Link

- 5.19 Idverde, the Council's grounds maintenance contractor is producing a landscape design for the Albert Roundabout. More details of the design will emerge; however, it follows the "Fixing the Link" themes and colour yellow. The Albert Roundabout concept is formed around a symmetrical framework of 600m<sup>2</sup> architectural shrubs, accompanied by drifts of pollinator friendly perennials and grasses. The colour scheme is predominantly yellow to reflect the existing town theme, with a contrast of blues and purples to set it off. The scheme will be dressed with 30mm-80mm cobbles to act as a weed suppressing and water retaining mulch. The outer ring of the roundabout will be planted with a low maintenance ground cover plant, the stones being retained by permanent edging.

#### **Public engagement**

- 5.20 Public engagement is a key part of the project, and lots of work has taken place to involve and encourage our local community to love and care for the environment. This has included changes and improvements to the [Woodland and Biodiversity Project website](#), which is regularly updated on progress of the project and provides other information.

#### Schools

- 5.21 Local schools have been engaged to design signage for 'no mow' areas across the borough. Activity packs with information about the project, and templates for signage were sent to schools along with guidance for seed gathering activity. Future plans include engaging schools to take part in bee and butterfly counts.

#### Social Media

- 5.22 During Year 2 officers have utilised the Council's social media channels to keep the public engaged and updated on the project. This has included a #loveyourtrees campaign where residents were asked to identify well know trees across Colchester, send in pictures of their favourite trees, and provide pictures of trees they had planted as part of the Trees for Years initiative over the years. Residents have also been encouraged to take part in seed gathering activities, with guidance and packs provided at Highwoods Country Park Visitors Centre. Several videos have also been developed and shared across social media to show progress with the project to date and explain future project plans.

#### Building a volunteer network

- 5.23 Volunteers for Year 1 of the project were recognised through a "thank you" video posted on to the Council website and social media, on International Volunteer Day on 5 December 2020. Prior to national lockdown restrictions being implemented the public were asked to sign up to volunteer for public planting days, with over 100 volunteers registered. The details of these volunteers have been retained to allow future engagement with key project initiatives and for the network of volunteers to grow and grow.

## **Stakeholder development**

- 5.24 The project team understand the importance of stakeholder development in ensuring the sustainability and legacy of this project and to that end, have been forging new relationships and enhancing existing relationships. Instrumental to the development of these relationship is the recruitment of a Woodland and Open Spaces Project Officer.

### Together We Grow

- 5.25 Together we Grow is a community Interest Company based in Colchester and founded in 2017 by Wayne Setford. It aims to improve the lives of communities by helping people and nature to grow together.
- 5.26 Wayne led on the Public Planting Events in Year 1 of the project and was so successful at building up a team of committed volunteer tree planters that he was asked to fill the same role for Year 2.

### Essex Forest Initiative

- 5.27 The Essex Forest Initiative was created in October 2019 by Essex County Council to commit to planting £1 million worth of trees over five years to combat climate change by locking up carbon in the environment.
- 5.28 They are looking to work with all interested Local Authorities within Essex to achieve this aim and have partnered with the Woodland Trust in providing native tree stock at a heavily subsidised cost to any Local Authority which has plans to plant woodland on their land.

### Woodland Trust

- 5.29 The Woodland Trust is the UK's largest woodland conservation charity and has planted 47m trees since it first began in 1972. It has agreed to supply the Project with a total of 10,350 tree whips, canes, and rabbit guards completely free of charge for planting in February & March this year.

### Stakeholder group

- 5.30 In light of the renewed focus of the project and to further ensure the direction and sustainability of the project, the Council has formulated an informal stakeholder group. It is anticipated that the membership of this group will flex and alter as the project evolves and develop. In Year 2 the group has been made up of interested individuals and organised groups such as Colchester Natural History Society (CNHS), Essex Wildlife Trust, and the "Together We Grow" Community Interest Group. Many of the individuals are Town and Borough Councillors with a particular interest in wildlife and biodiversity.
- 5.31 The informal group has helped to challenge and therefore influence the refocusing of the project, ensuring the objectives and principles of the project are sound. Members of CNHS have surveyed some of the proposed planting sites and have advised officers on ways to increase biodiversity in these areas which has led to positive changes being made to how the project develops and learns from others with expertise in the field. It is hoped that support like this, or similar, will continue into Year 3 from the existing and other groups, with a particular focus on greater collaboration and engagement.

## **Planning**

- 5.32 With ambitious plans for planting in the coming years, officers have been actively exploring several large sites, undertaking surveys and assessments.

### Cymbeline Meadow

- 5.33 The project team are working with the existing tenant farmer and Countryside Ranger team, who are investigating areas for improving the biodiversity of Cymbeline Meadows



#### Colchester Northern Gateway

5.34 As part of the approved landscape scheme for the Colchester Northern Gateway Sports Park, approximately 500 standard trees were planted and 86,000 hedging whips. Additional areas towards the North of the site and along the cycle routes are being assessed for additional tree planting in 21/22 planting season.

5.35 Officers have also exploring new and emerging strategies and policies:

#### Bee Lines

5.36 “B-lines” is a campaign run by the conservation charity Buglife aimed at creating a series of insect pathways running through the countryside to address the loss of flowers and pollinators across the land. B-lines have been mapped across most of the UK and some major routes run through Colchester Borough and the project team are working to fill the mapped routes with restored and new wildflower-rich areas wherever it can by changing the way the Council maintains the land to a “More grow, Less mow” regime.

#### Landscape guidance for new developments

5.37 The project team is looking to influence a change to existing policies, such as the existing landscape guidance, with reference to urban trees and tree planting in rear gardens, to improve green corridors and connections through the Borough.

#### **Overall summary**

5.38 Whilst Covid-19 has had an impact on the delivery of the service and whilst many of the core project team had to reassess their priorities to the delivery of core services and certain activities and events could not proceed as planned, good progress has been made in each of the workstreams within the last year. It is important that this work is sustained, and that the project continues to evolve and prepares for all and any opportunities as they arise.

5.39 Biodiversity, conservation and enhancement of our green spaces including tree planting is an evocative area. The project has evolved overtime and strives to incorporate a broad spectrum of sometimes conflicting views from stakeholders. The Project Team aim to navigate this spectrum of views and strike a balance, continuing to maintain relationships welcoming support and challenge in equal measure whilst remaining committed to the project principles set out in this report.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

6.1 This project supports the Councils [Strategic Plan 2020-23](#) of “tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability” and in particular the priorities of “respond to the climate emergency” and “conserve and enhance biodiversity”. It is also contributing towards “creating safe, healthy and active communities” through the various engagement and planting activities outlined in this report.



11 March 2021

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Assistant Director Place &amp; Client Services</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Maggie Ibrahim ☎ 508965</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>New Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes (previously named the Climate Emergency Strategic Response) and Midterm Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP 2021-23)</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	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 the new framework for managing the programme for sustainability, climate emergency response and carbon reduction as agreed in the previous Environment and Sustainability Panel. This was needed as the previous Environment Sustainability Strategy has recently come to an end. In developing the strategy document, it was recognised that a phased and agile approach was needed, starting off with a short and concise overview of the key strategic themes of the Council's work for further consultation and elaboration with residents and stakeholders. We also recognised the need to update the strategy with the targets and pathway to reach net zero carbon by 2030 which are pieces of work currently underway and should be reflected in our evolving strategy.
- 1.2 In order to be agile and keep stakeholders updated, we will publish on our website this short document for use in consultation to further develop our strategy. This new strategy document is now called the "Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes" (see Appendix 1). This replaces the previously named "Climate Emergency Strategic Response" title as we are departing from the idea of finished document as our response to the climate emergency and instead want to convey an agile and phased approach to developing a more comprehensive strategy. We are also suggesting we rename the strategy as 'Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy' in order to be less jargon heavy.
- 1.2 To ensure that the new strategy engages with key stakeholders within the Council, community groups, businesses and residents, it will be developed through a phased consultation process. The agreed first phase has been to develop a short strategy document through internal consultation, with members of our relevant Amphora companies and the Environment Sustainability Panel members. An engagement plan with further phases will be developed to ensure that we consult with key external stakeholders and elaborate the activities of the next phases of engagement.
- 1.3 The draft first phase of the strategy development is the creation of the 'Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes (CC&SST)'. This is a concise document elaborating: the context of why a new strategy is needed; the key themes of the strategy, a monitoring approach and highlights of the top ten actions from the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) in the 2020-2021 period.

- 1.4 The CEAP has been updated to align to the 8 strategic themes of the CC&SST. In addition, the Climate Opportunities Working Group (COWG), officers from across the Council and Amphora companies, updated the CEAP with new projects underway and upcoming in the next two or more years. Thus, the CEAP 2021-2023 is the new mid-term CEAP and continues to be agile and flexible, enabling changes that are responsive to both national and local initiatives. It will be updated and shared again in 6 months time – September 2021.

## **2. Recommended Decision**

- 2.1 To agree:
- the first phase of the Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes, for consultation on this document.
  - the updated Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) 2021-2023.

## **3. Reason for Recommended Decision**

- 3.1 The framework of the chosen approach, with the 2 documents, was agreed at the latest Environmental & Sustainability Panel meeting in January. Since then, work has progressed as directed and the Panel are now able to agree to the phased approach in developing the CC&SS and the CEAP 2021-2023. This first phase of the strategy is the 'Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes' document will allow for further consultation and information sharing with key stakeholders and its aligned and updated, Climate Emergency Action Plan 2021-2023.

## **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The Panel could consider delaying the sharing of the new Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes – for consultation and its linked Climate Emergency Action Plan 2021-2023 document. However, there is no beneficial reason to delay consultation and progress.
- 4.2 The Panel could decide to follow a different framework, but this would be contradictory to the previous decision.

## 5. Background Information

- 5.1 In 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency, committing to become net zero carbon by 2030. To meet this challenge, a review and update to the existing frameworks for the Council's sustainability and carbon reduction strategies was needed. The review of existing frameworks and documents was conducted and a new consultation document, the Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes (CC&SST) was developed, see Appendix 1. The title of this document has changed from the previous title of Climate Emergency Strategic Response document as it is intended to be the first document for consultation building up to a more comprehensive strategy. It was also noted that the language of climate emergency might not be as accessible as climate challenge. The process in developing the CC&SST document included:
- 5.2 The process to develop the CC&SS 2021- 2023 document included:
- a review of strategic documents related to sustainability and climate change
  - a review of plans related to sustainability and climate change
  - a gap analysis of any themes missing from the current Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and the previous Environment Sustainability Strategy
  - Consultation with key officers and Amphora company members in order to update elements of the strategy with current strategic plans
  - Presentation to the Council's Sustainability and Climate Challenge Project Board and Policy Senior Management Team for input.
- 5.2 The review and consultation led to the identification of 8 strategic themes. These include:
- I) Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings and fleet to help achieve a net zero carbon footprint for Council services by 2030
  - II) Produce renewable energy
  - III) Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment
  - IV) Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester
  - V) Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle
  - VI) Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development
  - VII) Ensure sustainable planning and development
  - VIII) Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment
- 5.3 It also led to an agreed "Top 10" actions from the CEAP to showcase significant progress made to date in line with the strategy, see Appendix 1.
- 5.4 In consulting with internal stakeholders and owned company members, it became evident that a more comprehensive strategy could be developed with time in order to convey what the Council is currently doing, and intends to do, to reach net zero carbon zero. Key pieces of work, such as creating targets for each strategic theme, as well as showing a pathway of carbon reduction through milestone years, is valuable to communicate externally. The appropriate place to communicate such information is within a strategy document as seen in other Council's, such as Bristol' [One City Climate Strategy](#). Hence, a phased approach in developing the strategy is suggested with the short document that is enclosed.

The current first phase strategy document does the following:

- ✓ Captures all strategic ambition of the Council related to sustainability and carbon reduction
- ✓ Frames our updated Climate Emergency Action Plan and aligns to the Strategic Plan
- ✓ Sets out the monitoring and communication of progress for the climate emergency action plan

- ✓ Highlights progress against our Climate Emergency Action Plan in 2019-20
- ✓ Details how residents/stakeholders can get in touch and support the Council's sustainability and climate related work.

The future phases could include:

- ☐ Objectives for each strategic theme
- ☐ Carbon Emissions Reduction Targets and timeframe up to 2030 – externally commissioned
- ☐ Engagement Approach and feedback from residents and other stakeholders
- ☐ Include potentially more themes:  
i.e., digital sustainability; financing models for sustainability and climate change (i.e., bonds, crowdsourcing, major donors); carbon offsetting (project exploration and set up).

- 5.5 In addition to the development of the CC&SST, the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) was revamped according to the 8 strategic themes in the strategy and updated to include new projects that are underway or currently planned for 2021-2023, see: Appendix 2. This was done through input from the climate opportunities working group and the manager of Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 5.6 Highlights of the new actions within the updated CEAP 2021-2023 document include the following:
- Commission a Carbon Management Plan 2021-2026 to sit alongside the Council's Building Maintenance Programme
  - Retrofit or redesign of estate and housing assets: Rowan House, 100 Homes and HRA "Housing Investment Programme", Crematorium, St. Mark's Community Centre, Shrub End Depot, Leisure World and Elfreda House
  - Develop an Asset Management (Housing) Strategy that includes carbon reduction
  - Plant 200,000 trees by 2024 as part of the Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project to benefit biodiversity and for capturing carbon emissions.
  - Switch Council energy supply to 100% renewable electricity tariff
  - Bring an e-car club to Colchester
  - Develop principles/approach for offsetting and review of natural asset list and project proposals by Carbon Trust
  - Update and produce a new: Procurement Policy to include sustainability, Development Plan Document (DPD) on Sustainability and Carbon Reduction, and an Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy (and procure EV Vehicles/ installing charge points)
  - Review our trade waste collection service to develop additional commercial recycling collections
  - Develop a Climate Emergency communications and engagement plan which will support the delivery of, and engagement around, the Council's Action Plan.
  - Develop and run Carbon Literacy Training for staff and tools page for capacity building, as well as launch the Hero for Zero Challenge for staff behaviour change for increased sustainability and carbon reduction life and workstyles.
- 5.7 The CEAP 2021-23 will be reported on regularly through the Environment Sustainability Panel Progress Reports, as well as through a bi-annual report on progress of, and updates to, the CEAP. These will be available online through the Council's website.

## **6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 6.1 The CC&SST will continue to support the importance of equality and diversity in all aspects of borough life. Through its component parts, made of elements of the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and the CEAP 2000 have been subject to equality impact assessments. Any new project developed will consider its equality, diversity and human rights impact.

## **7. Strategic Plan References**

- 7.1 The CC&SST 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 An engagement and consultation process will be developed to learn more from key stakeholders of how they would like to see the Council develop the CC&SST as well as the CEAP. Many of the actions within the CEAP will include consultations and efforts will be made to coordinate across the plan in a coherent manner with residents.

## **9. Publicity Considerations**

- 9.1 The development of this first phase strategy for consultation and Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) 2021-2023 will be announced on our website and media channels. In addition, once the engagement plan is finalised there will be an announcement of engagement opportunities/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 new CC&SST has been developed and the CEAP 2021-2023 updated to align with it. It is also why the CEAP 2021-23 was updated with new actions in order to demonstrate progress and forward-looking ambition to achieve the strategic goals.

## **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1:** Draft Sustainability and Climate Challenge Strategy Themes

**Appendix 2:** Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) 2021-2023





## Appendix 1: Draft Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes

Colchester Borough Council is leading the way in promoting sustainability and carbon Reduction. This new *Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes* continues to build on years of dedication and achievement and will evolve through consultation with stakeholders and innovation in the industry.

In 2019, we ranked among the top 10 local authorities in the Friends of the Earth's performance review in different categories including renewable energy, public transport, lift-sharing, energy efficiency at home, waste recycling, and tree cover. In the same year, we declared a climate emergency.

As a responsible Local Authority, we know that we have an important role to play in promoting sustainability and reducing carbon emissions. In 2020 we published our Council's [Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#) with *tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability* as a key priority. We also developed our [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) highlighting how we will reduce greenhouse gas emissions to reach carbon neutrality by 2030.

In 2021, we recognise the need to replace our recently expired Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2015-2020) with an evolving and comprehensive *Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes*. Will be developing our strategy and updating our themes through consultations with residents and partnership work. To date, it includes 8 strategic themes:

- 1. Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings and fleet to help achieve a net zero Carbon footprint for Council Services by 2030.**
  - Reduce carbon emissions from our existing buildings through use of insulation, solar panels, air source heat pumps and other technologies.
  - Change our petrol/diesel vehicles to electric vehicles and invest in appropriate charging stations for current and future use.
- 2. Produce renewable energy**
  - Develop a low carbon heat network for Northern Gateway South with open loop ground source heat.
  - Explore options for delivering a micro grid and solar farm to produce and increase the use of renewable energy.
- 3. Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment**
  - Enhance environments to create more space for nature to grow and thrive through natural seeding and greening.
  - Work with communities and groups in enhancing and protecting the natural environment
  - Plant native species and manage our woodlands, meadows and greenspace whilst sustaining existing habitats.
- 4. Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester**
  - Work with Essex County Council to install and improve facilities, infrastructure and routes for cyclists and walkers to enable active travel, healthier lifestyles, reduce car use and improve air quality.
  - Provide, support and encourage the take up of a range of sustainable transport choices by residents, businesses and our workforce.

## **Appendix 1: Draft Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes**

- Work with Essex County Council and other partners to implement the emerging Colchester Transport Strategy which includes strategies to develop measures to reduce traffic in the town centre and improve air quality.
- 5. Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle**
  - Engage, educate and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.
  - Sustainably minimise the environmental impact of the whole system of waste generated and collected by the Borough.
  - Implement a switch to electric vehicles over an appropriate time for our waste collection service.
- 6. Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development**
  - Discover, nurture and enable the work led by communities that promotes adaptation, sustainability and environmental behaviour.
  - Work alongside communities to maintain clean, green neighbourhoods and urban spaces that we all look after and enjoy.
  - Enable partners to implement and improve workplace travel plans, creating a shift toward active travel and clean air.
- 7. Ensure sustainable planning and development**
  - Ensure sustainable transport is provided as part of major development and regeneration projects.
  - Develop and implement policies and guidance (i.e., Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents, Sustainable Planning Checklist, Essex Design Guide Climate Change Supplement) to secure multi-functional green spaces, flood prevention, carbon reduction and sustainable travel through the planning process.
  - Train planners in latest policies and guidance for effective review of planning applications to support our goal of zero carbon by 2030.
- 8. Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment**
  - Ensure internal strategies and policies are consistent with our climate emergency declaration and commitment for net zero carbon by 2030
  - Strengthen our assessment of climate and environmental impacts in all decision making and reporting, including project development processes.
  - Develop and roll out a climate change learning and development programme for staff and members to improve understanding of carbon and wider environmental context.

As a Local Authority, we have a responsibility to both evolve and act on our strategy. We updated our Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) to include actions under each of the strategic themes as well as additional actions. This CEAP 2021-2023 will be reviewed bi-annually showing progress across the themes. This progress is possible by working in partnership with community groups, business, Essex County Council and other government agencies.

Our top ten highlights of our joint achievements in 2019-2020 include:

## Appendix 1: Draft Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes

1. Successfully completed trialling boreholes and testing the innovative Northern Gateway District Heat Network (the biggest of its kind in the UK); before starting to construct the infrastructure to connect to the future development and provide renewable heat to new businesses and homes.
2. Agreed an additional £4.5m of supplementary works to the Council's affordable housing stock that will add to the existing "retrofitting" of:
  - 2,628 homes with solar panels (44% of stock) providing renewable energy to heat homes.
  - 185 air source heat pumps that replaced gas boilers, removing 400-600 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> according to the [Energy Saving Trust's Guide to air source heat pumps](#).
  - 1 ground source heat pump and 2 gas absorption heat pumps across 3 of our sheltered housing buildings, resulting in a decrease of carbon emissions.
3. Started construction of our "New Council Housebuilding Programme" in which all properties are being built to the principles of the "Future Homes 2025" Standards, ahead of others.
4. Established:
  - An environmental checklist for staff and developers to consider the environmental impacts of new projects and how they can reduce them; and
  - The [Householders Guide to Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Improvements](#) to help residents to reduce their impact on the environment and make their homes more comfortable
5. Implemented the start of a strategy to swap petrol/diesel fuelled vehicles for those powered by renewable energy with appropriate timeframes for reducing emissions by at least 90% by 2030.
6. Introduced a "No Idling" policy and campaign to ensure that Council and other vehicles turn off their engines when stationary, helping to improve air quality and health for staff and Colchester residents.
7. Adopted the Colchester Cycling Action Plan as a special planning document to help developers provide or contribute towards cycling infrastructure and promotion.
8. Evolved the first *Fixing the Link* initiative, to better link the train station to town centre to encourage arriving by train and walking into the town centre and promote active travel. This is the first to be developed in the east of England.
9. Used smart technologies, such as Dynamics 365, to unify our data. For recycling tracking, this shows heatmaps of problem spots for collections where residents need more encouragement to recycle. The insights help us improve recycling services and reduce the amount of waste for the landfill.
10. Created a new [Environment and Sustainability Panel](#) for Members to receive updates on work related to sustainability and carbon reduction and provide guidance to Council operations.

Are you passionate about protecting the environment while also promoting low carbon growth? There are several opportunities to get involved in the Council's work. If you want to learn more go to: <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/>

## **Appendix 1: Draft Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy Themes**

Have any questions about this area of our work? Do you have feedback on our Climate Challenge and Sustainability Themes? Contact Us:

[climate.change@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:climate.change@colchester.gov.uk)

DRAFT

## **Climate Emergency Action Plan 2021-23 (DRAFT)**

[Theme 1 – Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings & fleet to help achieve a net zero Carbon footprint for Council Services by 2030](#)

[Theme 2 – Produce renewable energy](#)

[Theme 3 – Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment](#)

[Theme 4 – Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester](#)

[Theme 5 – Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle](#)

[Theme 6 – Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development](#)

[Theme 7 – Ensure sustainable planning and development](#)

[Theme 8 – Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment](#)

<b>1. Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings and fleet to achieve a net zero carbon footprint for the Council by 2030</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
1.1 Development of a new Carbon Management Plan (CMP) based on insight and evidence gathered from a detailed pathway modelling of the current CBC footprint	Work with the Carbon Trust to develop a new CMP for 2022-2027	April 21/2022
1.2 Review CMP 2016-2020 to address any outstanding projects and see if these can be carried out	Review projects to identify technical feasibility and budget available	Jan 21/Dec 21
1.3 Continue to report on our emissions annually, and look to collect more refined data on our indirect emissions	Explore ways of accessing data from contractors on their emissions in relation to procured goods and services  Review other data sources and report annually.	Reported annually
1.4 Take steps to ensure the council's future electricity supply is provided by 100% renewably generated sources	Source Council's electricity from a supplier providing 100% renewable electricity	Dec 20/Apr 21
1.5 Review our estate and assets to investigate means of increasing energy efficiency of heating, lighting and cooling systems	New Estate Asset Strategy to include decarbonisation plan	April 21
1.6 Decarbonisation of Rowan House, the Council's main office	Replacement of existing heating and ventilation systems with heat pump. Also adding in extra roof insulation and LED lighting	Jan 21/Dec 21
	Installation of 20 electric vehicle (EV) charge points at Rowan House	Jan 21 onwards
1.7 Redevelopment of Shrub End Depot to decarbonise the site, improve management of recyclables and help support the transition of the fleet to electric vehicles (EVs)	Installation of EV charge points.	Nov 20/Feb 22
	Improvements to building heating and lighting systems	
	Adding in storage facility into depot to store recyclables	

<b>1. Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings and fleet to achieve a net zero carbon footprint for the Council by 2030</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
1.8 Creation of an Asset (Housing) Management Strategy that will establish plans for reducing emissions from the housing stock	Reviewing plans for upgrading assets and setting an appropriate target for reducing emissions from the housing stock	Jan 21/Sept 21
1.9 Increasing the energy performance of 100 Homes to reduce energy use and tackle fuel poverty	100 Homes Project – Purchasing 100 former Council homes and increasing their energy performance certificate (EPC) rating to an average of B.	Sept 20/Mar 22
1.10 Decarbonising the housing stock through the Housing Improvement Programme (HIP)	<p>Works to upgrade most energy inefficient properties to an EPC of C or above.</p> <p>Replacement of heating system at Mary Frank House with an air source heat pump (ASHP)</p> <p>Installation of monitoring equipment in accordance with Heating regulations</p> <p>Boiler replacement works – Replacement of outdated and inefficient boilers</p>	April 21/March 22
1.11 Redevelopment of Elfreda House to reduce carbon emissions	Redevelopment of Elfreda House to Future Homes 2025 standard	2021/2023
1.12 Take a phased approach to the renewal of the fleet to meet our target of having a fully electric vehicle fleet by 2030	<p>Publishing a first draft of a fleet transition programme towards 2030</p> <p>In 2021, 15 EVs and 4 hybrid vehicles will be purchased to replace existing small vehicles fueled by diesel</p>	<p>Sept 20/Dec 20</p> <p>2021</p>

<b>1. Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings and fleet to achieve a net zero carbon footprint for the Council by 2030</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
1.13 Creation of an EV charging Strategy to guide provision of EV charging at housing developments and in Council owned car parks	Production of an initial strategy to set out guidance for provision of EVCPs	Mar 21/Aug 21
1.14 Explore design principles for a new Crematorium site to ensure this is designed to the highest environmental standards	Research of standards and technologies available to decarbonise Crematoria.	2021
1.15 Redevelop Rugby Club site so this is built to highest environmental standards	Include sustainability and energy approaches into design brief.	2021

<b>2. Produce Renewable Energy</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
2.1 Continued development of Northern Gateway Heat Network site to generate low carbon energy	Construction of the main energy centre and beginning to build connections to residential, commercial, health and leisure sites.	Q2 2021/Connections up until 2024
2.2 Explore the creation of a microgrid to link up new sites of solar PV generation to Council assets to decarbonise our energy use	Conduct feasibility study	2021



<b>3. Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
3.1 Commission a natural capital review for sustainability projects/carbon offsetting investigation	Consultant will conduct review of natural asset register and discuss options with officers	July 2021
3.2 Plant 200,000 trees by 2024 as part of the Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project to benefit biodiversity and for capturing carbon emissions.	<p>Volunteer planting days in Autumn for residents to help with planting around 20,000 trees on 11 different Council sites.</p> <p>Work with relevant experts to ensure planting sites are chosen appropriately to ensure tree planting will benefit biodiversity. Environmental Impact Assessments will be undertaken on new tree planting sites.</p> <p>Establishment of tree seed nursery at Highwoods Country Park so trees can be grown from seed for future use in the project.</p>	<p>Autumn 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
3.3 Review the Council's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, exploring opportunities to tackle climate change and to safeguard and enhance existing habitats and species.	Data and consultation will be used to inform the strategy	April 2021

<b>3. Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
3.4 Improve the ecological and amenity value of the riverside lake and island near the Castle Park to enhance biodiversity, capture carbon and allow better access to the site.	Plans in early development and will be expanded on in future update of the action plan	TBC
3.5 Ceasing the use of glyphosate herbicides in Council operations through a phased approach as a way to manage weeds, and encouraging other stakeholders to do the same	Agreement reached to phase out glyphosate use for general maintenance by end of March 2021  Alternative ways of managing weeds without glyphosate will commence at the start of the growing season	Sept 2020/April 2021  April 2021
3.6 Trialing 'no mow' or reduced mow approaches to rewild Council green spaces and support biodiversity, particularly pollinators.	14 green spaces have been identified where areas of reduced frequency mowing will be implemented to allow for the growth of grasses and wildflowers, with rewilding approach developed through engagement with Town and Parish Councils  Engagement with local schools has led to pupils producing designs for signs explaining why the Council is changing its mowing regimes.	Summer 2021/Ongoing  Ongoing

<b>4. Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
4.1 Continue to support local organisations to encourage active travel through the Travel Plan Club	Work and support local organisations to encourage active travel and reduce reliance on private car for commuting through creating workplace travel plans	Jan 21/Dec 21 – Annual plan
4.2 Implement the Electric Cargo (eCargo) bike project to reduce emissions from travel and operations of the Councils and local organisations	<p>Using eCargo bikes within Council operations to reduce emissions from travel.</p> <p>Providing eCargo bikes to 10 organisations (project champions) to break down barriers to using eCargo bikes as a sustainable mode of travel for conducting deliveries and other operations.</p> <p>Loaning eCargo bikes out to local organisations to promote this mode of travel, in a ‘try before you buy’ approach.</p>	May 2020/May 2023
4.3 Improve air quality in the borough by promoting the adoption of no idling and encouraging cycling and walking for shorter journeys	<p>No idling behaviour change campaign led by the community.</p> <p>Behaviour change work with a resident community and 4 schools to support walking and cycling for short journeys, particularly through air quality management areas (AQMA's)</p> <p>Psychological signage encouraging no idling to be installed in East Street/ Brook Street and monitored for effectiveness.</p>	<p>June 2019-June 2021 for behaviour change campaigns</p> <p>August 2020 – August 2022 for signage project (15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021-4 July 2022 for experimental studies)</p>

<b>4. Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
4.4 Provide enabling policies and strategies to promote walking and cycling /sustainable travel in Colchester	Influence Colchester Cycling Delivery Strategy	2021
	Vehicle Parking Standards review	2021
	ECC's Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plans	2021
	Rail operators Integrated Transport Forum and liaison with Network Rail	Ongoing
	Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership	Ongoing
4.5 Promote walking and cycling routes in Colchester through improving signage and wayfinding	Introduce wayfinding signage along the University to Town Centre routes to encourage walking	2021
	Town to Port wayfinding improvements	2021
	Colchester Station to Hospital wayfinding	2021/22
4.6 Improve infrastructure along the route from North Station to Town Centre to encourage walking and cycling along this route.	Fixing the Link – Project to encourage those arriving at Colchester Station to walk the route to Town Centre through installing better wayfinding and public realm improvements.	2021/2022
4.7 Map and promote the use of the Colchester Orbital	Mapping a circular walking and cycling route around Colchester and ensuring routes are accessible for all.	Summer 2020/Ongoing
	Greening the Orbital and expand route	

<b>4. Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
4.8 Encourage the uptake of alternative sustainable travel methods for work and leisure purposes	<p>Taking part in electric scooter (e-scooter) trial</p> <p>Colchester Future Transport Strategy- working with ECC to reiew the consultation responses ready to finalise the Strategy, and promote schemes which will help implement the initiatives contained within the Strategy.</p> <p>Influence Rapid Transit system linking Garden Communities, park and ride/choose site with town centre, hospital and Colchester Station, route and provision.</p> <p>The Borough Council's Scrutiny Panel to review bus operations in Colchester and to consider how to increase use of this sustainable mode of travel.</p>	<p>Feb - Oct 2021</p> <p>Spring 2021</p> <p>2021/22</p> <p>Spring 2021</p>
4.9 Facilitate walking and cycling in Colchester by providing suitable infrastructure.	<p>Identifying funding for, and a site in, the Town Centre to create a secure cycle parking facility, and plan how this will be managed.</p> <p>Working with Essex County Council (ECC) to support the introduction of infrastructure such as segregated cycle lanes and school streets along key routes in and around Colchester Town Centre.</p> <p>Reviewing S106 funding to plan and work with others to install and improve a range of measures and infrastructure</p> <p>Wivenhoe Trail - identify funding for and implement improvements. Work with partners to agree future maintenance plan.</p>	<p>Dec 20/2021</p> <p>Jan 21/2022</p>

<b>4. Facilitate walking, cycling and sustainable transport around Colchester</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
	Stanway to Tollgate - identify funding and working with others to initiate improved links	
4.10 Bring an electric vehicle car club to Colchester	Identify funding to create a network of electric car club vehicles in Colchester to support sustainable travel and move away from private car ownership	Jan 21/Dec 21
4.11 Develop actions as part of the Positive Parking Strategy that will help to reduce congestion in the Town Centre and promote sustainability.	<p>Park Active – A project to encourage people to park in car parks on the outside of the town centre – This will help encourage walking and cycling into town and reduce congestion.</p> <p>Installing electric vehicle charge points in Council owned car parks</p> <p>Review the usage and requirements of Council car parks to determine the quantity of parking required, where this should be located and parking tariffs.</p> <p>Promotion of the Park and Ride service in Colchester.</p>	2021/22

<b>5. Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
5.1 Improve systems for collecting household waste, recycling, food and garden waste with a focus on waste minimization, increased recycling and composting	<p>Re-establishing textiles recycling collections</p> <p>Rolling out programme to encourage residents to separate cans and glass</p> <p>Improvements in data collection to track recycling collections and identifying where recycling rates can be improved</p> <p>Improving recycling equipment distribution to residents</p>	For all – April 2019 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
5.2 Develop trade waste collection service to offer further commercial recycling collections for businesses	Establish profitability of current operations and identify new recycling options for businesses	2021
5.3 Improving communication with Colchester residents to improve participation in recycling and waste minimization work	Establishment of Community Education and Engagement team to deliver this work.	April 2021

<b>5. Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
5.4 Work actively within communities to promote recycling, reuse, upcycling and repairing opportunities	Introduction of new Community Engagement and Education Team within Neighbourhood Services, working collaboratively with the Community Engagement Team.	April 2021/ongoing
5.5. Explore trialing smart waste technology to improve efficiency of waste collections in the Borough	Support the introduction of smart waste technology within new developments  Explore funding opportunities for the introduction of 'smart' waste bins	Autumn 2021



<b>6. Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
6.1 Support community organisations in the borough to help deliver environmental benefits within communities	<p>Work with community organisations/individuals to highlight their work and help spread the message of their work and provide expertise where required.</p> <p>Support the Dedham Value Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Stour Valley project team to product a 5 year Management Plan to conserve and enhance natural beauty.</p>	Ongoing
6.2 Provide opportunities for residents to participate in Council decision making and action on environmental issues	<p>Provision of the 'have your say' option at the Environmental and Sustainability Panel</p> <p>Provision of opportunities for residents to volunteer on Council environmental projects such as tree planting and monitoring air quality</p>	Sept 20 - Ongoing
6.3 Support the Colchester Business Centre (Colbea) to develop policies and practices within their corporate strategy to include corporate environmental responsibility	Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) in Colbea's lease agreement for the North Colchester Business Incubation Centre	March 2021 – Ongoing
6.4 Collaborate with the University of Essex to ensure actions we develop are informed by academic expertise (where appropriate)	<p>Take part in a university 'challenge lab' to co-develop with researchers, solutions to a particular climate challenge in Colchester</p> <p>Build rapport with researchers on existing Council projects, and understand the expertise available at the University</p>	<p>Sept 21/2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<b>6. Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
6.5 Work with anchor/key organisations in the borough to promote the uptake of sustainable actions across the borough and improve engagement on taking action on climate change.	Creation of a network of key organisations in Colchester to share learning on good practice and provide a platform for ideas developed to be informed by detailed resident engagement.	Apr 21/Ongoing
6.6 Increase engagement with schools in Colchester to promote and support awareness raising and behaviour change around environmental issues	Pilot a project with two primary schools in Colchester to understand the challenges with embedding environmental content into lessons and school life, and use this to inform approaches to help schools reduce their environmental impact	Jan 21/Aug 21
6.7 Develop a Climate Emergency communications and engagement plan which will support the delivery of, and engagement around, the Council's Action Plan.	Survey with residents to help understand how residents prefer hearing about work to tackle the climate emergency. Use this insight to inform content put out on our communication channels.	April 21/July 21
6.8 Collaborate with Essex County Council (ECC) and other local authorities in Essex and those in the UK to share learnings around work on the climate emergency	<p>Take part in Carbon Reduction Across Essex (CORE) meetings with other Essex local authorities.</p> <p>Where appropriate, join grant funding bids with ECC to increase access to funding for environmental projects</p> <p>Participate in national local authority forums such as the Collective for Climate Action to share learning and ask questions about work on the climate emergency.</p>	Ongoing

6. Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development		
Action	How will action be achieved?	Date Started/ Finish
6.9 Communicate with Town and Parish Councils to understand how we can work together to tackle the climate emergency and ensure this reflects the wishes of communities we serve	<p>Sharing resources with Town and Parish Councils that will help them reduce their environmental impact.</p> <p>Provide opportunities to collaborate on Council projects e.g. eCargo bikes, Rewilding plans.</p>	Ongoing

7. Ensure sustainable planning and development		
Action	How will action be achieved?	Date Started/ Finish
7.1 Create a Planning Sustainability Checklist so decision makers can understand the sustainability of proposals	Planning Sustainability Checklist is drafted, brought to Cabinet and then following consultation the Checklist will become a local validation requirement	Jan 21/Summer 2021
7.2 Create a new Development Plan document on sustainability and carbon reduction	Creation of a new Development Plan document to provide guidance and encouragement to developers to consider carbon reduction and sustainable design within new buildings	Summer 2021

<b>7. Ensure sustainable planning and development</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
7.3 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.	Provision of leaflet detailing walking and cycling routes, as well as public transport options in the locality of the development	2021
7.4 Consideration given to car free developments and other approaches to reducing car parking provision and encouraging car free lifestyles	Adoption of new ECC parking standards, which include car free developments	2021
7.5 Explore opportunities for biodiversity net gain	Requirement for biodiversity net gain included in local plan	2021

<b>8. Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
8.1 Development of the Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy to provide oversight for the Council's work on the climate emergency	<p>Review previous Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Climate Emergency Action Plan and Strategic Plan 2020-2023.</p> <p>Align goals of all documents into strategy that will be the overarching document guiding the design of the Climate Emergency Action Plan</p>	Jan 21/July 21

<b>8. Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
8.2 Ensuring internal strategies and policies are consistent with the climate change emergency	Review of internal core strategies with at least 3 updated to show consideration of the climate emergency, including the Asset (Housing) Management Strategy	Feb 21/2022
8.3 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	Set up monitoring and reporting template for Climate Emergency Action Plan which will align with reporting to Environment and Sustainability Panel	Jan 21/Mar 21
8.4 Develop a learning and development programme for staff on climate change and environmental issues to help increase awareness and promote behaviour change	<p>Utilise training for planning officers provided by ECC to help planners understand how they can mitigate environmental impacts within their role</p> <p>Use resources produced by the Carbon Literacy Project to deliver sessions to staff to increase awareness of climate change, and the action we can take within our roles to reduce our environmental impact.</p>	<p>June 2021/Dec 2021</p> <p>May 2021/Ongoing</p>
8.5 Embed consideration of the environment and climate change within internal communications to promote awareness and behaviour change of environmental issues and the climate challenge	<p>Develop an internal comms strategy to plan out how to inform staff of environmental work and projects.</p> <p>Run a pilot behaviour change challenge to encourage staff to adopt more environmentally friendly behaviours</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Mar 21/Apr 21</p>

<b>8. Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>How will action be achieved?</b>	<b>Date Started/ Finish</b>
8.6 Strengthen assessment of environmental impacts in all levels of Council decision making	<p>Develop a suitable resource to help staff consider the environmental impacts throughout their project, drawing on learning from the environmental checklist originally developed</p> <p>Creation of KPIs linked to the Climate to monitor how Council operations and projects are becoming more environmentally friendly</p>	Mar 21/Sept 21
8.7 Improve our procurement processes so that environmental considerations are made within sourcing goods, service and works	<p>Develop guidance to help staff include more environmental considerations within procurement specifications.</p> <p>Review use of Social Value Portal and its ability to help the Council work with greener contractors and recognise the positive environmental benefits delivered through specific contracts</p>	<p>Summer 21</p> <p>Autumn 21</p>
8.8 Review the Council's Travel Plan to ensure this continues to promote sustainable travel to staff	Review the Council's Travel Plan in light of changes to staff working location patterns to ensure this Plan facilitates sustainable travel to staff going forward	Jan 21/Dec 21
8.9 Reduce the environmental impacts of events organised by Colchester Events Company	<p>Identify some sustainability improvements that could be made to events, and pilot at an upcoming event</p> <p>Review the Events Policy and associated documents to see how events could be made more sustainable in the long term.</p>	<p>Feb 21/Aug 21</p> <p>2021/2022</p>

11 March 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Ben Plummer ☎ 508965
Title	Government emergency authorisation of use of neonicotinoid based pesticides		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report was requested by Councillor Cory at the previous Environment and Sustainability Panel.
- 1.2 This report presents information on the Government's decision to grant emergency authorisation for the use of thiamethoxam, a neonicotinoid based insecticide, for treating beet yellows virus in 2021. The UK Government previously banned the use of this insecticide in 2018.

## 2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 There is no recommended decision. This report presents information to inform a discussion at the Environment and Sustainability Panel.

## 3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The report is to be used to inform discussion on this issue.

## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not applicable.

## 5. Background Information

- 5.1 On 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021, the Government released a statement detailing the reason for granting emergency authorisation of thiamethoxam, a neonicotinoid-based pesticide, the use of which had previously been banned along with two other neonicotinoid based pesticides in 2018 in the UK. The pesticide is to be authorised for use on sugar beet seed in 2021, to seek to deal with the potential danger posed from beet yellows virus spread by aphids, that has caused a significant reduction in yields of sugar beet in 2020. The [National Farmer's Union](#) argue that this action needs to be taken to avoid negatively impacting the farming businesses of British sugar beet growers.
- 5.2 The Government have detailed that use of the pesticide will be used in a controlled manner, applied in an approach so that is targeted to the sugar beet seed, to restrict spreading to the soil. It is suggested that a virus forecasting model will also be used to inform whether treatment of the seeds will be required. This will involve setting a threshold for virus infection for where negative economic impacts would not be produced, meaning if the threshold is met, the seed will not be treated with the pesticide.
- 5.3 As a non-flowering crop, it was assessed that risk to bees from applying the pesticide would be acceptable. Also, the potential for the insecticide to enter the soil and thus be present in following years of cultivation was recognised, and thus measures to mitigate this by excluding planting of flowering crops in subsequent cultivations is proposed. Following these steps detailed in 5.2 and 5.3, the Government believes will make application of the pesticide safe. These points are summarised in the [Government statement](#).
- 5.4 Neonicotinoid based pesticides are currently banned in the European Union, and the UK Government showed support for these restrictions in 2018.
- 5.5 [Academic research](#) published in *Science* has shown that the neonicotinoid based pesticides pose a threat to bee populations through affecting their nervous systems which can result in paralysis and death of bees. Bees are key within the agriculture sector, as well as the natural environment for pollinating crops, trees and flowers which is important for supporting food production around the world, food chains in ecosystems and providing habitats for wildlife.

## 6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

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

## 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.

## 8. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 This report contains reference to use of an insecticide that could potentially harm bee populations, affecting the wider ecosystem in the UK.

## Appendices

Appendix A – [Government statement about the emergency authorisation of thiamethoxam](#).



**Appendix B – Letter from Councillor Cory to local MPs, opposing the emergency authorisation of the thiamethoxam.**





**Colchester Borough Council**  
Rowan House, 33 Sheepen Road,  
Colchester, CO3 3WG

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Contact	<b>Cllr Mark Cory</b>
Email	<b><a href="mailto:mark.cory@colchester.gov.uk">mark.cory@colchester.gov.uk</a></b>
Date	<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2021</b>

Dear Priti,

### **The use of anti bee pesticides**

I believe we must stand together to protect our bees, other pollinators and ultimately, the food chain.

The decision by your government colleagues to reverse the ban on use of pesticides containing neonicotinoid thiamethoxam is not only a direct threat to our already endangered bee population, but it goes against the principle stance put forward in 2018 by then Environment Secretary, Michael Gove. He said: "The weight of evidence now shows the risks neonicotinoids pose to our environment, particularly to the bees and other pollinators which play such a key part in our £100bn food industry, is greater than previously understood ... We cannot afford to put our pollinator populations at risk."

Importantly, he added this key promise: "Unless the evidence base changes again, the government will keep these restrictions in place after we have left the EU."

The evidence has not changed. The same risk, which "we cannot afford", still remains. So, I hope that you can join me in lobbying to not allow this ecological disaster to occur.

We all learnt the basic science at school, outlining how important pollinators are to our plants and crops, and how we completely rely on insects for our food chain to survive. The future of our ecosystem depends on it, and harming the bee population is simply short-sighted. The UK bee population has declined by a third over the last decade, yet up to three-quarters of crop species are pollinated by bees.

This is a decision our bee population and our own ecosystem cannot afford. I ask you to make the sensible choice and call for this pesticide ban not to be lifted.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Mark Cory  
**Leader of the Council**



11 March 2021

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Assistant Director of Place and Client Services</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Ben Plummer and Maggie Ibrahim</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Climate Emergency Action Plan Update</b>		<b>☎ 508965</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	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 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

1.2 Progress includes:

- Confirmation of £528,250 of grant funding received for decarbonising Rowan House. Works include the installation of an air source heat pump, LED lighting, roof insulation, mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system and building management system which will produce an overall emission saving of 139.6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- Securing grant funding in consortium bid led by Essex County Council in Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme to upgrade the energy efficiency of homes in Colchester.
- Launch of the Council's 'Hero for Zero' behaviour change pilot to encourage staff to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours.
- Launch of resident survey to understand how residents currently hear (and would prefer to hear) about the Council's work on the climate emergency action plan.
- Production of '[A householder's guide to sustainability and energy efficiency improvements](#)', which gives information to advise householders on ways to increase the energy efficiency of their home.
- Beginning to support Colchester Business Centre (Colbea) to update their corporate strategy to include information on corporate environmental responsibility.
- Clean Air for Colchester featured in Clean Air Day 2020 insights and celebration [report](#)
- Progress made in management of Castle Park, including planting native trees, conducting litter picks, researching options for purchasing an electric gator vehicle and developing plans for managing the riverside lake and island near Castle Park.

## 2. Recommended Decision

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

## 3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 The report is for information only.

## 4. Alternative Options

4.1 Not applicable

## **5. Background Information**

### **Decarbonisation of Rowan House**

- 5.1 The Council has made a successful grant bid of £528,250 to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to increase the energy efficiency of and to decarbonise Rowan House. The technologies and measures being funded through the grant are:
- An air source heat pump to replace the current gas boiler – This will be powered by electricity, providing a source of low carbon heating to the building.
  - A mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) system – This system will recover heat from warm air within the building and use this to pre-heat cooler air entering the building. The system will thus provide a good source of ventilation to the building, preventing heat being lost from having to open windows to provide ventilation.
  - A building management system – This will help to monitor the temperature within the building, ensuring this is kept at suitable levels which will help to ensure the air source heat pump is used efficiently.
  - Extra roof insulation – This will help to further reduce heat loss from the building.
  - LED lighting – To replace existing external and internal lighting to increase energy efficiency.
- 5.2 These changes to the building are estimated to produce an overall emission saving of 139.6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- 5.3 Works to decarbonise Rowan House will occur as part of a wider project to refurbish and conduct basic repairs in the building. These changes are being made in line with a changing use of office space so that Council will occupy one level of the building and will allow space for staff collaboration alongside greater levels of working from home.

### **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme:**

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

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

### **Other updates**

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

## **6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

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

## **7. Strategic Plan References**

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

## **8. Consultation**

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

**9. Publicity Considerations**

9.1 There are no publicity considerations.

**10. Financial implications**

10.1 There are no financial implications.

**11. Community Safety Implications**

11.1 There are no community safety implications.

**12. Health and Safety Implications**

12.1 There are no health and safety implications.

**13. Risk Management Implications**

13.1 There are no risk management implications.

**14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

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



## Environment and Sustainability Panel

Item  
**11**

11 March 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. Panel Members are also asked to note that the proposed agenda item providing an update on the Town Deal has been moved to a future meeting of the Panel, and will be incorporated in a subsequent work programme.

### 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**

<b>Environment and Sustainability Panel</b>
<b>Meeting date / Agenda items -</b>
<b>Environment and Sustainability Panel - 17 September 2020</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Climate Emergency - One Year On</li><li>2. Greening Colchester</li></ol>
<b>Environment and Sustainability Panel – 29 October 2020</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Sustainability &amp; Community Engagement</li><li>2. Air Quality Project Update</li><li>3. Positive Parking Strategy</li><li>4. Safer, Greener, Healthier update</li></ol>
<b>Environment and Sustainability Panel - 17 December 2020</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Developing a Carbon Management for Colchester (Carbon Trust)</li><li>2. Decarbonising our Fleet (EST)</li></ol>

3. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update
Environment and Sustainability Panel - <b>28 January 2021</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainability in Planning</li> <li>2. Ecargo bike update</li> <li>3. Developing an Environmental Sustainability Strategy</li> <li>4. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update</li> </ol>
Environment and Sustainability Panel – <b>11 March 2021</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Woodland and Biodiversity Project Update</li> <li>2. Environmental Sustainability Strategy, to include Interim Action Plan for 2021</li> <li>3. The use of Neonicotinoid Pesticides</li> <li>4. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update</li> </ol>

