



Sustainable Development Select Committee

Report title: Climate Emergency Action Plan Update

Date: 09 January 2024

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Head of Climate Resilience

Outline and recommendations

1. Outline

- 1.1. This report sets out the proposed approach to updating and reporting on the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan. An update is scheduled for discussion by Mayor and Cabinet in March 2024.
- 1.2. The report covers:
 - Updates on actions in the 2020 action plan;
 - Proposals to refresh the current set of actions;
 - Estimates of the potential cost and impact of key actions from the draft updated 2024 action plan;
 - Plans to communicate the Mayor and Cabinet update to a wider audience.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Sustainable Development Select Committee is invited to note the contents of this report and feedback its views on the approach proposed.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan was approved by Mayor and Cabinet on 11 March 2020

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

Progress against the Action Plan has been reviewed on an annual basis:

- 10 March 2021 M&C Climate Emergency Action Plan update
<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s78637/Lewishams%20Climate%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan.pdf>
- 9 March 2022 M&C Climate Emergency Action Plan update
<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s96746/Climate%20Emergency%20Update.pdf>
- 8 March 2023 M&C Climate Emergency Action Plan update
<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s108302/230308%20MandC%20CEAP%20FINAL.pdf>

The Executive Management Team discussed the approach set out in this report at its meeting on 29 November 2023.

A update on the action plan is scheduled for discussion on the 13 March 2024.

1. Summary

1.1. This report provides the Sustainable Development Select Committee with an update on the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan. The report and accompanying annexes present the basis of the planned update to Mayor and Cabinet scheduled for March 2024. The main elements of the update are:

- Updates on actions in the 2020 action plan;
- Proposals to refresh the current set of actions;
- Estimates of the potential cost and impact of key actions from the draft updated 2024 action plan.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Sustainable Development Select Committee is invited to note the contents of this report and feedback its views on the approach proposed.

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 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 2021 the Government published its Net Zero Strategy setting out proposals to deliver the UK's commitment under the Paris Agreement.

3.2. Lewisham Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26 identifies the climate emergency as one

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

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of four local challenges, and states that:

- We continue to strive towards being a net zero borough by 2030, and will continue to lobby the government and work with our partners to achieve this.
- We will lead by example, by using 100% renewable energy, retrofitting public buildings where possible to make them more energy efficient, and supporting residents to make their homes warmer and more efficient.
- Our parks and green spaces are a lifeline to the health and wellbeing of our residents, and provide important resilience against the climate emergency. We will continue to invest in them, and continue to plant more trees – adding to the 25,000 we've planted since 2018.
- The progress of our Climate Emergency Action Plan will be reviewed annually by our Executive Management Team and through our scrutiny committee process, including reporting annually to the Mayor and Cabinet. We will publish a public update once a year setting out what has been done in that year and updating our set of actions going forward.

4. Background

- 4.1. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan was developed through a cross-Council working group and informed by a study commissioned in 2019 on the pathways to achieving net zero carbon by 2030.
- 4.2. The Action Plan set out 143 actions across 5 themes. Progress against the action plan has been positive since 2020, particularly in relation to integrating this agenda across the Council, our work in partnership with others and engagement activity. However the ambition for the borough to be net zero carbon by 2030 remains hugely stretching and the window for achieving it is closing rapidly.

5. Update on the actions in the 2020 action plan

- 5.1. Annex A includes an update against the 143 actions in the 2020 action plan.
- 5.2. The table at Annex A includes the original wording of the action and reference number, the team it was assigned to in the 2022/23 update and the original indication of timing. The update includes a narrative description and an assessment using the following terms adopted by the UK Climate Change Committee's in their analysis of progress by Government departments on climate change:
 - Action Achieved
 - Partly Achieved
 - Underway
 - Not Achieved

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5.3. The table below shows the distribution of these assessments across the action plan's five themes:

Theme	Achieved	Partly Achieved	Underway	Not Achieved	Total
Leading By Example	25	7	7	6	45
Sustainable Housing	22	16	4	1	43
Decarbonised Transport	5	3	14	0	22
Greener Adaptive Lewisham	7	5	1	1	14
Inspiring Learning & Lobbying	17	0	2	0	19
TOTAL	76	31	28	8	143

6. 2024 refresh of actions

6.1. Annex B sets out a proposed refreshed action plan with 60 actions.

6.2. Annex C set out a set of 35 Climate KPIs.

6.3. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan has had positive external recognition and the Council has consistently been assessed in the top 20 local authorities nationally under the Climate Emergency UK scorecard assessments. It is however clear that since the Action Plan was published there has been significant change across the policy and funding landscape service teams are operating in.

6.4. The proposed refresh has been based on the following principles:

- Create a clearer focus on priorities
- Integrate relevant Council strategic documents
- Ensure a clear evidence base for action, in particular costs for decarbonising sources of carbon owned by the council
- Ensure a clear focus on social justice
- Quantify the scale of challenge and delivery

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6.5. The table below compares the proposed 2024 actions with the 2020 set:

Theme	2020	2024	Updated	Unchanged	New	Closed
Leading By Example	45	17	15	1	1	26
Sustainable Housing	43	15	10	4	1	29
Decarbonised Transport	22	6	4	1	1	17
Greener Adaptive Lewisham	14	12	10	0	2	5
Inspiring Learning & Lobbying	19	10	7	2	1	12
TOTAL	143	60	46	8	6	89

6.6. As identified above one of the principles of the refresh was to align the action plan with strategic documents that have been produced since the Climate Emergency Action Plan was published in March 2020. These strategies, which are referenced within individual actions in Annex B, include:

- Lewisham Council Corporate Strategy 2022-26;
- Catford Town Centre Framework;
- Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022-27;
- Air Quality Action Plan 2022-27;
- Waste Management Strategy 2021-31;
- Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023-25;
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2020-25;
- Lewisham Local Plan 2020-40;

6.7. In addition, there are a number of key strategic documents that are currently in development including:

- Asset Management Strategy;
- Active Travel Plan;
- Housing Retrofit Strategy;
- Digital Strategy;
- Local Economic Development Strategy;
- Staff Travel Plan;
- Local Area Energy Plan;
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- Public Realm Design Guide;
- Lewisham 2030 Community Action Plan.

6.8. These strategies contain a wealth of relevant information. It is proposed that the current set of actions are streamlined to reflect this and to minimise duplicative demands on service teams and present a clearer focus on what the Climate Emergency Action Plan priorities are. This refresh of the Action Plan is intended to be part of an ongoing approach to adapting the actions as the funding and policy landscape evolves nationally, regionally and locally.

6.9. Alongside the 60 actions set out in Annex B it is proposed that the annual update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan is supplemented by the use of a set of Climate

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KPIs, arranged against the five themes. This responds to the feedback asking for more quantified information on progress and the degree of challenge involved. This set of 35 Climate KPIs is set out in Annex C.

- 6.10. Providing full cost information in relation to each action is extremely difficult. Many of the main sources of local emissions from housing and transport are not the direct responsibility of the Council and the mechanisms for achieving net zero for the UK do not align with the 2030 Climate Emergency date. Instead of providing broad cost estimates on all actions it is proposed instead to focus detailed cost information specifically in relation to those sources of emissions that the Council has greatest control over. The revised plan includes actions to cost delivery in these areas and work has already progressed on this. This work includes:
- A costed plan for retrofitting the corporate estate
 - A costed plan for retrofitting the local authority maintained schools' estate
 - A costed plan for electrifying the Council's fleet
 - A costed plan for retrofitting the Council's housing stock.
- 6.11. In addition, in relation to the Council's housing stock, future actions will need to be based on a robust assessment of the overall condition of stock and reflect the evidence established through the new stock condition survey.
- 6.12. The Committee has asked for more quantified information showing the scale of the challenge and impact of actions. As outlined below in section 7 and Annex D estimates have been made for a subset of actions from the 2024 action plan going beyond those where the Council has direct control. This information is intended to offer an indication of cost and impact over a three-year period to provide context and scale but would require significant additional work for use in more detailed policy and programme design.
- 6.13. It is proposed that the next update to Mayor and Cabinet on the action plan is moved to June each year rather than March, starting from 2025, to allow the information to capture a full financial year of delivery.

7. Cost and impact estimates

- 7.1. Annex D provides a prototype model for showing forecast costs and carbon savings for those actions where estimates can be made. This information is intended to offer an indication of cost and impact in a three-year period to illustrate context and scale but would require significant additional work for use in more detailed policy and programme design.
- 7.2. It is important to reiterate that developing costed plans and identifying estimates of expenditure does not represent a commitment by the Council to achieve net zero carbon at any cost. Establishing robust financial information underlines the scale of work needed and will enable Lewisham to move quickly as new funding opportunities emerge.

8. Public facing update on the action plan

- 8.1. Alongside report to Mayor and Cabinet with its annexes setting out the detailed analysis officers are working on a public-facing version of the reporting on progress that will be published alongside the committee report with the aim of making our work in this area more accessible and meaningful to a wider set of stakeholders.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1. Achieving the ambition for Lewisham to be net zero carbon has significant cost implications. Work undertaken to support the development of Lewisham's Climate

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Emergency Action Plan estimated a minimum cost of £1.6bn over 10 years.

- 9.2. Lewisham Council's funding from government has been hugely reduced since 2013/14, while at the same time, the Council has faced increased costs through population growth, changes to government policy, the COVID19 pandemic and costs associated with inflation and rising energy bills. Considering the minimum cost required to achieve the action plan, there is a need to find creative ways to find the resources needed to support this work.
- 9.3. 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 are potential connections between delivering on a low carbon agenda and the Council's need to cut expenditure and secure greater financial stability.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. 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.
- 10.3. The matters considered in this report are not key decisions. The implementation of various matters referred to in this report may be key decisions and if so will be addressed through the appropriate mechanisms when those decisions arise.

11. Equalities implications

- 11.1. The Council must have due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This requires all public bodies, including local authorities, to 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
- 11.2. The Council's Single Equality Framework 2020-2024 provides an overarching framework and focus for the Council's work on equalities and helps ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 11.3. 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.
- 11.4. 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. Further work is needed to fully identify the equalities implications of climate change for Lewisham residents.

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12. Climate change and environmental implications

- 12.1. The environmental implications of the climate crisis are summarised in the Action Plan. Since the plan was published there has been good progress made to embed action on the climate within the Council's strategies and operational functions, and to bring together the Council's work across wider environmental activity particularly in relation to the Council's Waste Strategy, the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, the Air Quality Management Plan, the draft Local Plan, the Flood Risk Management Strategy and the current Sustainable Streets programme.

13. Crime and disorder implications

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

14. Health and wellbeing implications

- 14.1. 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.

15. Background papers

- 15.1. <https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/catford-regeneration/catford-town-centre-framework>

16. Report author(s) and contact

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17. Glossary

18. 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.

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