

To: Executive  
26 Jan 2020

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**Climate Change Strategy 2020 - 2024**  
**Executive Director of Delivery**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present the proposed climate change strategy for Bracknell Forest Council.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 The Executive agrees the Climate Change Strategy and action plan**
- 2.2 The Executive agrees to the formation of an all Member climate change advisory group**

**3 Reasons for Recommendation(S)**

- 3.1 In Bracknell Forest Council Motion (02/2019), passed at Full Council on 17 July 2019, the council committed to becoming a net-zero greenhouse gas emitting borough by 2050. The motion states:

*“This Council strongly believes in the need to continue its work to address the impact of man-made Climate Change on our local communities. To this end, this Council asks the Executive to develop detailed action plans with measurable ambitious annual targets and an annual report to address this pressing matter to ensure that the Council meets the government target of eradicating its net contribution to climate change by 2050”*

**4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 Continuing with 3-yearly action plans, rather than a strategic framework and action plan

**5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Bracknell Forest Council has been committed to addressing climate change since the Nottingham Declaration on climate change in February 2007. Therefore, in the spirit of, “deeds not words<sup>1</sup>”, the council re-stated its commitments towards planning for and mitigating man-made climate change via the council Motion (02/2019). In the light of the new information from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the council undertook a review of its action plan outcomes to-date and what additional actions it needs to take to ensure that it is carbon neutral by 2050, in line with the Climate Change Act (2008).
- 5.2 Effectively tackling man-made climate change can only be achieved through having a clear strategy. Having a clear focus ensures that our work has clear, achievable and measurable outcomes that reduce CO<sub>2</sub> in the borough. This is important, as there

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<sup>1</sup> Emmeline Pankhurst founder of the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) coined the phrase

are many things that could be done and are beneficial in their own rights to the local environment, but Bracknell Forest Council has a singular focus on bringing the emissions in the borough down through this strategy.

5.3 The broad structure for the council's climate change strategy is summarised in the diagram below:

## BFC Climate Change Strategy (on a Page)

Bracknell Forest Council: 2020 – 2024

Adopt 4 Strategic Principles for the council's approach to tackling climate change

**We will achieve our 2050 objective of being carbon neutral through:**

Working with partners.

Preserving the climate beneficial elements of the COVID-19 emergency.

Working with schools and young people.

Preserving the natural environment sustainably in line with the Bracknell Forest strategic plans

Develop a high-level implementation Climate Change Action Plan

action plan to reduce carbon emissions that are under the council's control

action plan to influence and lead community action against climate change



5.2 This structure seeks to both act as an implementation approach and to give focus to the work. Our approach is to work with partners, schools and young people, to ensure that we are able to persevere the positive changes seen from COVID 19, plus ensure that our approach is consistent with our current plans, both corporate and environmentally specific.

5.3 Lessons learnt from the last action plan is that the work must have focus. Therefore, this strategy now clearly identifies that there are things the Council can directly control and things upon which it can act as an enabler or influencer. The strategy itself now picks up on those key differences and the actions required.

5.4 Whilst the Council has had climate change actions in place since 2013 there is a current need to generate a start point (baseline measure) against which to measure future progress. Taking forward the approach of separating out the things that we have direct control of and those which we have influent upon, two baselines have been taken into the strategy.

5.5 The best data source for estimating borough wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is that collated by the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Bracknell Forest borough's emissions have been estimated to be 443 Kilotonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per annum. For the council itself, an independent study has been completed and Bracknell Forest Council's own 'direct' GHG emissions were estimated for the calendar year 2019 as being 6.3 Kilotonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per annum. This represents around 1.5% of the total emissions figures.

- 5.6 Our strategy sets out the background context, at both international and national levels. It details the story of place and the work that Bracknell Forest Council has undertaken in addressing Climate Change, since 2007 and the work we have undertaken in developing the strategy.
- 5.7 The current version presented, whilst the strategy text is complete, the document still needs to go through the graphic design process in order to deliver a non-printable, e-document in support of the underlying values of preserving our natural resources.

### **Climate Change Strategy Action Plan**

- 5.8 The revised action plan (**appendix 2**) captures current climate change projects and aligns each to the principles that our climate change strategy is built around. It also gives each project a sense of identity in terms of which directorate / section they reside within, the lead Officer and to which Executive Member's portfolio the project relates.
- 5.9 The strategy action plan is a live document which currently has a total of **41** projects covering a breadth of council directorates. 5 of these projects reflect emissions that BFC has direct control over; 18 of these projects reflect emissions that the council can influence within the borough; and 18 of these projects are a combination of both of the above.
- 5.10 Officers responsible for each project / set of projects will be asked to provide quarterly updates utilising a standard template (**appendix 3**). These updates will subsequently be reflected within the strategy action plan and will form the basis for an intended annual progress report on climate change. Possible projects are being added towards the bottom of the action plan. These are forward looking possibilities which are not committed / adopted projects yet.
- 5.11 Measures / targets – we recognise that our current measures / targets are diverse and wide ranging and recognise the need to tie these down to a standard measure that links back to impacts on greenhouse gas emissions. This is a developing piece of work and our longer-term aim will be to convert these targets / measurables back to tonnes of co2 equivalent for ease of comparison purposes.
- 5.12 The project list will be reviewed quarterly, enabling new projects to be commissioned and added to the roster. Those projects which have been completed will also be taken off at these quarterly reviews. The summary performance of all the projects for each quarter, will be reported as part of the Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR) process reporting to the O&S Commission. An annual project performance report will also be presented to Full Council.
- 5.13 The Executive are asked to recognise both the strategy and the accompanying action plan as representative of the council's commitment to becoming a net-zero greenhouse gas emitting borough by 2050. In addition, and in recognition of the council's responsibility to support borough-wide reductions in greenhouse gas emissions it is also recommended that The Executive set up a Climate Change Advisory Group.

## **6 Consultation and Other Considerations**

### **Legal Advice**

- 6.1 The Council has powers via the Localism Act, (General Powers of Competence) supplemented by Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Sustainable Communities Act 2007, to engage directly and work with other agencies in helping to tackle climate change. The specific legal implications of the projects identified in the report will be identified as the projects progress.

#### Financial Advice

- 6.2 The projects currently detailed within the climate change action plan represent ongoing pieces of work which have each received the appropriate financial budgetary approval. Any future work projects will be subject to the same financial approvals.

#### Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 The Council's approach to climate change has been scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission including public inputs on 10<sup>th</sup> March and 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2020. Feedback from these sessions has been built in to the climate change strategy.

#### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 An initial EIA screening review has been completed with the conclusion that there are no significant specific disadvantages arising from the introduction of a climate change strategy.

#### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 The actual and potential effects of climate change are a global issue with governments across the world being urged to take appropriate action to address it. The council's climate change strategy is a local response to that wider issue.

#### Background Papers

Appendix 1: Bracknell Forest Council Climate Change Strategy 2020 - 2024

Appendix 2: Climate Change Strategy Action Plan

Appendix 3: Action Plan update template

#### Contact for further information

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