

Report subject	Climate Progress Report 2022-23
Meeting date	6 March 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report presents the fourth annual update to Cabinet on progress towards commitments made in the BCP Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration, made on the 16th of July 2019.</p> <p>Given the urgency of the climate crisis the Council remains committed to achieving its strategic objectives by the deadlines, ahead of national targets.</p> <p>The Council recognises that whilst this report is focused on reporting progress made during 2022-23 under the previous administration, changes need to be made if we are to stay on track to meet our ambitious targets.</p> <p>In addition, the Council also acknowledges the significant lack of national progress in areas such as grid policy and technology adoption; alongside external factors such as the disruption of international supply chains and global inflation, the Council recognises the scale of the challenge and the significant resource required to achieve its ambition.</p> <p>Evidence of global and local effects of accelerating climate changes are becoming manifest, and this needs a focus also on mitigation to prepare our area for more extreme weather events.</p> <p>2022-23 progress, a period under the previous administration, in summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make BCP Council and its operations carbon neutral by 2030 - progress continues to be made, with scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions reduced by 9.9% from the 2019 baseline • Work with the wider community to make the region carbon neutral before the UK target of 2050 – according to most recent data total area-wide emissions for 2022-23 have reduced by 8.3% from the 2019 baseline. <p>In recognition of the urgency to decarbonise, and that progress has not been as rapid as hoped or needed, it is proposed that our priorities during this next reporting period, include clear actions to accelerate progress, interim milestones and funding proposals.</p>

Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Notes the Climate Progress Report 2022-23 b) Agrees to join the UK100 initiative and adopt the Net Zero by 2045 pledge thereby clearly defining the previous commitment of ‘before 2050’ for our area-wide target c) Agrees the proposal to set interim reduction targets for the Council owned estate, specifically the priority emission sources of Council buildings and energy supply. In addition, we will look to establish targets for energy use in homes and road transport reduction in order to validate that both our corporate and area-wide targets are achievable d) Agrees to look at funding proposals, including ‘invest to save’ and consider a revolving fund for energy improvements in Council-owned buildings and other projects e) Notes the proposal to establish a Carbon Neutral Steering Group, to bring services together and to find solutions to carbon reduction challenges across the corporate estate f) Renew our work with external partners to shape and set interim targets towards the area-wide commitment to Net Zero g) Creating interactive dashboards to highlight targets and progress towards the internal and area-wide goals h) To agree to the delivery of carbon literacy training (with or without accreditation) for officers and members, business and community, which will empower decision making to meet carbon neutral targets and initiatives.
Reason for recommendations	This report informs on progress made to date and proposes the next steps of climate actions that the Council will commit to in order to deliver on the ambitions of a carbon neutral Council by 2030 and a carbon neutral region ahead of the UK’s 2050 target.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley, Portfolio Holder for Climate Mitigation, Environment and Energy
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Isla Reynolds, Director of Marketing, Communications and Policy</p> <p>Gail Scholes, Interim Head of Policy, Sustainability and Inclusion</p> <p>Neil Short, Strategic Lead: Climate, Resources and Sustainability</p> <p>Becky Beaumont, Sustainability Officer</p>

Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. On 16th July 2019, BCP Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and committed to becoming carbon neutral across Council operations by 2030 and to work with partners to set a target date for when the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole region can be made carbon neutral, ahead of the UK target of 2050. An annual report is required to update on progress towards achieving these targets. This is provided at Appendix 1.

Progress Report 2022-23: Headlines

2. The Council has continued its progress to meet its 2030 commitment for a carbon neutral organisation in reducing scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 9.9% since 2019 and the Council remains committed to making further reductions. This figure is in part due to the ceasing procurement of green electricity and the additional buildings that have been added to the council's energy contract, increasing both electricity and gas consumption. For this latter reason, the baseline needs to be amended to reflect the changes to the council's emissions and future forecasts.
3. The commitment for a carbon neutral area before 2050 has seen slow but steady progress made. Latest data shows an 8.3% reduction since 2019. Whilst the trend is in the desired direction, the pace needs to be accelerated if the Council and wider area are going to meet their ambitions. Interaction with partners and facilitating exchange of knowledge and good practice needs re-energising.

Membership of UK100

4. As previously instructed by Cabinet, the merits of membership of UK100 have been reviewed. It is proposed that, in recognition of the urgency to decarbonise, the Council join the UK100 group of local authorities and commit to its Net Zero membership pledge. Whilst this is not legally binding, it signals the Council's intention to step up activity and allows access to assistance and networking between local authorities, which would not otherwise be available.
5. Most of the necessary requirements are already fulfilled, including a Net Zero Council operations by 2030 pledge. However, the Council must adopt a new target for a Net Zero area by 2045, which is 5 years earlier than the current endpoint. Full details of the pledge are at Appendix 1, Part 3. This pledge would require further pathway modelling to assess the practicalities of delivery, this will constitute an additional action for 2023/24 reporting.

Action on Priority Emission Sources

6. The Progress Report identifies the Council's own Scope 1 and 2 emission sources that are largest or increasing across its portfolio. Accordingly, urgent consideration

should be given to directing resources towards these if progress is to be made by 2030. (see detail in Appendix 1) These are: Council buildings (owned and operated) and procurement of energy supply contracts (which ensures a future energy supply that is secure, cheaper, and greener).

7. To address these priority sources, it is proposed to establish a Carbon Neutral Steering Group. This will bring services together to find co-ordinated solutions to carbon reduction challenges across the corporate estate. To further support the Group, it is proposed that reserves allocated for climate activities will be used to fund carbon reduction projects, including energy efficiency or renewable generation installations on Council buildings.

Climate Action Plan 2019 update

8. The draft Climate Action Plan presented to Cabinet in 2019 consisted of 153 suggested actions to meet the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration commitments. A public consultation followed to establish which actions had support before activities commenced. To date, almost 50% of the actions have been, or are on track, to be completed. A full update of outcomes is included in Appendix 1 Part 4. A revised set of priorities will be formulated in the coming year.

Options Appraisal

9. **Option 1:** Cabinet notes the Climate Progress Report and agrees the proposals to take forward the Council's climate activity.
10. **Option 2:** Cabinet rejects the Climate Progress Report and the proposals, which will impact the momentum of the Climate Programme and risk the Council not meeting its 2030 carbon neutral target.

Summary of financial implications

11. Funding has been identified to enable the Sustainability Team to appoint to two posts, from within the existing establishment, to address corporate carbon reduction and adaptation planning. These will be in place in 2024/25. In addition, reserves for climate activities have been increased to £1m in recognition of increasing activity in this area. Proposed focusing on reducing energy use in Council assets would have the co-benefits of reducing pressure on the Council's revenue budget and improving comfort for staff and visitors.
12. The proposed revision of the area-wide target from the year 2050 to 2045 is a recognition of the need to accelerate activity. This target relates to area-wide emissions, most of which are out of the Council's direct control, relying on national legislation change and action. By making this pledge, the Council is committing to playing its part in this wherever possible but anticipates there are no additional financial implications. If this situation changes, then specific implications on finances will be brought forward appropriately for consideration at that time. Membership of the UK100 initiative, a condition of which is the revising of the target, will bring positive benefits and opportunities that will enable the Council to network, learn, build capacity and assist in emissions reduction.

Summary of legal implications

13. Legal implications in delivery of any projects referenced within this report or appendices will be considered on a case-by-case basis and early engagement with the Council's Legal Team will be sought. In addition, the Council is obliged to sufficiently take account of the Climate and Ecological Emergency in the development of the new Local Plan, or risk legal challenge.

Summary of human resources implications

14. During 22/23, the Sustainability Team has been moved to the Marketing, Comms and Policy Directorate, a central location within the organisation, which provides an opportunity to embed sustainability and climate action at the heart of Council strategy, policy, and operations.

Summary of sustainability impact

15. To establish impact on sustainability and other Corporate Plan objectives, Decision Impact Assessment ref. 618 has been completed and the report proposals have achieved a low carbon footprint, as the proposals support the climate agenda. The report seeks to reduce emissions through, behavioural change, building retrofit improvements, encouraging active travel, reducing waste, reducing pollution, creating green jobs, regenerating the natural environment, and enabling communities to live healthy lives.

Summary of public health implications

16. Climate change will result in increasing heatwaves, extreme weather events, floods, disease, and increased cancer risk. The measures proposed to reduce climate change will help to mitigate against these dangers and additional benefits from those actions can also have a direct positive health effect (e.g., increased fitness from walking or cycling and better air quality from reducing car journeys).

Summary of equality implications

17. An EIA conversation/screening document has been completed. It concludes that the Annual Report itself has no negative equalities implications but potentially some positive outcomes, for example addressing health inequalities or protecting older people from extreme temperatures. Resulting actions may require individual assessments to be carried out before commencement.

Summary of risk assessment

18. We must further our knowledge of Climate Vulnerability and Risk of the possible effects of climate change on our area. Failing to achieve the Climate and Ecological Emergency declaration commitments will contribute to an increasingly hostile global and local environment. Not achieving targets will result in the Council failing to meet

its commitments under the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration and therefore not helping global efforts to keep climate warming below 1.5°C to avoid further environmental damage, population displacement, biodiversity loss and risk to life. The Council will also face reputational damage from negative publicity (locally, nationally, and internationally). However, if we act in a timely manner, many of the actions to tackle climate change will contribute to social, economic, and environmental benefits, reducing the likelihood of actual and perceived risks. Risk assessments will be carried out for individual Climate Action projects as required, on a case-by-case basis.

Appendices

Progress Report Appendix 1 contains:

- Part 1: BCP Council Climate Progress Report 2022-23
- Part 2: Technical Appendix
- Part 3: The UK100 initiative
- Part 4: Action Plan update