



## Environment and Sustainability Panel

Item  
**10**

6 December 2023

Report of	Head of Sustainability	Author	Ben Plummer
Title	Climate Emergency Action Plan Update		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report details key progress and updates from actions in the [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (CEAP), and other relevant updates since the last meeting on 21 September 2023.

1.2 Key highlights include:

- The Council has launched a [new webpage](#) that will detail how residents who are eligible for **energy efficiency grants** can apply for these.
- The Council is providing the opportunity for residents to **hire pay as you go electric and electric cargo bikes**. These are available to hire from the secure bike hub, with a current hire price of £3 for 2 hours, or £10 for the day.
- The Council has now published its **finalised Greenhouse Gas Report** for financial year 2022/23, with greenhouse gas emissions totalling 5547.28 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. This shows a small decrease of 2.6% in emissions compared with financial year 2021/22, and an overall 10.5% decrease in emissions since the 2018/19 financial year set as the Council's emissions baseline.
- The Council has made a bid for funding to round 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund to support **capital energy efficiency and decarbonisation improvements at Leisure World Colchester**. The bid included the request for funding to install LED lighting, solar PV, pool covers and more.
- The Council **received a score of 34% in the Council Climate Action Scorecards**, scoring above the district average of 29%. The scorecards are discussed in detail in an accompanying report at this meeting.
- The Council has **updated its invitation to tender (ITT) and bidder response documents** to include more information about the climate emergency within these documents, alongside asking suppliers for more information about their environmental credentials and ways they are mitigating the environmental impact of the contract they are delivering.
- The Council has introduced an **online learning course on environmental awareness** for staff to learn more about climate change and the ways they could lower their environmental impact. A member training course is also being put together for delivery in early 2024.
- Continued availability of [free adult cycle training](#) of varying levels from beginner to advanced level training, to improve cycling confidence and understanding of how to cycle safely.

**2. Recommended Decision**

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of the report and ask any questions they have about the updates provided or progress of any actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

**3. Reason for Recommended Decision**

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

**4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Not applicable.

## 5. Background Information

### Key updates

#### Energy Efficiency grants

5.1 The Council has created a [new webpage](#) detailing the different energy efficiency grants available to residents to help increase the energy efficiency of their homes. Several energy efficiency grant opportunities that residents might be eligible for are now advertised on here. The Council has been advertising the grants through a series of in-person pop-up events in different locations across Colchester and these have been advertised through local community groups and parish councils. Letters for the Home Upgrade Grant have also been sent to potentially eligible properties encouraging residents to apply.

#### Pay as you go ebike and eCargo bike hire opens

5.2 Residents can now hire a range of ebikes and eCargo bikes on a pay as you go basis from the secure bike hub in the city centre. Bikes are available to hire from a minimum current price of £3 for 2 hours, up to £10 for a full day hire. The Council is also working with the community where a group of residents are setting up a community bike hub for residents to use ebikes and eCargo bikes on a pay as you go basis from Old Heath Recreation Ground.

#### Greenhouse Gas Report published

5.3 The Council has published its Greenhouse Gas Report, detailing greenhouse gas emissions figures for financial year 2022/23. The total emissions recorded were 5547.28 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e, which reflects a reduction in 2.6% since financial year 2021/22 and a 10.5% reduction when compared to the baseline financial year of 2018/19. At the next Panel meeting, further actions the Council aims to take to reduce emissions across its estate will be presented. The Greenhouse Gas report is available to view on the [Council's website](#).

#### Swimming Pool Support Fund bid

5.4 The Council has made a bid into phase 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund administered by Sport England for funding to install energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures at Leisure World Colchester. Measures included in the application were for rooftop solar PV, LED lighting, water filtration system, pool covers, a new air handling unit with heat recovery and smart motors. The outcome of the bid will be determined by late 2023/early 2024.

#### Council Climate Action Scorecards

5.5 The Council has received its Council Climate Action Scorecard as part of the assessment completed of all local authorities in the UK. The Council scored 34% on the assessment, above the district Council average of 29%. A full review of this assessment is provided in an accompanying report on the agenda.

## **Procurement and Sustainability**

- 5.6 The Council has made alterations to its invitation to tender and bidder response documents that companies must fill out when tendering for a contract opportunity. Information has been added about the Council's climate emergency declaration and the importance of this in regard to companies we want to work with. An additional question asking about the company's environmental impact and how it will mitigate the environmental impact of the contract it is delivering has also been included. Analysis of responses will take place in the new year to determine effectiveness and improvements will look to be made to make consideration of environmental impacts a stronger part of the procurement process.

## **Staff and Member training**

- 5.7 An online learning course has been developed for staff on environmental awareness. The course includes content on an introduction to climate change and its impacts, the co-benefits of tackling climate change, the role of local authorities (and specifically Colchester City Council) in responding to climate change, information on carbon footprints and how staff can take action in their personal and work lives to reduce their environmental impact. A carbon literacy course is also being developed for councillors which is being rolled out in early 2024.

## **Free Adult Cycle Training**

- 5.8 Essex County Council are continuing to provide access to [free adult cycle training](#), to improve cycling confidence. These 1:1 sessions range from the 'adult learn to ride' sessions for adults at a beginner riding level to 'adult advanced cycling' which gives users advice on road positioning, cycling on faster roads and at junctions and roundabouts. Completing the 'adult advance cycling' training is a condition of being able to use the pay as you go electric bike and electric cargo bikes in the secure bike hub, as well as for staff to use any of the Council's electric and electric cargo bikes. Find out [more information](#), including the [registration form for sessions here](#).

## **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 2023-2026 theme of 'Respond to the climate emergency'.

## **8. Consultation**

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

## **9. Publicity Considerations**

- 9.1 There are no specific publicity considerations.

## **10. Financial implications**

10.1 There are no direct financial implications of the updates provided in this report.

**11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications**

11.1 Providing more facilities, and access to training, to support cycling will help encourage more residents to cycle more which can benefit physical and mental health.

11.2 There are no anticipated impacts on community safety from the project updates presented in this report.

**12. Health and Safety Implications**

12.1 There are no health and safety implications from this report.

**13. Risk Management Implications**

13.1 There are no risk management implications from this update.

**14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

14.1 The project updates in this report all aim to reduce emissions and environmental impacts across the Council.