

Part A

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 2 March 2020
Report of: Energy & Renewal Surveyor
Title: Sustainability Strategy – Part 1 2020-2023

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The first phase of this Sustainability Strategy sets out a roadmap from 2020 to 2023 towards an ambition to become net climate neutral for emissions generated within the Borough that fall within the influence of the local authority.
- 1.2 Following consideration by Heads of Service and Portfolio Holders, the strategy was presented to the Sustainability Forum on 24 February 2020.

2.0 Risks

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (Treat, tolerate, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (the combination of severity and likelihood)
Lack of early progress and progression towards the target	Risk to achieving the final target (Leaving the target harder to achieve in future years).	Through the Project Board have adequate monitoring and determination of each project and its consequences towards the target. Ensure that there are adequate sign off, resource and regular reporting. Understanding what is required to achieve the target	Treat	3x2 = 6

		<p>through baseline and analysing the projects progressed.</p> <p>Ensure strategy developed and integrated in corporate policy and decision making.</p> <p>Ensure the strategy is regularly reviewed and adapted via a/the formal process proposed</p>		
Criticism of the ambition in relation to the project actions and their ability in meeting our climate emergency declaration	Bad publicity and lack of community support and engagement	<p>Develop and update regular communications (create a comms. plan)</p> <p>Regular review and monitoring</p> <p>Regular update and report of actions</p>	Treat	3x2 = 6
<p>Conflicting Opinion of Stakeholders</p> <p>And</p> <p>that cannot be aligned with other council priorities – at odds with other priorities (i.e. affordable houses to build vs long term climate impact)</p>	Inability to reach consensus on strategic aims	<p>New Structure with Head of Commercial taking responsibility to align with other council priorities</p> <p>Develop key stakeholder relationships</p>	Treat	3x3 = 9
Lack of adequate resource to	Will affect effective delivery	Project board Embedded	Treat	2x4 = 8

<p>deliver – A dependency on key individuals.</p> <p>Many of the projects require development with outcomes and resource unknown at present</p>		<p>Regular reporting through proposed structure</p>		
<p>Lack of finance to deliver the projects</p>	<p>Will affect effective delivery</p>	<p>Identification of business case to make decisions on opportunities and self-recycling for some schemes</p> <p>Identify future needs and set provision for an annual budget</p> <p>Adequate resource to lever in external funding</p>	<p>Treat</p>	<p>3x3 = 9</p>
<p>National policy changes funding and ambition (national ambition is currently low in comparison to WBC targets (2050 vs 2030 for WBC carbon neutrality)</p>	<p>Will affect effective delivery</p>	<p>Seek to influence where possible.</p> <p>Adapt strategy to reflect national picture and policy</p> <p>(this maybe positive or negative in relation climate change policies</p>	<p>Treat/ tolerate</p>	<p>2x2 = 4</p>
<p>Inability within the strategy proposals in establishing early enough baselines</p>	<p>Inability to be able to track progress for reporting and to determine realistic future targets and projects within</p>	<p>Investigate options to prioritise key influences (i.e. sites or projects that have the biggest impact to the target)</p>	<p>treat</p>	<p>3x3 = 9</p>

	the early part of the target term			
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3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Cabinet is asked to note and approve the strategy, action plan, initial 6 projects to focus on and the project structure to deliver the strategy.

3.2 That the Group Head of Commercial is to have delegated authority to progress the action plan and subsequent future parts of the strategy in conjunction with the portfolio holder.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact:

Neil Walker, Energy & Renewal Surveyor

Telephone extension: Extension 8149

Email: neil.walker@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Alan Gough, Group Head of Community & Environmental Services

4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 On 9th July 2019 Watford's elected councillors voted in favour of declaring a climate emergency and have pledged to do everything in their power to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030.

4.2 The motion approved the following actions:

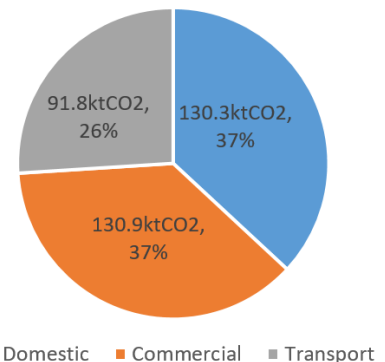
- 1) Join other Councils in recognising and declaring a climate emergency
- 2) Pledge to do everything within the Council's power to make the whole of Watford carbon neutral by 2030
- 3) Within this develop an ambitious sustainability strategy for reducing the Council's own emissions, with an objective that the Council becomes carbon neutral by 2030
- 4) Use all planning regulations and the Local Plan to cut carbon emissions and reduce the impact on the environment
- 5) Call on national government for more powers and resources to make this pledge possible, and ask the Elected Mayor to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to this effect
- 6) Continue to work with partners across the borough, county and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans
- 7) Take account of climate impacts within existing decision making processes
- 8) Report back to Council, via the newly established Sustainability Forum, on an action plan to address the climate emergency, and then every six months after this an update on progress being made. The proposed action plan to be on the agenda of the Sustainability Forum to be held 3rd October 2019

9) Dedicate enough staff and budget to achieve these aims, including the most appropriate training for members and officers to promote carbon neutral polices and to achieve these aims”

4.3 This strategy sets out the first part of our journey towards our target of achieving net zero CO2 emissions for the whole borough by 2030.

4.4 Our borough wide emissions are measured each year by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. There are three categories measured that are considered within the scope of the local authority influence. These are emissions from estimates of end-user carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions produced in three areas: Industrial & Commercial, Domestic and Transport.

4.5 [Emissions](#) for the most up to date figures in 2017 totalled 353kt CO₂, split between those emitted by domestic, responsible for 37%; by commercial, 37% and by transport, 26%.



4.6 *Chart depicting emissions breakdown in the borough that are deemed within the influence of Watford Borough Council (ktCO₂)*

4.7 In response to the climate emergency declaration this strategy sets out the initial projects and proposals to 2023 that work towards net borough wide carbon neutrality by 2030.

4.8 During 2020 to 2023 further work will be completed to publish the next part of the strategy that will work towards this goal.

➤ **Strategy Objectives**

4.9 Set the base line for our current borough wide emissions

4.10 Collate existing and currently proposed projects that will work towards our target

4.11 Set new and ambitious projects that will work towards our target within the six key themes of the strategy:

- Leading By Example
- Reducing Energy Use and Emissions
- Improving Transport & Air Quality
- Reducing Waste
- Nature Restoration
- People Power

4.12 Continue to evolve and adapt our current phase of the strategy and develop further phases that work towards achieving our target through to 2030.

➤ **Strategy Definition**

4.13 **In Scope**

- Setting our baseline for net emissions using annual published data for emissions that fall within the influence of the Local Authority published by the [Department for Business Energy & Industrial strategy](#) (BEIS).
- Including emissions that are from our own LA operations.

4.14 **Out of Scope**

- Emissions that fall outside of the scope of Local Authorities have been excluded in our target baseline. These are emissions that Local Authorities doesn't have direct influence over. These are:
 - Motorways – all emissions from the “Transport (motorways)” sector have been removed.
- EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) sites – these emissions have been removed from the “Large industrial installations” sector, with the exception of energy suppliers (e.g. power stations), whose emissions are indirectly included via the end-user estimates for electricity use. Note that not all the emissions from the “Large industrial installations” sector are produced by EU ETS installations, hence the fact that there are emissions remaining in this sector in the subset.
- Diesel railways – all emissions from the “Diesel Railways” sector have been excluded;
- Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry – all emissions belonging to the “LULUCF Net emissions” sector have been excluded.

Initial Focus

4.15

Our initial approach will be to focus on 6 projects covering every theme of the strategy, whilst mobilising our ability to deliver and develop the remaining action plan.

Theme	Project	Reason
Leading By Example	Develop a sustainability eLearning module to be completed by all staff during induction and then on an annual basis as part of the yearly Performance Review process.	To ensure all staff are engaged and actively helping towards our target working towards sustainability being embedded across all of the organisation
People Power	Encourage and support community engagement	A key part of our strategy depends upon residents taking their own actions to reduce their carbon footprint and support the council to deliver our goals. Our actions will be influenced by our community. We plan to survey residents and partners asking for their opinions
Reducing Energy Use	Analyse and report on our annual corporate greenhouse gas emissions	To be able to measure our progress we will need to establish an

and Emissions	and progress towards our targets via the website and the Council's annual Performance Report. Look to automate the process through BMS systems and a managed analysis solution	accurate baseline. This will also help us identify priority areas that have the biggest effect on emission reduction
Improving Transport & Air Quality	Participate and develop the HCC Sustainable Transport town application as part of a wider ranging strategy to cover low carbon transportation in the borough;	Transport is responsible for around ¼ of our target emissions. We wish to bring together the many transport related projects being progressed and proposed into one comprehensive strategy that works towards our target
Reducing Waste	Work towards becoming a single-use Plastic Free Council. This will involve auditing our use of single use plastics and replacing them wherever possible with more sustainable alternatives.	We want to set a good example and be responsible by considering wider aspects of sustainability within our strategies and not just those that we are measuring against through delivering our net zero emission target.
Nature Restoration	Consider and incorporate initiatives for improving the wildlife value of all Council owned new buildings or when doing external works to existing buildings.	Similar to reducing waste increasing biodiversity in the borough is part of the sustainability agenda. It will also contribute to air quality as well as the social health and wellbeing within the borough

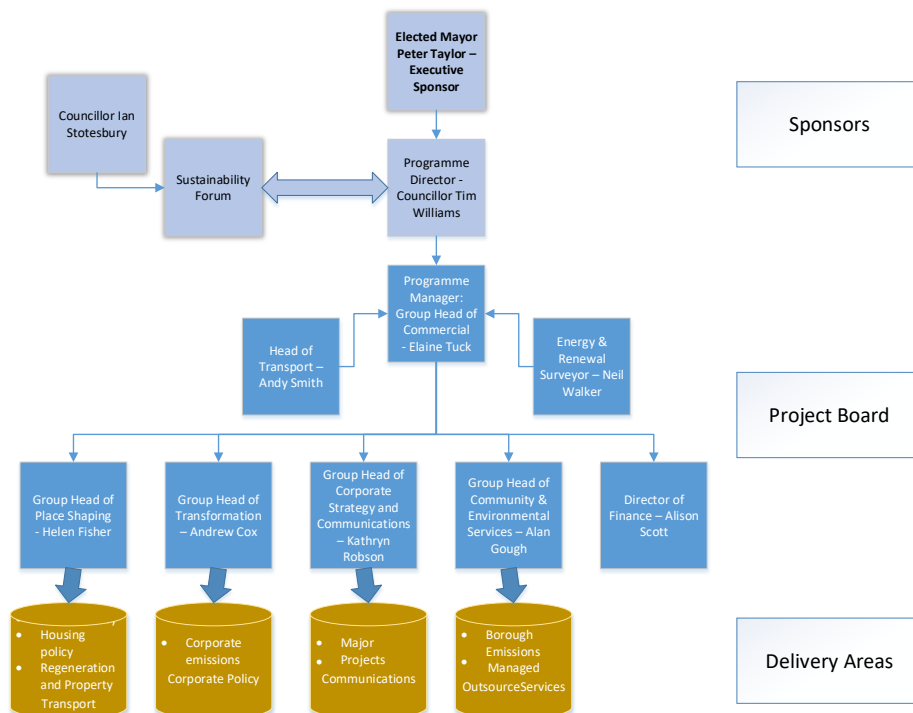
Funding

- 4.16 Various projects within the strategy are already funded within the councils existing and agreed spending plans.
- 4.17 Some projects will be defined through feasibility and investigation, whereby budgets will then be considered on a project by project basis through developed business cases.
- 4.18 Part of the remit of the project board will be to manage budget provision and make recommendation for projects, as well as to seek funding streams as appropriate.
- 4.19 Watford Borough Council has already procured external project capital in working towards project delivery. Examples include making use of central government funding and support:
- A feasibility study for district heating paid for by the government heat network delivery unit ([HNDU](#)), managed by the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.
 - Applying for Grant schemes for electric vehicle charging infrastructure ([OLEV](#)).
 - Making continued use of Energy Company Obligation funding ([ECO](#)) to support residents with energy efficiency improvements.

- The council will also consider making use of finance options that may be available (for example the [public works loan board](#)) and other beneficial schemes such as the [Carbon Trust interest free loans](#). These options will be considered as part of business cases.
- When considering business cases we will look at whole life cycle costings, for example higher initial capital cost of electric vehicle fleet and its infrastructure recouped by running cost savings made in the longer term or income that can be generated from solar panels to provide a return on investment.
- We will seek to make use of partnership working to share resource and opportunities (for example with other LA's) and consider options available to local authorities such as procurement and delivery routes provided by [Local Partnerships](#).
- We will seek to develop ring fenced funding streams for the sustainability agenda such as funds from considering carbon offsetting (section 106), business sponsorship and grant applications.

Stakeholders

4.20 The strategy is set to be delivered by the new Group Head for Commercial in a structure as follows:



4.21 Sustainability is currently being led by Alan Gough, Group Head of Community & Environmental Services

4.22 An action plan project includes the objective to seek community involvement. It is proposed consultation will take place to help develop and support the next part of the strategy. Part of this will be delivered through a comprehensive communications strategy, to include engagement of our residents and businesses within the borough.

- 4.23 Within the development of the next part of the strategy an assessment will be made and mapped on interdependencies and influences of other councils strategies.
- 4.24 An indicative assessment has been made for each project to determine:
- The estimation of each projects financial scale (from none to high).
- and
- An estimation of each project’s financial capital commitment (from ‘none’, such as development of a web page; through to the ‘need for a business case’. As projects are developed this will help to keep track of progress and resource required.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that all projects will require individual business cases and those that are not currently contained in existing budgets will require growth bids or external funding as part of the budget process.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that any funding for projects that that are not within the budget will need to be approved by council.

5.3 **Equalities**

- 5.3.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken during the development of the strategy for sign off.

5.4 **Staffing**

- 5.4.1 To be confirmed

Appendices

WBC Sustainability Strategy – Part 1
WBC Sustainability Action Plan