

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 December 2023
Title:	Climate Change Annual Report
Report From:	Director of Hampshire 2050

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on progress on Climate Change over the last 12 months, highlighting some key areas of delivery and set out plans for the year ahead.

Recommendation

2. That Cabinet approves the annual update on progress on Climate Change over the last 12 months from July 2022 to July 2023.

Executive Summary

3. This paper seeks to
 - set out the progress that has been made on climate change over the past 12 months, from July 2022 to July 2023;
 - provide an update on the priorities for the climate change programme following the corporate restructure in January 2023;
 - provide an update on progress on embedding climate change across Hampshire County Council;
 - provide an update on progress with the implementation of the Strategic Framework including some highlights and case studies showcasing best practice on actions and programmes to reduce emissions and build resilience across key sectors;
 - provide an update on Networks & Partnerships, Communications & Marketing;
 - provide an update on the climate change budget; and
 - set out the areas of focus for the next 12 months.

Contextual information

Delivering against the Climate Change Strategy during the past year

4. In July 2020, the Climate Change Strategy was approved by Cabinet, where it was also agreed that annual progress reports would be prepared.
5. To ensure delivery against the Strategy both an action plan and strategic framework were developed. It has been two years since the action plan and the strategic framework were established and progress on these have been reported on in previous reports.
6. In January 2023, following the restructure, the Council's role on climate change was re-defined to reflect the need to ensure that the Council's resources are used for maximum impact. As most major sources of emissions are beyond the control of the Council, a primary function of the climate change programme is to influence, advocate for, and facilitate action by others through partnership working and establishing the necessary frameworks and strategies.
7. In line with this it was agreed that the strategic framework would now become the main focus of the climate change programme going forward as it represents the key strategic priorities that will be essential to meeting our targets and embedded into plans, actions and activities of both Directorates and the wider organisation. With regards to the action plan, in the main, actions are now part of business as usual and in many cases form part of directorate reporting processes.
8. It was therefore agreed by the Corporate Management Team in February 2023 that reporting on the action plan would no longer form part of the annual reporting cycle, ensuring resources are focused on the strategic framework and there will continue to be a focus on ensuring that climate change is embedded into business as usual, across all Directorates. This will be delivered through the Climate Change Group (previously Board) and the climate change team.
9. When Cabinet adopted the strategic framework, it was agreed that the framework should be under continuous review to ensure it remains fit for purpose and is a "living document". As such, the strategic framework continues to be updated and reviewed, particularly in light of the changes set out, to ensure that the focus of the strategic framework is fit for purpose and that there is better representation from across the Council. For example, areas such as education, inclusion and skills which are critical to tackling climate change will feature more prominently.

Annual Report July 2022-2023

10. The Annual Report (appended) is the third annual report since 2020 and covers progress made between July 2022 and July 2023.

11. The Annual Report covers a number of sections to highlight the progress made in the last 12 months. These are set out below:

Corporate awareness and accountability on climate change This covers the work that has been done on supporting staff within the County Council to ensure climate change is part of the DNA of the organisation. This section covers the work of the Climate Change Group (previously Board), the mandatory Decision Tools, e-learning update and ongoing work to support teams across the council to embed climate change.

Hampshire Area Emission Report

Territorial emissions for the UK are estimated by central government, disaggregated by local authority area, and made publicly available online as the [local authority greenhouse gas emissions national statistics](#). **There is a two-year lag in data released by government meaning this report refers to 2021 results.** (For a deeper insight into the data collection methodology, further caveats about the data, and our scope of influence, please see our [2022 emissions report](#).)

Between 2019 and 2021 there was an overall reduction in Hampshire's territorial emissions of 7.3%, resulting in a cumulative reduction of 46% since 2005. Included in this figure is a carbon sequestration, which was 0.5% higher in 2021 than in 2019.

Hampshire County Council Emissions Report

The focus of the work of the strategic framework is on the Hampshire area which accounts for approximately 98% of the emissions, however, it is important that we continue to track our own emissions. This work is led by Universal Services and has a separate reporting cycle (see [Greenhouse gas emissions | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)).

Strategic Framework. This forms the main part of the report and focuses on the Strategic Framework. Highlights on some of the key priority programmes on Residential, Transport, Energy Generation & Distribution, Green Economy, Natural Environment, Buildings & Infrastructure are set out in this section of the report. Highlights include:

- continued successful delivery of the Greening Campaign in Hampshire including below highlights:
 - Phase 1 - 14 communities participated with a combined annual saving of £199,651, and an estimated 379.5 tonnes of CO₂ based upon taking carbon-saving actions at home.
 - Phase 2 - 10 communities signed up across Winchester, New Forest, Basingstoke, East Hampshire and Gosport. 14,307.10m₂ of land was improved as part of the make space for nature pillar, surpassing the target.
- helping to secure approximately £500,000 for the Greening Campaign from the National Lottery which will ensure the programme will continue to be delivered across Hampshire for the next three years without relying on funding from Hampshire County Council;

- continuing the successful delivery of Solar Together schemes which, since 2021, has helped 2,100 households secure solar panels, resulting in the installation of 7,400kw of rooftop solar power, which has the capacity to save an estimated 46,000 tonnes of carbon emissions;
- supporting the delivery of a new website for the Environment Centre to provide free, trusted and straightforward advice about climate change, energy and sustainability. The new website has received 42,395 visitors in the 8 months since its launch in November 2022. This represents a 12-fold increase on the previous 12 months. This project has proved invaluable during a period of high energy costs and a cost-of-living crisis as the number of people living in fuel poverty increased substantially between 2020 and 2022;
- development of a viable and bespoke business case for an area-wide retrofit scheme;
- completion of the first stage of research with University of Southampton into the renewable energy potential in Hampshire to meet our energy needs;
- the Bus Service Improvement Plan has also been adopted, alongside 8 Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans;
- Post Covid the County Council continues to use its bus budgets to keep as many bus routes going following a reduction in demand and income for bus operators;
- over 100 staff who look after or improve our streets and spaces have been trained in how to apply the Healthy Streets Framework;
- successful in securing funding for a programme of works to design and deliver new demonstration active travel schemes;
- bid for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding has been submitted;
- continuing to work in partnership with The Retrofit Academy to increase local delivery of courses for retrofit skills including understanding retrofit, adviser, assessor, and co-ordinators and to understand better the current state of retrofit skills in Hampshire;
- using the Government's flagship Skills Bootcamps programme to directly commission a range of training courses in low carbon construction, retrofit and green transport skills to meet the identified needs of the sectors;
- working with Hampshire and Surrey Chambers of Commerce to develop Local Skills Improvement Plans helping the County Council to better understand the breadth and depth of the skills needed to support the low carbon economy in its area and to focus future investment through the Local Skills Improvement Fund;
- the Hampshire Forest Partnership launched;
- the Waste Prevention Grant Fund has now supported more than 100 projects countywide to help their communities reduce waste;

- the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan: Partial Update is currently being developed. The Draft Plan includes a strengthened Climate Change Policy which requires all applications to include a Climate Change Assessment;
- action on climate change and health through spatial planning and placemaking has been embedded into the 'Healthier Communities' theme of the [Health and Wellbeing Board](#); and
- the Flood and Water Management team is working with the Environment Agency on a 2-year pilot programme for Property Flood Resilience.

Year of Climate Resilience 2022

This section provides an update on the communications and engagement activity undertaken to highlight building resilience with our residents. A series of digital adverts to Hampshire audiences have been delivered covering flood risk, giving wildlife a helping hand in your garden, home insulation and saving water. These adverts generated just under 600,000 views and over 2,300 clicks. On Facebook, more than 350,000 were additionally reached.

Networks and Partnerships This section provides an update on Expert Forum and also covers activity and collaboration with local, regional and national partners and networks, to learn from, share best practice and to promote Hampshire's leadership approach. Some of the highlights from the past 12 months are provided below:

- attendance at the Green Finance Training sessions run by CIPFA and ADEPT; and
- invited to be a member Net Zero Hub Steering Group and the Local Government Association Climate Action Group.

Communications and Marketing This outlines the insights-led behaviour change programmes to engage residents.

- between July 2022 and June 2023, there have been 19,113 unique views of the climate change webpages;
- the new [webpage](#), 'make your home resilient to climate change' has been created. Over the last year, this page has received 1,713 unique views; and
- to support the County Council's new youth engagement programme, two focus group workshops with 17, 18-24 year olds were delivered in July 2023 in Eastleigh and Basingstoke.

Engagement

As most major sources of emissions are beyond the control of the County Council a primary function of the climate change team is to influence, advocate for, and facilitate action by others. A dense programme of engagement activities reflects this priority with representation at major events, contributions to case studies, blog articles and numerous in-person and online presentations supporting partners and residents with their climate activities. Some highlights from this section include:

External Presentations

- keynote presentation at the Climate Unity Youth Conference July 2023;
- speaker at University of Southampton 3rd International Conference on Evolving Cities July 2022; and
- speaker at The National Retrofit Hub: Finance Working Group.

Events

- the New Forest Show - three days of direct engagement with over 350 residents;
- Planet Petersfield - engaged with families and local green groups; and
- a Parish Engagement event to promote ways for parishes to become involved in climate action. Attended by over 50 parish representatives.

External Engagement

- UK Power Network on the development of a Local Area Energy Planning tool;
- ExxonMobil on the Solent Cluster Hydrogen Strategy;
- National Energy Foundation and leading social housing providers on retrofit; and
- UK Infrastructure Bank and Green Finance Institute on retrofit and green finance opportunities.

Case Studies, Blog Posts and Awards

- winning the Regen Green Energy Award for Public Sector Local Leadership;
- a case study for Ashden and Friends of the Earth on [the Council's Year of Climate Resilience](#); and
- a case study for the Local Government Association on how to develop a [retrofit scheme for private residents](#).

12. There are 2 Appendices to this report, as follows:

- Appendix 1 - Annual Report – this is the full annual report that provides detailed updates on progress that has been made on climate change over the past 12 months between July 2022 – July 2023; and
- Appendix 2 - Progress on Strategic Framework – provides full updates on key programmes including Residential, Energy Generation & Distribution, Green Economy, Transport, Natural Environment etc.

Finance

13. In December 2021, Cabinet agreed to support the County Council's continuing commitment to deliver on its climate targets and proposed to fund the Climate Change Team within the revenue budget on a permanent basis.

14. A one-off budget of £2million was also allocated to the climate change programme to support the significant activity required to meet the targets.
15. Table 1 below sets out a summary of the agreed committed expenditure on projects since the budget was allocated in 2020. This allocation includes 10-15% contingencies for each project.
16. The total allocated budget of £1,153,895 represents agreed expenditure not actual spend to date, which is lower.

Table 1: Summary Project Committed Budget to July 2023

Agreed allocated expenditure to 3/2024		
Community Energy South	£46,000	Complete
EV Charging Pilot	£100,000	Under review
iChoosr (Solar Together Round One)	£47,000	Complete
New Economics Foundation (Green Economic Recovery)	£65,000	Complete
The Carbon Trust (Baseline Data)	£99,000	Complete
the Environment Centre (Telephone and Online Support)	£48,000	Complete
University of Southampton (Energy Landscape)	£18,000	Complete
Greening Campaign (Phase One)	£99,999	Complete
Parity Projects (Household-level Energy Efficiency Mapping)	£45,000	Complete
the Environment Centre (Website)	£24,000	Complete
Community Energy South (CRF Funded)	£100,750	Complete
Greening Campaign (CRF Funded)	£97,000	Complete
Parity Projects (Retrofit Programme Development)	£60,000	Complete
University of Southampton (Energy Strategy Evidence Base)	£121,706	Ongoing
iChoosr (Solar Together Round 2)	£33,000	Complete
Community Energy South (Grant Funding)	£99,400	Ongoing
Parity Projects (Tender Spec Development)	£50,000	Ongoing
iChoosr (Solar Together Round 3)	£35,000	Ongoing
Subtotal	£1,188,855	
Income		
SW Energy Hub (Offsets Parity Projects Phase Mapping)	-£30,680	
District Contributions (Offsets Parity Projects Phase One)	-£4,000	
Community Renewal Fund (Offsets CRF Funded Projects)	-£197,750	
Solar Together Referral Fees (Offsets Solar Together Round One)	-£52,530	
Solar Together Referral Fees (Offsets Solar Together Round Two)	TBC	

Subtotal	-£284,960	
Other Allocations		
Revolving Community Energy Fund (investment pot)	£250,000	Ongoing
Total Allocation	£1,153,895	
Remaining balance (unallocated)	£846,105	

17. In addition to the income outlined in the table above that offsets programme expenditure, income to offset the climate change team's staff costs was also secured as part of the successful Community Renewal Fund bid.
18. A further successful bid to the National Lottery secured almost £500,000 to expand and deliver the Greening Campaign for three years, of which a share was secured to offset staff costs in both the climate change team and the waste prevention team.

Performance

19. Overall good progress is being made on the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy through the various activities and programmes outlined in this annual report.
20. Within the Strategic Framework, there is a clear progress on key strategic programmes such as transport, residential emissions, energy and environment.
21. Engagement has become a strong focus for the work this year and the annual report clearly demonstrates the significant effort that has been put into both developing this further but also in engaging with residents and partners, through the community projects, networks and partnerships and very successful insights-led campaigns and broader engagement programmes.

Consultation and Equalities

22. This decision relates to an annual monitoring report and does not result in any changes to services, so has been assessed as having a neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

23. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

Climate Change Adaptation

24. This report is an annual progress update on both climate change mitigation and resilience, for the Hampshire area and across the whole organisation. Therefore, even though the tools were not applicable, the report demonstrates that significant action is being taken to address climate change mitigation and resilience. With 2022 being declared the Year of Climate Resilience more work has been undertaken to identify actions on resilience and showcase them to different audiences. Overall good progress on resilience is being made across the authority.

Carbon Mitigation

25. This report is an annual progress update on both climate change mitigation and resilience, for the Hampshire area and across the whole organisation, and demonstrates that significant action is being taken to address climate change mitigation and resilience. It also demonstrates that climate change is being embedded across all our services and that climate change is a key priority for Hampshire County Council.

Conclusions

26. Based on the research and analysis undertaken over the last 24 months and the agreed focus on influencing, advocacy and facilitation of action by others the primary focus for 2023 onwards is:
- working on the delivery of the outward facing elements of the Strategic Framework;
 - focusing on supporting Hampshire County Council residents through behaviour change and building resilience;
 - continuing to build on the strategic leadership, influencing, enabling and advocacy role; and
 - supporting corporate join-up and the embedding of climate change into business as usual across the organisation.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Climate Emergency Motion	June 2019
Hampshire 2050 Commission of Inquiry	September 2019
Climate Change Strategy	July 2020
Climate Change Action Plan	September 2020
Climate Change Strategic Framework	February 2021
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Climate Change Act	2008
National Adaptation Programme	2018

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This decision relates to an annual monitoring report and does not result in any changes to services, so has been assessed as having a neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics.