

## Part A

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** Monday, 13 March 2023

**Report author:** Senior Democratic Services Officer

**Title:** Sustainability Strategy Task Group - final report

### 1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides Cabinet with the final report and recommendations of the Sustainability Strategy Task Group. The full report is attached as Appendix 1.

1.2 The report was reviewed and approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 February 2023. The minutes of the item are attached as Appendix 2.

### 2.0 Risks

2.1 No direct risks to the council have been identified as a result of the task group's recommendations.

### 3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet approves the task group's recommendations:

1. To increase the target for the number of households who commit to making one change to live more sustainably to be more challenging; potentially to 50% of households.
2. Any off-setting required to meet the targets should be within Watford as much as possible.
3. The delivery plan for the Sustainability Strategy should be brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review and discussion.
4. The Sustainability Strategy's delivery plan and accompanying documentation should include a risk register.
5. The updates on progress against net zero carbon targets should be published with and without the impacts of aviation and shipping.

6. To strengthen the consideration of the sustainability impacts in council decision-making processes, including having regard to the targets in the strategy.
7. A communications plan and behavioural change campaign will be required to ensure residents and businesses engage with the targets and feel part of the solution.

**Further information:**

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**Report approved by: Carol Chen, Group Head of Democracy and Governance**

#### **4.0 Background and overview**

- 4.1 Watford Borough Council has declared a climate emergency and an ecological emergency. The Sustainability Strategy is a pivotal document for the council to ensure its response as an organisation and a place leader meets the urgency of the climate and ecological emergencies.
- 4.2 The council's existing Sustainability Strategy expires in March 2023. There has been a programme of work to renew this strategy with an updated and refocused document to come into force at that time. The development of the strategy included an engagement exercise with residents and groups in late 2022 which will help to shape the focus. The work of the task group is intended to feed into the development of the strategy alongside this programme of work.
- 4.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish the task group at its meeting on 22 June 2022 and confirmed the membership and chair in October 2022. The task group included the following members:
  - Councillor Mark Hofman (Chair)
  - Councillor Peter Jeffree
  - Councillor Rabi Martins
  - Councillor Sara-Jane Trebar
- 4.4 The task group met virtually on three occasions in November and December 2022. At the outset, it was agreed that the task group would focus on the following areas:
  - Targets contained in the strategy
  - Leading by example
  - People Power
  - Governance

4.5 During the course of the meetings, the task group received presentations from Watford Borough Council officers on the above areas and discussed the proposals contained within the draft strategy.

## 5.0 **Implications**

### 5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the recommendations arising from the work of the task group do not result in any direct financial implications. Where there are budgetary requirements arising from the delivery of the objectives in the Sustainability Strategy, these will be subject to approval through the Council's budget setting framework.

### 5.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

### 5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 There are no specific implications in this report.

### 5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications in this report.

### 5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications in this report.

### 5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 There are no community safety implications in this report.

### 5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 This is captured in the body of the report and appendix.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Sustainability Strategy Task Group report

Appendix 2 – Extract from minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## **Background papers**

There are no specific background papers for this report. All background information used during the task group's work is referenced in the final report.