



Climate Emergency - Recommendation to Council: Approach to Climate Emergency Action Plan

Corporate Priority:	Corporate Strategy 2020 to 2024: Protect our climate and enhance our rural, natural environment.
Relevant Ward Member(s):	
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	Choose date
Exempt Information:	No
Key Decision:	No
Subject to call-in:	No Not key decision

1 Summary

- 1.1 Melton Borough Council set up the Climate Emergency Policy Development Group in July 2019 to develop an Action Plan for consideration by Cabinet and Council by April 2020.
- 1.2 An action plan structure and content has been agreed by the Group and Cabinet's consideration of its approach is sought.
- 1.3 The proposal is to develop the activity on a progressive stage process as follows:
 - Scoping work
 - Baseline analysis
 - Decarbonisation pathways
 - Target setting
 - Action Plans
 - Monitoring and evaluation

Further detail on the content and intention of these stages is provided in the report below.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That Cabinet:

Recommends to Council agreement of the approach set out in paragraph 6.1 and 6.2.

3 Reason for Recommendations

3.1 The approach proposed would set out the short, medium and long term approach to the challenging target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

3.2 The report also makes arrangements for governance and oversight of the activity going forward, which is considered to be of great importance as it will permeate most, if not all, parts of the organisation and in order to keep all members informed of progress, recognising the status of the subject as a Corporate Priority.

4 Options Considered

4.1 The approach proposed is considered to relate closely to the Councils' management, leadership and overall governance structures. Other models have been considered but are not considered to be sufficiently aligned.

5 Background

5.1 The Climate Emergency Policy Development Group, established in July 2019 has developed a series of suggested initiatives covering many aspects of the Council's activity and extending into how we influence others – both agencies and the wider public/economy e.g through planning powers. A meeting date has been set to invite stakeholders and experts to comment on our aspirations and invite them to share their knowledge and expertise.

5.2 The various initiatives considered have been prioritised using the principles of risk assessment to identify opportunities and their ease of implementation.

6 Main Considerations

6.1 Discussion took place at the meeting of the Policy Development Group in February regarding reporting back to Cabinet and then Council. A report structure & content has been agreed by the Group and Cabinet's consideration of this approach is sought.

- (i) Scoping (Policy Development Group) - Confirming what emissions will be covered by the programme – identification of 'scope 1 and 2 emissions' (as defined by the Carbon Trust) but also scope 3 emissions from purchased goods and services as well as indirect transport related emission sources and waste – this draws from the Group's deliberations so far and will be complemented by the stakeholder event.
- (ii) Undertake a Carbon baseline (External Contractor) - a comprehensive measurement of current carbon emissions on an organisational basis. Examples of approaches

from other locations and organisations have been sourced which demonstrate good practice and valuable insight.

- (iii) Identify ‘Decarbonisation pathways’ (MBC Officers & Policy Development Group)- use baseline data to set out options to decarbonise, considering what actions will be necessary and possible across the short, medium and long term including identification of budget implications. The Policy Development Group will review officer plans to decarbonise in each area (pathway) , to oversee judgements made on the approach suggested, the understanding of costs/risks of the different options, and to consider whether plans are sufficiently ambitious and realistic, and how they can be funded. This should include milestones and timeframes to achieve ambitions to help forge action plans.
- (iv) Target setting - Setting realistic targets & timetable for scope 1 and 2 emissions and, where required, separate targets for scope 3 emissions.
- (v) Develop Action Plans (MBC Service Areas and new Climate Change and Environmental Quality Board: an internal officer group, reporting to the Policy Development Group) - including roles and responsibilities and the necessary governance structures required to oversee the implementation of the plan.
- (vi) Monitoring and evaluation (Policy Development Group) – to receive progress reports from service areas via the Climate Change and Environmental Quality Board, and to report progress on the overarching action plan to Cabinet/Council on an annual basis; as part of wider reporting on the Corporate Strategy.

6.2 Members will be aware of the update on the deliberations of the Policy Development Group as reported to Council in December 2019. The proposed structure is intended to develop these and work them up, supplemented by any further initiatives identified, into a workable timetable of action in the short, medium and longer term, with associated targets for carbon reduction.

The measures themselves are likely to permeate most, if not all, of the Council’s business and activity and the Policy Development Group so far has identified measures within key themes. These themes are likely to form, or inform, the scope 1 and scope 2 areas referred to above as follows:

Estate/ MBC Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce plastic usage further e.g. small sachets for refreshments in meeting rooms, plastic bin liners that are not biodegradable, green cleaning products etc. • Council Housing: over time, housing improvements to include low carbon/carbon neutral materials, heating systems etc. Build in to maintenance programmes; • Consider use of estate and assets to provide exemplars of energy efficiency/carbon neutral development; • Investigate current status of investments, and the companies we use to see do we need to divest from carbon producing companies
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Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPD on Design to develop approaches to energy efficient development and alternative power sources; Consider scope for further 'green' planning policies such as water recycling; • Upon review of Local Plan and other planning documents, to include Carbon neutral policy requirements (as distinct from current 'aspirational' terms); • Encouragement of exemplar development; consider the extent to which other planning policies may be compromised to achieve this;
Regulatory,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review scope and effectiveness Policy in fuel use terms;
Transport and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of local food suppliers; • MBC vehicles to be energy efficient or electric; use of green fuels in Council owned vehicles. • Recharging points on MBC estate • Encourage electric Charging points around the Borough; Investigate the government scheme On-Street Residential Charge point Scheme (ORCS) • Investigate impact of increased volume of rural traffic on roads • Working with bus services to improve provision to rural areas to reduce need for personal transport.
Plastic and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to promote recycling and reduce plastic in the environment. • Reduce waste to landfill; reduce methane 'greenhouse gas' emissions.
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a monitoring system before MMDR finished, providing a baseline. • Encourage enhanced tree planting along route of MMDR
Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Disaster planning strategy for the impact of future flooding events; identification of vulnerable properties pro-active prior warning to residents based on weather warning and flood alerts; publishing of contact information for assistance; further recruitment of flood wardens; additional localised sand bag provision (as per Bottesford). • Campaign for better flood defences and preventative works.
Grounds fencing & benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider use of recycled plastics, which last longer than timber. • Use of peat free products and review of the use of pesticide and chemical treatment. Scope for leaving areas of grass uncut as meadowland. • Battery powered equipment , a commercial level ride on mower and wood chipper • Opportunities for tree and wild flower planting, e.g. within the Country Park and around the top grassed areas to the rear of Phoenix house. • Consideration of biodiversity and green space management as this might be a source of offsetting; • Future opens spaces to include increased planted areas (as opposed to recreational grass space).

7 Consultation

- 7.1 No public consultation has been undertaken in relation to the proposals set out to date, though the stakeholder event involved external parties. As a Corporate Priority there is a requirement to carry out a stakeholder analysis and deploy a communication strategy. An 'environment or climate change summit' has been suggested for later in 2020.
- 7.2 Climate change and environmental issues has become a priority in the 2020-2024 Corporate Priorities following consultation towards their overall formulation.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 8.1 The recommended proposals will be presented to the Council meeting on 8th April 2020.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 No budget has been assigned to this work and it is not known what the expected overall spend will be. This should be a key component of the Action Plan activity and will influence future budget setting activity.
- 9.2 An exception to this is the baselining activity referred to above, for which a sum of £5,000 is required. This would support and expert, independent commission to measure the Council's own carbon production and the 'pathways' around which to develop Action Plans. This can be funded from within established budgets.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services – 10.03.20

10 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 Oversight and Governance of this activity would be provided by the continuation of the Climate Emergency Policy Development Group, with annual updates provided to Council. Within senior management structures, an Environment Board is to be established to oversee and co-ordinate this work along with the other activities that are comprised within the Corporate Priority "Protect our Climate and enhance our rural, natural environment". Regular updates and discussion of key issues would be provided through liaison with the Portfolio Holder.
- 10.2 Work planning and budgetary implications, including the influence the work has on budget setting, would be managed through the normal management and governance provisions

Legal Implications reviewed by: Director for Governance & Regulatory Services– 10.03.20

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 No equality or safeguarding issues have been identified to date.

12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 No community safety issues have been identified to date.

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 13.1 This report is fundamental to the Council's future measures in respect of environmental impact and climate change. The work programme will develop steps to realise our ambitions to realise the objective of the Council becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

14 Other Implications (where significant)

- 14.1 None

15 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Measures identified are likely to require refocussing of Council investment and expenditure.	High	Critical	High
2	Measures affecting external parties ('scope 3' activities) are more difficult to secure and measure.	Very High	Marginal	Medium
3	Lack of 'Buy in' of Leadership and wider organisation.	Very Low	Critical	Low

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High		2		
	5 High			1	
	4 Significant				
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low			3	
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Long term planning will ensure that measures proposed are included within budget setting procedures, and are regarded as 'mainstream' within service delivery.
2	Opportunities to enhance the influence on key external parties arise from the Council's role as landowner, landlord and Local Planning Authority.
3	The subject area has been included as a Corporate Priority 2020-24, raising its profile amongst Members and staff. Internal management arrangements are being developed to reflect and support the Corporate Priorities, which will ensure it is disseminated to all levels of key staff.

16 Background Papers

16.1 Report to Council 18.12.2020 and Appendix A.

17 Appendices

17.1 None.

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