

Environment Committee	
Meeting Date	March 18 2025
Report Title	Revised Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan Report
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To adopt the revised Action Plan

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 On 26 June 2019 the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency setting ourselves challenging targets to achieve net zero carbon for the council by 2025 and net zero carbon across the Borough by 2030.
- 1.2 In April 2020 the then Cabinet adopted an Action Plan to deliver the targets.
- 1.3 While we have made good progress and fulfilled many of the actions within the Plan it has become evident that we will not meet the ambitious targets we set ourselves and the Borough.
- 1.4 We have worked with the Carbon Trust to determine realistic targets and worked across the Council to draft the revised Action Plan in appendix 1.
- 1.5 It is proposed that our own targets dates for net zero are 2035 for scope 1 and scope 2 emissions and 2045 for scope 3 emissions. For the Borough we are proposing a target date of 2045 – still ahead of national and Kentwide targets.

2 Background

- 2.1 Since the Spring of 2019 councils across the UK declared climate emergencies of varying types and ambition. Swale had one of the most ambitious within Kent and nationally.
- 2.2 In common with most other local authorities, we are now revising our Action Plan due to it being clear that targets will not be met.
- 2.3 We worked with the Carbon Trust to revisit our carbon footprint, to determine progress and to establish what could realistically be achieved. We have worked this information into the Action Plan.

- 2.4 The Carbon Trust also provided the tools and training to better measure our progress against the Action Plan and as with the former Action Plan there will be an Annual Report in January each year to full Council.
- 2.5 We have reviewed the actions from the original Action Plan, retained some, added new ones and grouped them into seven themed areas
- Council Operations
 - Air Quality and Sustainable Transport
 - Low Carbon Business and Industry
 - Low Carbon Buildings and Energy Efficiency
 - Waste and Resource Consumption
 - Resilient Communities and Engagement
 - Biodiversity Net Gain and Ecology
- 2.6 The new themes reflect the need for us to engage more with our communities and businesses and to support their carbon saving activities.
- 2.7 The Action Plan will be a living document and will be updated to reflect other policies as they are adopted.
- 2.8 The full revised Action Plan can be found at Appendix I.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 To adopt the revised Action Plan.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 We could continue with the existing Action Plan but it is out of date for our own operations and unlikely to be fulfilled for the Borough. This is not recommended.
- 4.2 We could decide not to have an Action Plan – this would mean revoking the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration. There is no will to do this.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Action Plan has been worked on and consulted on across the Council. Each action owner and their teams has contributed to the drafting and development of their actions.
- 5.2 The Climate and Ecological Emergency Steering Group (which includes councillors and officers) has reviewed the Action Plan.
- 5.3 The Action Plan has been reviewed by IAM, SMT and at the Leader's Briefing.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Action Plan is cross cutting
Financial, Resource and Property	The actions are all met from within existing budgets. Grants from external sources will also be sought wherever possible.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The Action Plan supports improving our environment and contributes to the development of a more sustainable Council and Borough.
Health and Wellbeing	Improvements to the environment and sustainability have tangible health and wellbeing benefits.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

8 Background Papers

Motion to full council 26 June 2019

<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/g2156/Public%20reports%20pack%2026th-Jun-2019%2019.00%20Council.pdf?T=10>

Action Plan report to Cabinet April 2020