

**Report To:** Cabinet

**Date of Meeting:** Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Report Title:** Climate change strategy and action plan refresh

**Report By:** Victoria Conheady, Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture

**Key Decision:** Y

**Classification:** Open

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### **Purpose of Report**

In February 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to 'make Hastings carbon neutral by 2030'. In March 2020 the Council published its initial response setting out a 2-year action plan and strategy. This report sets out the next phase of the climate change strategy and action plan, setting out a pathway and set of actions to work towards delivering net zero emissions.

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### **Recommendation(s)**

- 1. To approve the adoption of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan to work towards delivering net-zero carbon emissions for the borough by 2030**

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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. The report presents a refreshed draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan building upon the achievements of the 2020-2022 strategy and action plan.

## Introduction

1. The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is brought for approval and is attached at Appendix 1 and 2
2. The development of the action plan has been aligned with national legislation and policy including the diverse range of new policy announcements since 2020, including The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Better, and new evidence published by the Committee on Climate Change and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
3. The plan continues to respond to the analysis and evidence developed by [AECOM](#). In addition, the action plan has been written in collaboration with colleagues across the council to ensure that the actions are honest, feasible and realistic and reflect the work that the whole council is doing or planning to do to tackle climate change and prepare for the inevitable impacts of a changing climate.
4. Using the Citizen Lab digital platform, local peoples views and thoughts were also sought and these are reflected in the action plan . Some highlights of the comments we received from local people are : creating more wildlife habitats, planting trees, creating more wildflower areas to support pollinators, supporting local food growing, using recycled rain water in public toilets, support home insulation at scale, promote car free days and install more faster EV infrastructure.

The Council has an important role to play in the way it delivers, develops policy and programmes and attracts new funding to the town in delivering this strategy and action plan (and all other council strategies). However, with council budgets more constrained than ever, our capacity and resources to deliver the level of ambition becomes more challenging. This will result in the climate change team working with all service areas to ensure future climate resilience and reduction in emissions actions are planned for within existing resources.

## The Climate Change Strategy

5. As has been discussed in previous reports, in reality the target of net zero by 2030 is unlikely to be reached due to central governments targets of 2050 being out of alignment with our targets. This said, we will be working to achieve as much as possible to set the town in the direction of net zero in the coming years. The scale and pace of change needed and the level of investment required should not be underestimated.
6. The delivery of net zero can only be reached through collaboration, partnership working and action at local, regional, national and international levels of all governments and organisations.
7. The strategy and action plan presented here will build on the work that started in 2020 to meet the climate emergency vision.
8. We will continue to lobby government and regional stakeholders for the levels of investment needed to deliver the 2030 vision and work with partners and businesses, engage residents and local communities in taking action too.

## The Action Plan themes

9. In developing the refresh of this strategy and action plan we have undertaken a gap analysis of the current strategy themes, reviewed published documents and strategies, taken account of the work Climate Emergency UK has completed in reviewing all Council strategies and

feedback from the community. We have continued to use the modelling work that was developed by AECOM to inform the action plan.

10. This review has resulted in the addition of 4 new themes which are highlighted below along with the original strategic themes.

- Communication, partnership working and influencing others
- Governance and decision making
- Renewable energy and heat
- Homes and the built environment
- Sustainable and low carbon transport
- Biodiversity, green infrastructure and nature recovery

*new themes*

- Food
  - Waste and the circular economy
  - Water
  - Adaptation and resilience
11. The additional thematic areas reflect other sources of carbon emissions that arise from our collective consumption of goods and services, the need to plan for the impacts of a changing climate, and the important role food and water play in tackling climate change.

### **Highlights of proposed actions**

#### **Theme 1 Communication, Lobbying, partnership working and influencing others**

12. We will continue to promote and keep the councils climate change web pages up to date and create a brand to support our communication about climate change.
13. Work with local partners, government departments and regional organisations to encourage climate action within their own organisation and share best practice and knowledge, securing funding to support specific projects and actions.

#### **Theme 2 Governance and decision making**

14. Investigate climate change/eLearning opportunities that may be provided through the councils existing current learning portal to increase staff awareness of climate change
15. Work in partnership with neighbouring local authorities to update our sustainable procurement policy

#### **Theme 2 Renewable energy and heat**

16. Ensure the council purchase green electricity for its operational assets

17. continue to identify opportunities to install solar panels on council owned buildings

#### **Theme 4 Reducing energy demand from homes and the built environment**

18. Continue to work in partnership to develop a strategic approach to make all tenures of housing in the borough more energy efficient
19. Support the delivery of the Green construction, energy and vehicle training centre at East Sussex College (Ore Campus)

#### **Theme 5 Transport these measures will help to reduce emissions from transport**

20. Introduce a cycle to work scheme to encourage staff to commute to work and meetings by cycling
21. Work in partnership with ESCC to deliver the Local transport Plan (LTP4) and to deliver on-street Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

#### **Theme 6 Biodiversity, green infrastructure and nature recovery**

22. Develop an in house grounds maintenance service and new service specification to manage the towns parks and open spaces
23. Increase wildflower and pollinator planting where suitable providing habits for insects

#### **Theme 7 Food**

24. Support local food growing through Local Plan policies
25. Support local food growing initiatives by making suitable council owned land available

#### **Theme 8 Reducing emissions from waste and supporting a circular economy**

26. Compost parks and open space waste arisings, creating a mulch/ compost to reapply to our land
27. Support local reuse and repair schemes which divert waste for disposal, for example Freegle, repair cafes, library of things, Hastings Furniture Service, local charity shops etc

#### **Theme 9 Water**

28. Complete the new Local Plan and ensure that planning policies and guidance reflect strategic goals for water minimisation
29. Work with Southern Water to secure renewed afresh water and sewage infrastructure

#### **Theme 10 Adaptation and resilience**

30. Ensure the blue green infrastructure plans and biodiversity net gain build future climate resilience for the town through natural capital solutions and carbon offsetting

#### **Economic / financial implications**

31. Dedicated staff resources have been allocated to the climate emergency including a full time Tackling Climate Change Programme Manager and until May 2022 an Energy Development and Delivery Project Manager, who is now in a new role but allocates a % of time to climate

change work such as delivering the roof top solar programme. In addition, officer time was allocated from a project officer role for the last 6 months.

32. However, all service areas and officers from across the council have a role to play in delivering the climate emergency action plan, which is reflected in the revised document presented here.

## Legal

33. The Climate Change Act 2008 and 2050 Target Amendment Order 2019 is the basis for the UKs approach to tackling and responding to climate change and imposes obligations on Local Authorities to reduce emission of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2e</sub>) and that climate risks are prepared for.

## Options

34. Do nothing- note the content of the report and the Climate Change Strategy and action plan but take no further action. This option is likely to be hugely detrimental to the council's climate ambitions and ultimate success.
35. Agree and adopt the draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

## Conclusions

36. The Council has acted since the climate emergency was declared to understand the boroughs carbon emissions (current and future trends) and to gain a better understanding and identify the steps needed to take the council and the town on a pathway to net zero.
37. To achieve this ambition will require national policy interventions and funding as well as a change in all of our behaviours coupled with technology advances. Transitioning away from the use of fossil fuels to heat and light our homes and businesses, decarbonise transport and reduce our energy demand are major energy transitions that will take time and investment.

## Timetable of Next Steps

38. Please include a list of key actions and the scheduled dates for these:

Action	Key milestone	Due date (provisional)	Responsible
Present the draft climate change strategy and action plan to cabinet for approval	Cabinet approve and adopt the strategy	7 <sup>th</sup> November 2022	Managing Director Assistant Director of Regen & Culture Tackling Climate Change Programme Manager
Finalise design of the document and update HBC	Climate Change web pages updated	Jan 2023	Tackling Climate Change Programme Manager

climate change pages	A designed version of the strategy published		
Annual report to cabinet on the progress of the action plan	For noting and monitoring purposes	October 2023	Tackling Climate Change Programme Manager

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## Wards Affected

(All Wards);

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## Policy Implications

Reading Ease Score:

Have you used relevant project tools?: Y/N

**Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:**

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Y
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	N
Risk Management	Y
Environmental Issues & Climate Change	Y
Economic/Financial Implications	Y
Human Rights Act	N
Organisational Consequences	Y
Local People's Views	Y
Anti-Poverty	Y
Legal	Y

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## Additional Information

Appendix 1 Climate Change Strategy  
Appendix 2 Climate strategy action plan .

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## Officer to Contact

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