



Sustainable Development Select Committee

Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan: update for the Sustainable Development Select Committee

Date: 14 January 2021

Key decision: No

Contributors: Climate Resilience Manager

Outline and recommendations

This report provides the Sustainable Development Select Committee with an update on delivery of Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan. The Committee is invited to note:

- Achievements since the Action Plan was published, described in 6.4
- The detailed update against the actions, provided as an annex to this report;
- The proposed priorities for the next 12 months, identified in 7.1;
- The proposal to refocus the Action Plan, set out in 7.3-7.5;

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

In February 2019 Lewisham councillors agreed a motion to declare a 'Climate Emergency' and asked Mayor and Cabinet to adopt an action plan by the end of 2019/20 with the aim of making the borough carbon neutral by 2030.

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

Mayor and Cabinet agreed Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan on 11 March 2020.

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s72555/Climate%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

Mayor and Cabinet is scheduled to review an update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan on 10 March 2021.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides Sustainable Development Select Committee with an update on Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan, which was published in March 2020.
- 1.2. COVID19 has affected delivery of the Action Plan, but the reasons for and the urgency of the need for action on climate change remain unchanged. This report:
 - Provides an update on Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan
 - Restates the need for action and outlines the focus of our work to respond to the Climate Emergency in the context of COVID19;
 - Outlines priorities for the coming 12 months;

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. This report provides the Sustainable Development Select Committee with an update on delivery of Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan, published in March 2020. The Committee is invited to note:
 - Achievements since the Action Plan was published, described in 6.4
 - The detailed update against the actions, provided as an annex to this report;
 - The proposed priorities for the next 12 months, identified in 7.1;
 - The proposal to refocus the Action Plan, set out in 7.3-7.5;

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. In 2016, the UK Government ratified the Paris Agreement, part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which commits countries to taking 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 greenhouse gas emission targets and in 2019 the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019¹ committed the UK to a legally binding target of net zero emissions by 2050. In December 2020 the Government's Energy White Paper provided further details of the UK's path to net zero, with further proposals promised in the run up to the international COP26 climate summit in Glasgow, which was deferred to November 2021.
- 3.2. Lewisham's Corporate Strategy priority 'Making Lewisham Greener' includes the following commitments relating to energy:
 - We will maximise opportunities for energy efficiency in all council buildings and new developments;
 - We will explore working with publicly owned not-for profit energy suppliers that do not penalise poorer residents using prepay meters.
- 3.3. The actions and the values of Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan support delivery across the Corporate Strategy, in particular:
 - 'Tackling the housing crisis' and improved standards across all housing sectors
 - 'Building an inclusive local economy' and supporting the growth of a thriving local economy
 - 'Making Lewisham greener' and the increased use of environmentally friendly transport as well as better care for our local environment and planet.

4. Background

- 4.1. The social, economic and environmental risks associated with a rise in global

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/9780111187654>

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temperatures above 1.5°C are well established², but the international community has, so far, struggled to deliver on commitments to reduce carbon emissions. 'Climate Emergency' has been a community-level response to the perceived lack of action at international and national levels. By the end of 2020 70% of UK local authorities, including 26 London Boroughs, had declared a Climate Emergency and set local targets to cut emissions.

- 4.2. In February 2019 Lewisham Councillors approved a motion declaring a Climate Emergency and setting the ambition for Lewisham to be carbon neutral by 2030. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action plan was developed over the course of 2019 through an internal working group, discussions with residents and with community groups, input from the Sustainable Development Select Committee and was informed by a detailed study to identify and cost a trajectory that met the ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030³. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan was approved by Mayor and Cabinet on the 11 March 2020⁴.
- 4.3. The Action Plan identified the following priorities:
 - 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.
- 4.4. The Action Plan set out 143 actions across the following 5 delivery areas:
 - Leading by Example;
 - Sustainable Housing;
 - Decarbonised Transport;
 - Greener Adaptive Lewisham;
 - Inspiring, Learning and Lobbying.
- 4.5. An assessment of progress against each action is included as an annex to this report.

² <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

³ <https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s72556/Annex%20C%20Routes%20to%20Carbon%20Neutral%20Report.pdf>

⁴ <https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s72555/Climate%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

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5. Restating the need for action on climate change

- 5.1. The risks and impacts of a changing climate will not fall equally, and without action the consequences will exacerbate poverty and health inequalities globally and locally.
- 5.2. In addition, given the fundamental nature of the changes needed, there are considerable risks that the actions taken to limit carbon emissions could, in themselves, disadvantage low income and vulnerable individuals and communities. The COVID19 pandemic is forecast to result in a 6% global decrease in energy demand in 2020, a cut in carbon emissions that has come at huge social and economic cost. This impact underlines that delivering on a climate agenda needs the UK Government to break the links between economic prosperity and carbon, and that locally, our strategy should be to address climate change as an issue of social justice with a focus on our low income and vulnerable individuals and communities.
- 5.3. While the Council's contribution to the carbon footprint of the borough has been calculated as being just 3%, it is right that we seek to be ambitious. Taking positive steps to cut carbon emissions and adapt to a changing climate also offer opportunities for wider benefits for health and wellbeing, skills and local jobs and other social and environmental outcomes.
- 5.4. It is important to recognise that delivery of the ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030 goes way beyond the resources and functions of the Council as a local authority. The trajectory analysis informing the Lewisham Action Plan estimated the cost as being at least £1.6bn. Lewisham Council's Climate Emergency Action plan seeks to balance the need to be ambitious with recognition that delivery is dependent on significant and sustained action by central government and by all sectors and communities responding positively to the need for change. Lobbying central Government for the investment in infrastructure and the legal and fiscal incentives, and engaging with local partners and the wider community remain fundamental priorities if we are to achieve our ambitions on climate change.

6. Progress since March 2020

- 6.1. The 143 actions in the March 2020 Action Plan are divided across the following themes:
 - Leading by Example;
 - Sustainable Housing;
 - Decarbonised Transport;
 - Green Infrastructure;
 - Inspiring, Learning and Lobbying.
- 6.2. COVID19 has affected delivery, but also reinforces the central underlying principle of the Action Plan: that a changing climate has the greatest impact on our most vulnerable communities, and that taking action on climate should be framed in the context of taking action on social justice.
- 6.3. An annotated list of the set of actions is attached as an annex to this report.
- 6.4. Key achievements since the Action Plan was published include:
 - Delivery and publication of energy master-planning⁵ and strategic heat

⁵ <https://lewisham.gov.uk/-/media/files/imported/accessible-lewisham-energy-masterplan.ashx?la=en>

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decarbonisation studies⁶. This externally-funded work will support the Council's new Core Strategy in shaping the way new development meets zero carbon standards and is intended to create opportunities to bring in further investment to support heat networks;

- £600k external funding secured for fuel poverty advice services across South London supporting over 3,500 households;
- Delivery of Lewisham's Community Energy Fund including the Retrofit Action for Tomorrow (RAFT) initiative, an innovative engagement project with St Winifred's School;
- £175k funding secured from the Government's Low Carbon Skills Fund to assess and develop detailed proposals for zero carbon retrofit work on 10 corporate sites and 5 schools. The outputs from this work will be submitted as bids for funding under the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme;
- A new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy aligning how green and blue infrastructure in the borough contributes to achieving climate and wider environmental benefits;
- Recognition at the 2020 Community Tree Awards of the Council's work with Street Trees for Living;
- Agreement on a new investment strategy for the Council's Pension Fund which sets a low carbon mandate;
- Upgrades to the Council's fleet to comply with highest standards of emissions;
- A significant increase in digitisation in the way staff work, resulting in big reductions in corporate paper consumption;
- Introduction of 'warm mix' on road resurfacing reducing carbon emissions by 10-15% and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of planned works;
- Active engagement in London Councils' Climate Emergency work.

7. Priorities for the next 12 months

7.1. The focus for the next 12 months is:

- Reviewing and streamlining the Climate Emergency Action Plan and embedding delivery of the Action Plan as part of local COVID19 recovery planning and the response to the financial pressures the Council faces;
- Accessing Government funding under the 'Plan for Jobs' including the £1bn Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and the £0.5bn Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Fund;
- Securing funding from the Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) to develop the next phase of work on heat networks;
- Development and implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and similar initiatives once funding from TfL is confirmed;
- Reducing corporate emissions including emissions from schools, through the planned review of assets for corporate buildings and the Digitisation Strategy;
- Working with Lewisham Homes to shape and deliver their new Asset Management Strategy;
- De-carbonising the Council's supply chain through improved procurement policies;

⁶ <https://lewisham.gov.uk/-/media/files/imported/accessible-strategic-borough-wide-decarbonisation-strategy.ashx?la=en>

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- Engagement activity with residents, businesses and local partners and in particular development of plans for Lewisham’s Borough of Culture year.

7.2. Responding to the Climate Emergency is about making better use of resources and creating an alternative to a high-carbon consumer economy. In this context there is a clear connection between delivering on a low carbon agenda and the Council’s need to cut expenditure and secure greater financial stability. The proposed budget cuts considered by Mayor and Cabinet on the 9 December include a number of strands with potential to deliver financial and carbon reduction benefits including:

- A-01 - Staff productivity arising from new ways of working
- A-02 - Cross cutting review of enforcement roles
- A-03 - Corporate Transport arrangements
- A-08 - Reduction in corporate paper usage
- D-01 - Generating greater value from Lewisham’s asset base
- D-06 - Catford Campus - Estate Consolidation and the wider Asset Review
- F-15 - Environmental operations review of waste and cleansing operational model
- F-16 - New waste strategy
- F-18 - Controlled Parking Zone Extension

7.3. Officers intend to update Lewisham’s Climate Emergency Action Plan in 2021 to reflect the wider impact of the pandemic on services and the borough, and with the aim of creating a more streamlined approach that will sharpen the focus of priorities and reducing the administration of coordinating delivery. It is suggested that the number of actions could be halved without losing the level of ambition in the plan if the actions are made smarter and the detailed delivery is embedded into wider Council strategies and service plans including the COVID19 recovery plan. Using quantified data and measurable targets in the Action Plan will be one of the key ways to achieving this.

7.4. Lewisham is embedding a strategic approach to transformation through the Assistant Chief Executive’s Division. This work will bring together our strategic drivers for transformational activity, including the climate emergency, and through a more robust Project Management Office approach, is designed to ensure tangible outcomes are identified and delivered. Three new thematic programme Boards will oversee the Council’s strategic transformation activities, with the Climate Resilience Team involved in each but in particular the Ways of Working Thematic Board, driving the culture change required to deliver on the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

7.5. To streamline the current Climate Emergency Action Plan officers propose to review the actions with service teams in 2021 with a focus on the following themes:

Leading by Example	Create a culture of action on climate change within the Council. Deliver the target for Lewisham Council to be carbon neutral by 2030, with an interim target of reducing carbon emissions from our corporate buildings by 50% by 2025.
Sustainable Housing	Deliver a new ambition for energy and carbon performance across Lewisham Homes' stock. Support all tenures of housing to cut emissions.
	Support investment in high quality public transport including the

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Decarbonised Transport	Bakerloo Line Extension. Create spaces for walking and cycling.
Greener Adaptive Lewisham	Promote adaptive responses to make Lewisham more resilient to a changing climate now and in the future. Take a holistic approach to the environment and the circular economy making the most of the connections across climate change, clean air, biodiversity, waste & recycling and sustainability.
Inspiring Learning and Lobbying	Work collaboratively with residents and partners from all sectors to inspire action on climate change across Lewisham. Deliver an ambitious programme of transformation that reflects and responds to the diversity of our borough in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background.
Delivering the Plan	Ensure a just transition to transforming carbon emissions in Lewisham. Action Plan implementation.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. 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. Work undertaken to support the development of Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan estimated a minimum cost of £1.6bn over 10 years.
- 8.2. 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 in 2020 the COVID19 pandemic. There are no 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.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. 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.
- 9.2. 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.
- 9.3. 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.
- 9.4. 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

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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.

9.5. 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.

9.6. 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.

9.7. 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.

10. Equalities implications

10.1. There are no specific equalities implications arising directly from this report but it should be noted that the risks and impacts of a changing climate will not fall equally, and without action the consequences will exacerbate poverty and health inequalities globally and locally.

10.2. In addition, given the fundamental nature of the changes needed, there are considerable risks that the actions taken to limit carbon emissions could, in themselves, disadvantage low income and vulnerable individuals and communities. The COVID19 pandemic is forecast to result in a 6% global decrease in energy demand in 2020, a reduction in carbon emissions that has come at huge social and economic cost. This impact underlines that delivering on a climate agenda needs the UK Government to break the links between economic prosperity and carbon, and that locally, our strategy should be to address climate change as an issue of social justice and the focus of our Climate Emergency actions should be on our low income and vulnerable individuals and communities.

10.3. Further work is needed to fully identify the equalities implications of climate change for Lewisham residents.

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11. Climate change and environmental implications

- 11.1. The environmental implications of the climate crisis are summarised in the Action Plan. Further work is needed to embed action on the climate within the Council's strategies and operational functions, particularly in relation to wider environmental activity including in relation to air quality, waste and recycling, biodiversity, flood risk and sustainable transport and air quality.

12. Crime and disorder implications

- 12.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

13. Health and wellbeing implications

- 13.1. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan will deliver a range of health and wellbeing benefits to residents, including actions to improve air quality, increased participation in active travel as well as support for low income and vulnerable households to cut the cost of staying warm in winter.

14. Background papers

- 14.1. 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>

- 14.2. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan (March 2020)

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s72555/Climate%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

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15. Glossary

Term	Definition
Carbon / Carbon dioxide	Carbon dioxide (CO ₂) is a naturally occurring gas fixed by photosynthesis into organic matter and is a by-product of fossil fuel combustion, land use changes and other industrial processes. CO ₂ is the principal greenhouse gas (see below) associated with human activity and climate change (see below) and the reference against which other greenhouse gases are measured. Unless otherwise indicated the terms 'carbon' or 'carbon dioxide' are used in this report to refer to a combined measure of greenhouse gases (CO ₂ e or CO ₂ equivalent), of which carbon dioxide is the most common.
Carbon Neutral	The term "carbon neutral" is used in this report in line with the original declaration of a Climate Emergency in Lewisham. Carbon neutrality balances greenhouse gas emissions with carbon removals. As defined by the Committee on Climate Change, a net-zero or carbon neutral target requires "deep reductions in emissions, with any remaining sources offset by removals of CO ₂ from the atmosphere". In the context of Lewisham's target this means additional carbon removal and storage activity at the borough level or 'carbon offsets' funding an equivalent removal outside the borough.
Carbon Offsetting	Carbon offsetting enables individuals and organisations to compensate for any emissions they cannot avoid by paying for a carbon credit, typically a payment for an equivalent amount of emissions to be reduced or removed elsewhere. These emissions savings are generated through the implementation of a variety of projects such as planting trees and installing solar panels. Offsetting should be seen as an option of last resort and there is no commitment by Lewisham Council to fund carbon offsets to meet the aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030.
Climate	Climate is usually defined as the average weather, or more rigorously, as a statistical description in terms of the mean and variability of relevant quantities over a period of time ranging from months to thousands or millions of years. The relevant quantities are most often surface variables such as temperature, precipitation, and wind.
Climate Change	Climate change, as used by the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change, refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer.
Fuel Poverty	The Government's definition of fuel poverty for England and Wales states that a household is said to be in fuel poverty if: they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level), and, were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. There is a direct link between living in cold and damp conditions and poor health outcomes.
Greenhouse Gases	Greenhouse gases are those gaseous constituents of the atmosphere which absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of thermal infrared radiation emitted by the Earth's surface, by the atmosphere itself, and by clouds. This raises global temperatures with a consequential impact on climate. Water vapour (H ₂ O), carbon dioxide (CO ₂), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), methane (CH ₄), and ozone (O ₃) are the primary greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere.
Scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions	Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions are a method of defining, measuring and reporting carbon emissions on an organisational or an area basis. Scope 1 covers direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 covers indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, heating and cooling. Scope 3 includes all other indirect emissions including in particular the supply chain.

16. Report author and contact

Martin O'Brien: Climate Resilience Manager; martin.o'brien@lewisham.gov.uk; 07736 900 214

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