



**Cabinet**

**Tuesday, 14 December 2021**

**Climate Change Strategy 2021 – 2030**

## **Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods**

### **Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change, Councillor A Brennan**

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. This report presents the new Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030, replacing the Climate Change Strategy 2009-2020, which was last updated in 2013.
- 1.2. A decision is required whether the new Strategy meets the needs of the Council and whether the Council should adopt this Strategy.
- 1.3. This overarching Strategy forms part of a suite of documents, strategies, and action plans all focused on mitigating the impacts of Climate Change and promoting environmental sustainability throughout the Borough. This will be achieved by setting policies and targets to tackle climate change and providing leadership to our communities by supporting residents and business to reduce their emissions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of Climate Change.

#### **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) adopts the Climate Change Strategy 2021 – 2030 as a Strategy of the Council;
- b) grants the Director – Neighbourhoods delegated authority to make minor revisions to the Strategy to ensure it meets the Council's objectives; and
- c) confirms the Council's commitment to work in partnership to ensure that the Borough of Rushcliffe will be Net Zero for its emissions by 2050, in line with National Government's Net Zero targets.

#### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1. The environment is one of the Council's Corporate Priorities and in order to align with National Government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (October 2021), the adoption of this Climate Change Strategy will provide a clear demonstration of how the Council will work with its communities and partners towards making Rushcliffe a carbon neutral Borough by 2050.

- 3.2. This new Strategy will frame the current actions and work streams outlined in the Council's Carbon Management Plan, which seeks to make the Council's operational services carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.3. The current adopted Climate Change Strategy ran to the end of 2020, and needs updating for its work to continue in line with the Environment Act 2021.

#### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1. The Environment Act 2021, makes provision about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment; environmental protection; waste and resource efficiency; air quality; environmental standards about water, nature, and biodiversity and for conservation covenants.
- 4.2. The new Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030 aligns with the Environment Act 2021 and provides a comprehensive set of Council documents and strategies with their own individual policies and targets, which we will continue to adapt and develop to contribute to the overarching Climate Change Strategy aims and objectives.
- 4.3. Climate change is a global issue that requires dramatic action on a local level. The introduction of this Climate Change Strategy sets out our path to achieve these goals. The Climate Change Committee (2020), states that 'Local authorities have a crucial role to play in achieving the UK's 2050 Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions target. Whilst local authorities are directly responsible for only 2-5 per cent of local emissions, through their policies and partnerships they have strong influence over more than a third of emissions in their area.'
- 4.4. A Climate Change Strategy for Rushcliffe was first produced in 2009, and then updated in 2013, and these were adopted by the Council.

#### **5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection**

The Council could choose not to adopt the Climate Change 2021-2030; however, this would not accord with the government Net Zero Strategy 2021 or the Environment Act 2021. Further if the Climate Change Strategy 2021 – 2030 is not approved the Council may not be able to deliver on its commitment to a carbon neutral Borough.

#### **6. Risks and Uncertainties**

Not adopting the Strategy could result in Climate Change being inadequately considered during new policies or strategies and beneficial management not being undertaken.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Financial Implications**

7.1.1. Tackling climate change by improving the environment and reducing carbon emissions represents a significant challenge for the authority requiring both revenue and capital commitment. As part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy presented to Council on 3 March 2020, Council approved a £1m Climate Change Action Reserve. Ongoing costs and savings will be identified as part of the business case for potential climate change and carbon reduction measures which will be included in the budget going forward.

7.1.2. In February 2021, Cabinet approved a £50,000 grant scheme over a four-year period to support tree protection and wildflower planting in Rushcliffe which will enable the continued delivery of the Rushcliffe Free Tree Scheme and Community Tree Scheme as part of its commitment to nature conservation, biodiversity and tackling climate change.

### **7.2. Legal Implications**

Whilst there are not direct legal implications, the Strategy supports the Council in exercising its duty to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of tackling climate change.

### **7.3. Equalities Implications**

Implementing strategies and interventions that will improve the capacity and resilience of vulnerable people and communities to climate change is vital especially where these groups may incorporate those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

### **7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications**

Section 17 highlights that local authorities, when carrying out their core activities, can significantly contribute to reducing crime and improving the quality of life in their area. It is therefore important to give due consideration to community safety issues in the development of Climate Change strategies.

## **8. Link to Corporate Priorities**

Quality of Life	Although climate change is usually discussed within the context of sustainability, it is equally important for an individual's quality of life. Indeed, environmental conditions not only affect human health and well-being directly, but also indirectly, as they may have adverse effects on ecosystems, biodiversity, or even more extreme consequences such as natural disasters
Efficient Services	Climate change will have significant impacts on levels of service delivery. The decisions made in service delivery

	planning are important and practical opportunities to improve community resilience. Integrating climate considerations into service delivery planning can help the authority manage risk, adapt service levels, and manage costs.
Sustainable Growth	It is critically important that the significant growth projected in the Borough is sustainable and takes into consideration climate change targets from developments as required by the Net Zero 2050 Strategy
The Environment	The report supports all aspects of the Environment theme of the Corporate Strategy

## 9. Recommendation

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- c) confirms the Council’s commitment to work in partnership to ensure that the Borough of Rushcliffe will be Net Zero for its emissions by 2050, in line with National Government’s Net Zero targets.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	David Banks Director – Neighbourhoods and Deputy Chief Executive 0115 914 8438 <a href="mailto:dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk">dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	Cabinet 9 February 2021 – Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy 2021 -2025  Cabinet 10 March 2020 - Carbon Management  <a href="#">Rushcliffe Climate Change Strategy 2009-2020</a>
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Rushcliffe Climate Change Strategy 2021 -2030