



Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 3 October 2019

Carbon Management

Report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

1.1. On 7 March 2019, Rushcliffe Borough Council passed the following motion;

In the light of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, declaring a climate emergency, Rushcliffe Borough Council will evaluate the implications of the report and review its 2010 Carbon Management Plan. The review should be undertaken by a relevant scrutiny group, and their findings shall be considered by the Cabinet by no later than March 2020. This Council calls upon the designated scrutiny group to consider the Council setting a carbon neutral target to be achieved by 2030.

The commitment to review and implement a refreshed target should also be integrated into the Council's commitment and leadership to parish councils, business and strategic partners, to deliver widespread carbon reductions across the borough. Rushcliffe Borough Council will continue to call on the Government to provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on climate change easier.

1.2. This report outlines the Council's current strategic framework and recent performance in reducing carbon emissions from the Council's direct operations. A presentation will be delivered to the Group by the Community Development Manager and the Environmental Sustainability Officer which will cover the scale of the challenge faced, local emissions, delivery of the existing action plan and the proposed scope, approach and resource considerations of developing a new action plan capable of achieving carbon neutral status by 2030.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) Endorses the priority focus on the Council's own direct operations and the mitigation required to achieve carbon neutral status by 2030
- b) Requests that officers undertake a further review in 2025 regarding the potential adoption of a Borough-wide net zero carbon emissions target

- c) Comments on the proposed process to produce a new carbon management action plan and indicates their interest in attending training
- d) Requests that officers report back to scrutiny in January 2020 with a draft action plan (including resource implications) to enable members to make their recommendations to Cabinet in March 2020

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. On 26 June 2019, The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 was enacted. This Order changes the Climate Change Act 2008 to require that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 must be 100% lower than the 1990 baseline, i.e net zero emissions.
- 3.2. The UK Committee on Climate Change states: “There is a crucial role for local authorities in reducing emissions to meet national carbon budgets” and “The focus of a local authority low-carbon plan should be emissions drivers over which they have significant influence. In particular ... residential and non-residential buildings, surface transport, waste and own estate”.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The Council’s Carbon Management Plan was approved by Cabinet in June 2011, with a target to reduce carbon emissions by 15% by 2015 and a longer term target of 30% by 2020, from our base year of 2008/09, in line with Government guidance at that time.
- 4.2. It was agreed in November 2013 that future actions for the Carbon Management Plan be incorporated into the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan which runs to 2020. A significant part of the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan has now been completed, including:
 - a. Moving the main council offices to a new building
 - b. Redeveloping leisure provision in West Bridgford
 - c. Working with partners to deliver affordable warmth
 - d. Purchasing cleaner more carbon efficient vehicles.
- 4.3. However, some parts of the Action Plan have not yet been fully delivered, including:
 - a. Redeveloping leisure provision in Bingham
 - b. Redeveloping the depot (services moving during 2019)
 - c. Staff and user travel plan at the Arena
 - d. Adoption of the local plan (Part 2 planned for adoption during 2019)
- 4.4. All of this has led to an 18.2% drop in emissions up to April 2018 from our base year of 2008/09 for carbon emissions from our operations and services.

- 4.5 The relative split in carbon emissions across the Council's estate for the 12 month period April 2017 to March 2018 is shown in Figure 1. This highlights the significant impact that Leisure Centres have on carbon generation.

Fig 1 - RBC contribution by source in 2017/18:

	GHG Emissions In tonnes CO₂e	% Contribution
Gaseous fuels for own consumption	134	3.08
Vehicle fleet	772	17.73
Grid electricity	280	6.45
Streetwise Fleet	118	2.72
Business Travel	43	1.01
Externally Managed Leisure Centres - Gas Consumption	1,971	45.27
Externally Managed Leisure Centres - Electricity Consumption	930	21.36
Losses due to Electricity transmission and distribution	103	2.37
Total	4,351	

- 4.6 Green House Gas emissions from the authorities operations and services are measured by taking records of electricity and gas usage for property (including leisure centres provided by the authority but operated by contractors), litres of petrol and diesel used by the Council and fleet and mileage claims for business travel by staff. This is converted to emissions of carbon equivalents by a methodology published annually by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
- 4.7 Emissions caused by water use on council property, employee commuting (this is often regarded as the employees own carbon footprint), waste generated by the authorities operations and fugitive emissions (e.g. from air conditioning units) are not calculated as the data to make these calculations is not available. We do not record emissions from property (e.g. office and industrial units) let to other users, as this will be part of that businesses carbon footprint.

Proposed approach to developing and RBC action plan

- 4.8 To be effective it is important to understand the sphere of influence that the Council can have in terms of tackling the challenge of climate change and carbon reduction. This will also help to ensure that there is clarity in terms of delivering the Council's motion and form the basis of a draft plan to be approved by Cabinet next year. Therefore the priority will be to understand if the Council can deliver a plan to be carbon neutral by 2030 for its own

operations, the extent to which by 2030 we can make changes to key contracts such as leisure and then understand how we can best influence wider business and the community.

- 4.9 Even in terms of the Council's own direct operations, to completely eradicate all emissions is unlikely to be possible therefore it is likely there will need to be an action within the plan to produce zero emission power (e.g. solar and wind generation – this can be by direct generation or by investing in local businesses, bio generation (green waste composting / bio digestion and bio methane electricity generation), food waste collection and bio generation, algae fuels). Any residual emissions would need to be re-absorbed to achieve net zero status e.g. through tree planting projects.
- 4.10 An officer steering group led by the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods has been set up to consider how the Council can best respond to these challenges, which will report into the Communities Scrutiny work programme. Membership of the group includes:
- Fleet
 - Contracts
 - Community Development
 - Environmental Health
 - Communications
 - Property
 - Planning/planning policy
 - Finance
 - Human Resources.
- 4.11 Training needs are an important consideration in the development and delivery of a carbon management plan. Although there are officers with knowledge and experience in this field there is a gap in terms of the extent of internal 'expertise' and dedicated capacity. It is therefore likely that additional support and/or training will be required for officers and potentially Councillors.

5 Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1 There is a strong scientific consensus that human activities have caused global warming. Without significant change in behaviour and policy, continued increases in temperature at the current rate will result in global warming reaching 1.5 degrees between 2030 and 2052. This would cause irreversible damage to the environment and result in climate related risks to health, livelihoods', food security, water supply and economic growth. (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report October 2018). This highlights a significant longer-term risk of major environmental and societal damage resulting from inactivity to tackle climate change.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

Given the scale of the challenge ahead and relatively modest progress that has been made over the previous decade, significant change will be needed. Although some improvements can be made at relatively low cost there is likely to be a capital and revenue investment required if a carbon neutral target is to be achieved by 2030. It will therefore be important to understand what the carbon value for money impact is for initiatives to inform the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and beyond.

6.2 Legal Implications

Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030 in itself is not in a legal requirement and consequently there is no legal duty for the Council to undertake actions and activities in support of the target. However, Council has agreed a motion that establishes an expectation to deliver widespread carbon reductions.

6.3 Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6.4 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no implications arising from this report that impact on community safety in respect of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988.

7 Link to Corporate Priorities

7.1 The issues raised within this report contribute directly to two of the Council's Corporate priorities, namely; 'The Environment' and 'Quality of Life'.

8 Recommendations

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For more information contact:	Dave Banks Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods 0115 9148438 dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Minutes of Council 7 March 2019 – Notice of Motion A.
List of appendices:	None.