

Cabinet Report

Report of Head of Policy and Programmes

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Wards affected: All

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To: Cabinet

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Climate Action Plan

Recommendation

That Cabinet notes the development of and approves the attached Climate Action Plan for adoption and implementation.

Purpose of Report

1. To describe the development process and contents of the Climate Action Plan and to request that Cabinet approves the plan for adoption and implementation.

Corporate Objectives

2. This Plan is the key delivery vehicle for demonstrating our commitment to the Corporate Plan objective of Tackling the Climate Emergency and our target of becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030, with a 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2025.
3. Our Corporate Plan states that we will implement a Climate Emergency programme, focussed on what the council has control over, working towards our targets for our own buildings, vehicles, leisure and arts centres.

Background

1. The aim of the Plan is to set out actions and outputs to reach our desired outcome and target of being carbon neutral in our own operations whilst also communicating and engaging with our communities on the Climate Emergency. Improvements to our service provision and engagement with our communities will also have an impact on reducing district wide emissions.

2. It should be recognised that this Climate Action Plan is one piece of a much larger picture, consisting of national, regional and other local initiatives and plans. It is also often highlighted that there are many co-benefits of climate action, these can include, health and well-being, cleaner air, improved work-life balance, warmer and more energy efficient homes, new employment opportunities and reduced flooding.
3. The Climate Action Plan will be owned by, and delivered across, all council services. In preparing the plan, individual meetings were held with Heads of Service to develop and agree the actions. We also carried out a review of local and national best practice from other local authorities and publications from Friends of the Earth.
4. In order to demonstrate the council's commitment to openness and accountability progress on the actions and outputs in the plan will be reported quarterly in line with the corporate performance management framework and presented to CEAC. The council's greenhouse gas emissions will also be reported and published annually.
5. The plan has been designed to be a rolling one to allow for changing circumstances in an emergency situation. Therefore, the Climate Action Plan is a live document, where quarterly progress reporting may facilitate the reprioritisation or refocusing of actions by Cabinet where necessary.
6. CEAC members have been engaged during the development of the Plan, with early drafts being shared and have contributed individual feedback. CEAC members also participated in a drop-in session on 8 December 2021 to discuss the Climate Action Plan and the approach to its development. It has also been reviewed at the CEAC meeting on 10 January 2022.
7. It should also be noted that, The Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) is currently exploring a delivery plan for the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire report which will support our work to reduce district wide emissions. Many actions to tackle district wide emissions are best approached at a county level to achieve economies of scale and maximise the opportunities for communication. Officers and Members through the Environment Advisory Group (EAG) will continue to work through the FOP in tackling district wide emissions at scale, in tandem with the implementation of this Plan.

Climate and ecological impact implications

8. This Climate Action Plan sets out a detailed programme of work for reducing the council's carbon emissions across all service teams.

Financial Implications

9. The Climate Action Plan includes an introduction by the Head of Finance which sets the scene in terms of council financing and how climate is a priority balanced with other factors. Partnership working and external funding will be needed to deliver all actions in the Plan. Any projects undertaken as a result of this plan will go through the formal process in the Corporate Delivery Framework to ensure budgetary requirements are assessed at each level.

Legal Implications

10. Individual actions will have legal implications. These will be considered as projects are brought forward through the council's Corporate Delivery Framework.

Risks

11. There will be risks associated with individual actions and these will be considered as projects are brought forward through the council's Corporate Delivery Framework.

Conclusion

12. This report presents the council's Climate Action Plan and recommends it for approval, adoption and implementation.

Appendix

- Draft Climate Action Plan