

24 June 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Ben Plummer and Maggie Ibrahim
Title	Climate Emergency Action Plan Update		☎ 508965
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report details key progress made with the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), and other relevant updates since the previous meeting on 11th March 2021.

1.2 Progress includes:

- Starting work with the Carbon Trust to update the Council's emissions projections until 2030 and to produce a brief on carbon offsetting approaches
- Launching the Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategic Themes that frame the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP)
- Successful rollout of eCargo bikes with champions and within CBC
- 1st stage of psychological signage study completed for Clean Air for Colchester project to encourage no idling in Colchester.
- Updated the Sustainability and Climate Action webpage to provide more information on Council emission and projects related to the climate emergency.
- Supporting the delivery of the Eco Festival to take place on 4th September 2021
- Audited the carried out and activities planned for "Go Green Schools" with a pilot school
- Prepared the presentation planned for 24th June to the Town and Parish Councils on the climate emergency and what they can do to tackle climate change.
- New Sustainability and Carbon Reduction assessment (and guidance) produced to help staff minimise the impact of their projects on the environment and emissions.

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, or ongoing work in these areas.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

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

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Not Applicable

5. Background Information

Carbon Trust

- 5.1 The Council is working with the Carbon Trust to update the Council's emissions projections up until 2030. This will build on two previous pieces of analysis undertaken by the Carbon Trust in 2018/19 to calculate the Council's baseline scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, and to carry out pathway modelling to predict the Council's emissions in 2030.
- 5.2 This current work will involve collecting data on several of the Council's high emitting assets, including Rowan House, fleet, sheltered housing and Leisure World. The Building Management Programme that outlines cyclical maintenance work on Council assets will also be reviewed for carbon reduction opportunities. Several projects planned for these assets will lead to significant emission reductions for the Council over the next few years and up to 2030. The Carbon Trust will help to map this out for the Council, in addition to proposing further emission reduction opportunities for these Council assets.
- 5.3 The analysis will also include a review of approaches for offsetting emissions. Offsetting could be used to bridge any "gap to target" that remains for the Council. The principles and approaches for offsetting will be discussed with Council officers and members in a workshop, with a brief on offsetting strategy advice. The analysis will include the Carbon Trust conducting a best practice review of offsetting.
- 5.4 This analysis will be used to inform the development of a Carbon Management Plan for 2022-2027, and give updated milestones for emission reduction in between now and 2030 that will allow us to track our progress.

Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy

- 5.5 The Council is currently developing a Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy, to replace the previous Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2015-2020. This will guide the Council's strategic response to the climate emergency and frames the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP).
- 5.6 So far, the Council has produced the '[Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategic Themes](#)'. This document details the 8 key themes of the Strategy, and also provides information on key highlights for the Council that have been made since the declaration of the climate emergency.
- 5.7 The Council will begin to add more detail to the strategy over the following months through holding meetings and workshops with Council officers to discuss the activities and objectives of each of the strategic themes. Part of this work will be facilitated by researchers from the University of Essex.

Other Updates

- 5.8 The Council has helped to facilitate a successful rollout of eCargo bikes to 10 champion organisations in Colchester, as well as within the Council. Up until the end of March 2021, it was recorded that 3,428 miles had been travelled using eCargo bikes. Before the eCargo bikes were made available all of these miles would have likely been carried out using cars or vans.

- 5.9 The 1st stage of the Council's study to investigate the impact of psychological signage on driver behaviours to reduce idling has been carried out as part of the Clean Air for Colchester project. Learnings from this 1st stage will help inform the next stage of the study with bigger, tailored signs to Colchester being planned to be introduced subject to planning permission.
- 5.10 The Council has updated its [Sustainability and Climate Action webpage](#), so it now provides more information on the Council's emissions and projects relevant to the climate emergency. Information is also provided on how residents can make a difference in reducing their own environmental impact, as well as signposting to the new [Eco Colchester website](#) which is a useful hub for residents looking to become more green.
- 5.11 "Eco Colchester", a community-led group helping individuals to reduce their environmental impact, are hosting the first 'Eco Festival' on 4th September 2021. The Council are helping to support this event, and officers from CBC will be in attendance at the event.
- 5.12 'Go Green Schools' is a project being carried out by the Council and University of Essex in collaboration. Funding for the project has been provided by the LGA and University College London, and focusses on understanding the challenges primary schools face in embedding a consideration of the environment into school practices. The project has so far conducted an audit of current practices at Unity Primary Academy in relation to food, travel, waste, energy, biodiversity and curriculum through surveys and interviews with key staff at the school. From June-September 2021, activities will be carried out at the school to help raise environmental awareness and tackle some of the challenges outlined in the audit.
- 5.13 A presentation to Town and Parish Councils will take place on the 24th June 2021. The presentation will include information on several of the Council's projects that tackle climate change that may be of relevance for the Towns and Parishes to be involved in. It will also make these councils aware of opportunities, resources and guidance to help them to tackle the climate emergency.
- 5.14 The Council has developed a Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Assessment. This has now been included as part of the project management process for staff to complete when creating new projects. The assessment (and associated guidance) will help staff identify the environmental impacts of their projects (both positive and negative) and provide resources and guidance to help them minimise any negative impacts. It will also aim to get projects reporting on the impact on emissions (where this can be calculated). This is part of the Council's aim to 'change the way we work' to support tackling climate change.
- 5.15 Additional project updates can be found [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 2020-2023 theme of 'Tackling the Climate Challenge and Sustainability'.

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 specific financial implications from this paper.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no specific community safety implications from this paper.

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 from this update.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The updates mentioned in this report are all relevant to tackling climate change and/or improving the environment.
- 14.2 Specific projects, such as the Colchester eCargo Bike Library will contribute to both a reduction in emissions related to travel, but also improvements in physical and mental wellbeing related to active travel.
- 14.3 Clean Air for Colchester focusses on improving air quality in the borough which can lead to better health outcomes. 1 in 20 deaths in Colchester are linked to pollution. It is known that small, easy changes to driving habits, such as switching off the engine while stationary, can cut pollution by up to 30% and this is a key focus of the project.
- 14.4 The 'Go Green Schools' project will help schools to reduce their environmental impact, but will also aim to boost pupil and staff wellbeing through involvement in outdoor learning and nature-based activities. According to [Teach Outdoors](#), outdoor based learning had a positive impact on pupil enjoyment of lessons and understanding of nature.