



## Mayor and Cabinet

### Lewisham Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan

**Date:** 11 March 2020

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:**

**Contributors:** Executive Director Housing, Environment and Regeneration. Head of Law. Head of Finance.

### Outline and recommendations

This report presents the Mayor and Cabinet with the Lewisham Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan, developed in response to the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019.

Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to:

- approve the Lewisham Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan;
- affirm the ambition for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030;
- note the ambitious nature of this target and the need for significant and sustained action by central government if it is to be delivered;
- approve the outline communication strategy at Annex A
- approve the proposed criteria for Lewisham's Carbon Offset Fund at Annex B
- agree the proposal that Mayor and Cabinet reviews progress on the Action Plan annually.

## Timeline of engagement and decision-making

- 27 February 2019 Council; declaration of a climate emergency
- 21 January 2020 Sustainable Development Select Committee;
- 11 March 2020 Mayor and Cabinet;

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. In February 2019 Lewisham Council agreed a motion to declare a 'Climate Emergency' and asked Mayor and Cabinet to adopt a new climate change action plan by the end of 2019/20 with the aim of making the borough carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.2. This report and the draft Action Plan are intended to present Mayor and Cabinet with the opportunity to determine the approach the Council will take in response to the threat of climate change.
- 1.3. Research commissioned by officers has estimated the cost of delivering on the proposal for the borough to be carbon neutral as being a minimum of £1.6bn over the 10 years to 2030. It is clear that delivery can only be achieved with significant and sustained action by central government.
- 1.4. While the Council's contribution to the carbon footprint of the borough is calculated as being just 3%, it is right that we seek to be ambitious because the consequences of inaction risk costs that cannot be predicted and will fall most heavily on vulnerable residents. Taking positive steps to cut carbon emissions and adapt to a changing climate also offers opportunities for wider benefits for health and wellbeing, skills and local jobs and other social and environmental outcomes.
- 1.5. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan has been developed with the involvement of services across the Council, with members and in discussion with local groups and the public. It is intended to be an ambitious 10-year programme that we continue to develop in response to new opportunities and in open discussion with residents and other stakeholders.

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## 2. Recommendations

### 2.1. That the Mayor and Cabinet:

- approve the Lewisham Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan;
- affirm the ambition for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030;
- note the ambitious nature of this target and the need for significant and sustained action by central government if it is to be delivered;
- approve the outline communication strategy at Annex A
- approve the proposed criteria for Lewisham's Carbon Offset Fund at Annex B
- agree the proposal that Mayor and Cabinet reviews progress on the Action Plan annually.

## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1. In 2016, the UK Government ratified the Paris Agreement, part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Agreement commits countries to take action to prevent the global average temperature increasing 2°C above pre-industrial levels. In 2017 the Government published its Clean Growth Strategy setting out its approach to delivering on its greenhouse gas emission targets and in 2019 the Government passed the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/9780111187654> committing the UK to a legally binding target of net zero emissions by 2050.
- 3.2. A Special Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018 identified the social, economic and environmental damage a 2°C average rise in global temperatures would be expected to cause. The Report confirmed that limiting this to 1.5 °C would have significant benefits and may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.
- 3.3. Lewisham's Corporate Plan 2018-22 includes commitments to maximise opportunities for energy efficiency and to provide support on energy bills for vulnerable residents. Both these areas are highly relevant to the Climate Emergency and are covered in the Action Plan.

## 4. Lewisham Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan

- 4.1. The Council declared a climate emergency on 27 February 2019, proposing a new target for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 4.2. The Council motion setting out the declaration states that without significant and sustained action the world will exceed the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2050. The declaration recognises the important role of the public sector in enabling individuals and communities to respond and highlights that the consequences of failing to address this are likely to include:
- increased risk of flooding and damage to buildings, infrastructure and the local economy;
  - health problems, particularly for children, older people and those with pre-existing conditions;
  - higher living costs including energy, food, travel and insurance costs;
  - increases in social injustice and inequality;
  - financial and emotional consequences for residents with families around the world adversely affected by the impact of a changing climate.
- 4.3. The declaration asked Council to recognise the severe and enduring social, economic and environmental implications of climate change, and called on the Mayor and Cabinet to:

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- pledge to do everything within their power to make Lewisham carbon neutral by 2030.
  - launch a review to report to on delivering a Zero-Carbon Lewisham including:
  - publish a new Lewisham Action Plan on Climate Change, with an interim draft ready for scrutiny by the Sustainable Development Select Committee and Mayor & Cabinet before the end of the municipal year 2019/20.
  - Set specific and measurable targets to reduce carbon emissions for the Council and for the borough as a whole, including costed milestones to zero-carbon;
  - Consider systematically the climate change impact of each area of the Council's activities;
  - Increase local resilience to climate impacts already in the system.
- 4.4. This report and the draft Action Plan are intended to present Mayor and Cabinet with the opportunity to determine the approach the Council will take in response to the threat of climate change.
- 4.5. The draft Action Plan contains a wide range of activity of relevance across different Council teams. The actions have been developed with service teams and through a number of cross-cutting forums within the Council. On the 21<sup>st</sup> January, the Sustainable Development Select Committee reviewed the findings of research to set out the scope of work needed to deliver a carbon neutral borough and the key themes of our response. These issues were then also discussed at a public forum held on the 29<sup>th</sup> January. This draft of the Action Plan presented to Mayor and Cabinet for approval has been informed and developed through these various meetings and events.
- 4.6. Research commissioned by officers identified that 50% of carbon in the borough is from housing and 25% from transport. Just 3% of emissions come from the Council's operations. Based on a set of scenarios quantifying the impact of a range of actions the most challenging sources of emissions to address are domestic gas and road traffic.
- 4.7. The research estimates that the cost of reducing emissions close enough to zero to meet the aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030 would cost at least £1.6bn. The largest part of the costs, £843m, relate to private housing. The £1.6bn is acknowledged to be an underestimate due to the difficulty of quantifying the transport infrastructure requirements. Achieving carbon neutrality within the research is also based on an annual carbon offset of £8.4m from 2030/31.
- 4.8. These amounts do not represent any financial commitment by the Council and making a declaration of a Climate Emergency does not offer access to any new funding sources or new powers. It is clear that delivery of the proposed target can only be achieved with significant and sustained investment from central government and active participation of residents and partners locally to bring our collective resources together to address the climate crisis.
- 4.9. Key themes that have emerged in the development of the draft action plan are:
- The scale of the climate crisis requires us to be ambitious;
  - The Council should demonstrate leadership in terms of its own operations;
  - Action on climate change is action on social justice;
  - Action on climate change also has the potential to deliver benefits in relation to skills and employment; health and wellbeing and wider environmental programmes;
  - The target cannot be delivered by the Council alone. Lobbying central government, partnership working with partners locally and resident engagement must be at the heart of our approach.

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- 4.10. The action plan covers 5 delivery areas:
- Leading by Example;
  - Sustainable Housing;
  - Decarbonised Transport;
  - Greener Adaptive Lewisham;
  - Inspiring, Learning and Lobbying.
- 4.11. Content in each delivery area includes the following sections:
- ‘Our ambition and the challenge we face’, which seeks to summarise what the section covers and our overarching approach;
  - ‘What we have done’, which provides an update on actions we have already taken or are delivering;
  - ‘Future actions’, which sets out our planned approach going forward;
  - ‘Our asks of others’, which identifies the actions needed by others particularly from government to deliver on the actions we have identified.
- 4.12. Engaging and inspiring others to take action, at a national, regional and local level will be critical to achieving the Action Plan. An outline communications plan is included at Annex A setting out the approach proposed in terms of this work.
- 4.13. Annex B sets out proposals for aligning Lewisham Council’s existing Carbon Offset Fund with delivery of the Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan.
- 4.14. The Action Plan is intended to be the basis for an ambitious 10-year programme to deliver on our declaration of a Climate Emergency. Inevitably across such a broad range of activity there are actions that need further work to define and cost them. As new funding streams, technologies and legislation comes forward we will need to adjust our Action Plan. Delivery of individual projects will remain subject to the Council’s constitution and decision-making processes while progress on the Action Plan as a whole will be overseen by the Council’s Climate Emergency Working Group and reviewed by the Executive Management Team. It is proposed that Mayor and Cabinet review progress against the Action Plan on an annual basis as a way to maintain transparency and accountability in the delivery of our ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.
5. Financial implications
- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report but delivery of an ambitious programme to cut emissions across the Council’s corporate estate and the borough as a whole has potentially significant cost implications. The trajectory research calculates a total cost of £1.6bn over 10 years and acknowledges that this is likely to be an underestimate. The largest part of the costs, £843m, relate to private housing, with £63m estimated to fall directly to the Council, £177m for work across the schools’ estate and £233m to Lewisham Homes. Achieving carbon neutrality within the research is also based on an annual carbon offset of £8.4m from 2030/31. Further details are set out in the draft Action Plan.
- 5.2 Lewisham Council’s funding from government has been cut by over 58% since 2013/14, while at the same time, the Council has faced increased costs through population growth, changes to government policy and other pressures. There are no

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extra resources available to local authorities that declare a climate emergency and we will need to find creative ways to find the resources needed to support this work.

- 5.3 Agreement of funding for specific actions identified in this report will be subject to the Council's existing delegations and decision-making processes.
6. Legal implications
- 6.1. The report refers to the Climate Change Act 2008 and regulations under that Act. The Act establishes a legal framework that underpins the UK's commitment to tackling climate change, including reducing CO2 emissions and addressing climate risks. The provisions of the Act apply at central government level, at least at the moment.
- 6.2. Local authorities can use their own powers to take actions. The relevant powers are likely to include the wide general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which allows local authorities to do anything that individuals generally may do. The existence of the general power is not limited by the existence of any other power of the Council which (to any extent) overlaps the general power.
- 6.3. As stated in the report and in the financial implications, this report does not commit to any specific actions. Future decisions about specific actions will need to take into consideration the specific local authority powers which are relevant to those actions, and be made in line with existing decision making and legal requirements.
- 6.4 The Council has a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty - The Equality Act 2010, or the Act). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.5 It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed above. The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for the decision maker, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. The decision maker must understand the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.
- 6.6 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance. The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found on the EHRC website.

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6.7 The EHRC has issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty. The 'Essential' guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice.

## 7. Equalities implications

7.1. There are no specific equalities implications arising directly from this report but it should be noted that action on climate change is action on social equality and the Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan commits to further assessment of the equalities impact of the Climate Emergency.

## 8. Climate change and environmental implications

8.1. The implications of the climate crisis are summarised in the Action Plan. It is also clear that there is a need to connect work on climate change with our wider activity on waste and recycling, biodiversity, flood risk, sustainable transport and air quality.

## 9. Crime and disorder implications

9.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

## 10. Health and wellbeing implications

10.1. Improvements to air quality, increased participation in active travel and action on fuel poverty will deliver a wide range of health and wellbeing benefits to residents.

## 11. Background papers

11.1. Please include a list of papers, documents and reports that relate to the report's subject matter with hyperlinks if the documents are available on our website.

Declaration of a Climate Emergency at Full Council (February 2019)

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s62942/Motion%20%20proposed%20Cllr%20Anwar%20seconded%20Cllr%20Krupski.pdf>

Report to Sustainable Development Select Committee (January 2020)

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s71180/04%20Climate%20Emergency%20update%20210120.pdf>

## 12. Report author and contact

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