

To: **Executive**  
**16 July 2024**

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**Annual Report on Climate Change**  
**Executive Director of Communities**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update the Executive on annual progress made against the climate change strategy.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That the Executive agrees the report and notes the progress made by the Council in relation to its climate change strategy.**

**3 Reasons for Recommendation(S)**

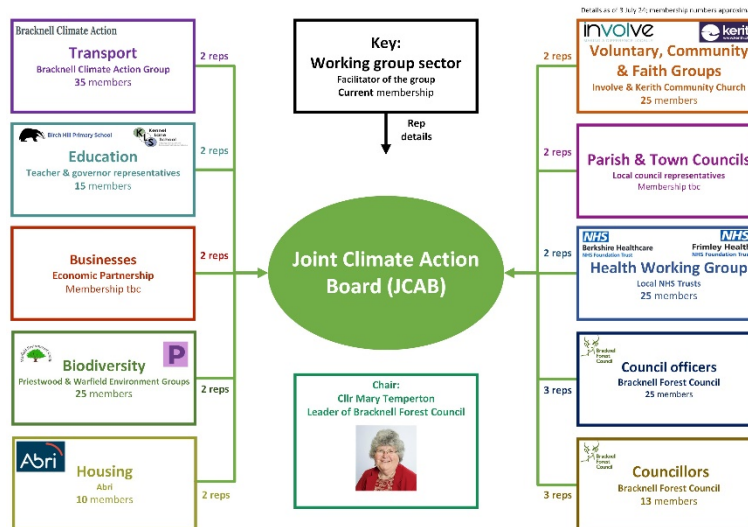
- 3.1 The council has set the objective of achieving Net Zero by 2030, in line with its declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency. Tracking progress of this objective was agreed as part of the council's climate change strategy. This strategy sets out that a report on progress would be presented to council annually.

**4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 n/a

**5 Supporting Information**

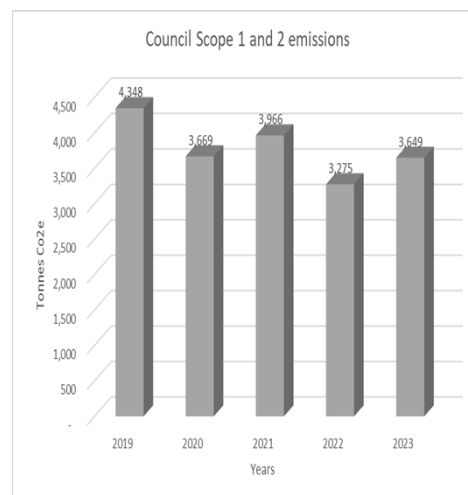
- 5.1 In September 2023 the council passed a new Motion declaring a climate change and biodiversity emergency. The Motion resolved that the Council would review, broaden and accelerate its Climate Change Strategy, and to commit to achieve net-zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as close to 2030 as possible. It also promised that we would co-produce with the community a Community Climate Emergency Strategy (CCES), with the aim of making the wider Bracknell Forest area net-zero as close to 2030 as possible. Both strategies should be done so in a financially transparent way to demonstrate accountability, affordability and economic benefits, with clear interim, smart targets.
- 5.2 The council's current climate change strategy and accompanying action plan covered the period 2020 – 2024 so are due reviews by the end of 2024 anyway. Those are the subject of a separate paper.
- 5.3 The need to work more closely and collaboratively with our communities on climate change became a focal point for 23/24 activities. This started with The Leader convening an inaugural climate change summit in July 2023, held at Time Square. The summit was attended by over 130 delegates from schools, businesses, community groups, councillors and council officers. The summit led to the creation of the Joint Climate Action Board (JCAB) supported by 10 sector-specific working groups. The JCAB aims to be representative of the borough and will be responsible for the creation of the CCES.



5.4 The full annual progress report for 2023/24 is attached as appendix 1, accompanied by a comparable progress summary (appendix 2). There is also a one-page summary of 23/24 activities attached as appendix 3. The following highlights are reported to council. Domestic housing retrofits were supported by the Solar Together, HUG2 and Warm, Safe and Well schemes. The council’s own estate benefited from 7 properties receiving retrofit works, successful completion of the Commercial Centre plus progress towards delivering a potential solar farm with accompanying EV charging facility on London Road. On the transport front much work was done to deliver increased EV charging, promoting active travel and improving public transport provisions. In the natural estate we delivered projects to promote both biodiversity and encourage sustainable use of resources. Our kerbside food waste collections expanded again and we introduced a trial to recycle soft plastics. The new Local Plan will strengthen our environmental requirements around new developments and we are now in a position to potentially revoke one of our Air Quality Management Areas with DEFRA.

5.5 The key performance measure for the council has been emissions data in scopes 1 and 2, which we have collected since 2019. Emissions are reported on a calendar year basis. The data was re-baselined in early 2024, updating the numbers from 2019-2022 to consistently apply the location-based approach we are now taking.

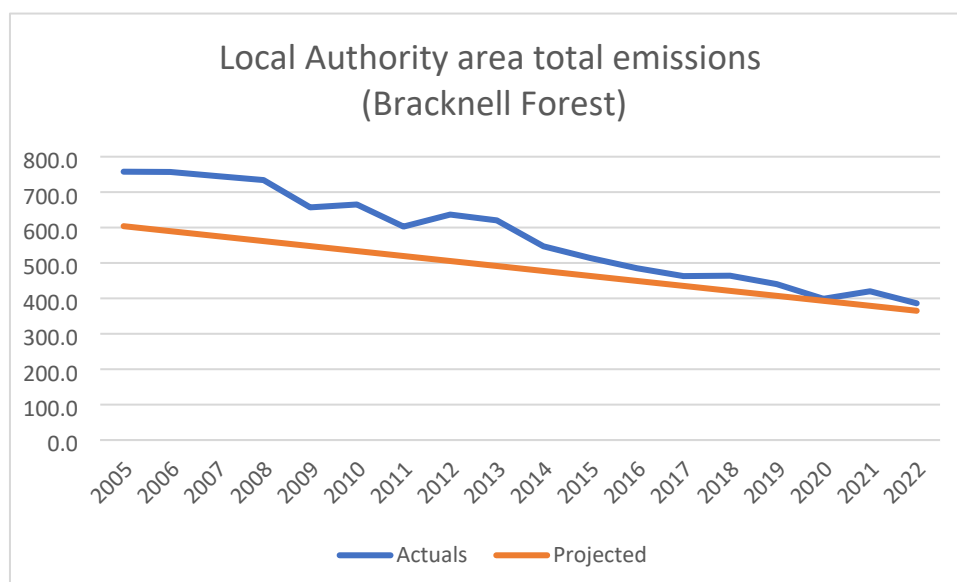
5.6 Our total CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions from the council’s transport fleet, plus gas and electric consumption was 3,649 tonnes (scope 1 & 2 emissions). This compares to last year’s figure of 3,275 and the initial figure of 4,348 in 2019. The overall trend is therefore a 699 tonne reduction across the 5 years, although CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions actually rose by 374 tonnes over the most recent year.



Much of that increase came from both electricity (249 tonnes) and heating (128 tonnes). Some of the change in heating figures is attributable to converting heating

systems from oil to gas, but there was still a general incremental increase in both gas and electricity use across the estate.

- 5.7 The key performance measure for the borough is total CO<sub>2</sub>e territorial emissions by local authority area. For the Bracknell Forest borough area, the 2022 figure was 386.1kT CO<sub>2</sub>e which is down by 33.9kT from 2021. The overall reduction trend from 2005 to 2022 is shown as the blue line in the chart below. The red line shows a projected reduction based on the UK target of achieving a 78% reduction against a 1990 baseline by the year 2035.



- 5.8 Looking forwards the council-wide Business Change programme includes a Net:Zero workstream which aims to alter the culture within the organisation to embed climate change thinking in our decision making processes and to improve the knowledge and confidence of our officers and councillors around climate change.
- 5.9 The need to understand the Council's scope 3 emissions footprint will also become a focus next year. It is estimated that scope 3 (essentially supply chain) emissions could actually account for as much as 80-90% of the organisation's total carbon footprint.

## 6 Consultation and Other Considerations

### Legal Advice

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

### Financial Advice

- 6.2 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

### Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 N/A

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 Specific EIA's are completed by Officers for their individual projects within the Climate Change Action Plan.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 The Council is committed to becoming a net zero carbon authority by 2030 or as near as possible. All actions that the council undertakes should be assessed for their environmental and financial impacts prior to receiving executive approval.

### Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to:

Reduce emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. The Council believes that this will reduce emissions because having readied and completed feasibility studies places the Council in a stronger position for bidding and securing any public authority funding offered by the Government.

### Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 Climate Change and health and wellbeing have strong and developing links. The promotion of healthy green spaces, active travel and improving the warmth of vulnerable residents' homes are all such examples. Officers from both the climate change and health and wellbeing teams continue to collaborate on developing an integrated impact assessment tool to assist with future council decision making processes.

### Background Papers

Appendix 1: Climate Change Annual Progress Report 2023/24

Appendix 2: Climate Change comparable progress summary

Appendix 3: Actions on a page 2023/24

### Contact for further information

Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director Communities - 01344 355621

Kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk