

SUBJECT:	CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND DECARBONISATION PROGRESS
MEETING:	STRONG COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE
DATE:	17th JUNE 2021
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide an opportunity to scrutinise the progress being made towards the council's commitment to reduce its carbon emissions in response to the climate emergency declaration in May 2019.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 The committee is invited to assess progress made towards reducing the authority's carbon emissions.
- 2.2 The committee identifies any areas of activity that should be considered by officers and the cross-party working group on climate change as it updates the action plan.

3 KEY ISSUES:

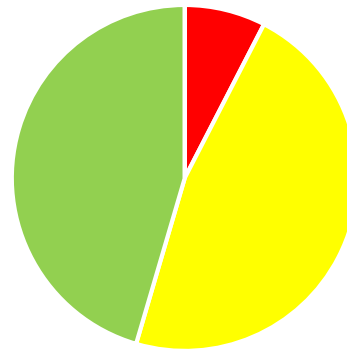
- 3.1 In May 2019 Council voted to declare a climate emergency. A commitment was made to reduce the authority's own emissions to net zero by 2030 and develop a strategy and costed action plan to deliver this commitment. The motion also committed us to encourage, support and enable residents and businesses to take action to reduce their carbon emissions in line with a 2030 target.
- 3.2 The strategy and an associated action plan was subsequently agreed in October 2019 and sets out a series of actions aligned to ten strategic objectives. The member led Climate Emergency Working Group, chaired by the cabinet member with attendance from officers and members of the community has met regularly since January 2020 to ensure that this important agenda is progressed with the necessary pace and ambition.
- 3.3 The strategic direction remain appropriate and it is not proposed that this needs adjustment at this point in time. However, the action plan remains a live and flexible document to which further actions and information can and should be added as technology advances and new opportunities become available.
- 3.4 Appendix one shows progress made to date for each of the current actions. These have been given a colour rating based on progress. Of the 66 actions in the plan, 30 are progressing as planned (green), 31 are showing some progress (yellow) and 5 not progressing as planned (red). Compared with the last report to Council in July 2020, there are more green and yellows, and fewer reds. This report gives an overview of progress, but the full action plan can be seen in Appendix 1

Progress on actions June 2020



■ No progress ■ Some progress
■ Good progress ■ Not yet started

Progress on actions May 2021



■ No progress ■ Some progress
■ Good progress ■ Not yet started

3.5 There is good progress being made on almost half of the actions, with some that had not started last year because of Covid-19 now underway. The reason for the slower progress with some of the actions is mainly because of delays due to the pandemic, caused by competing pressures, closure of venues or services, postponed consultation or engagement or delayed decisions on external funding.

3.6 Significant progress has been made against many of the actions. Examples include:

- Purchase of 7 electric vehicles for use by different council teams, with an electric minibus and two electric roadsweepers on order.
- Establishing Libraries of Things, Repair Cafes and a second Re-use Shop using Welsh Government Circular Economy funding.
- Developing further active travel routes, trial changes to traffic flows in town centres to allow active travel with social distancing and the purchase of electric bikes to pilot
- Delivery of Carbon Literacy training to 113 representatives of Monmouthshire PSB partners
- Nearly 10,000 streetlights converted to LED bulbs which use less energy.
- 150,000 kg of carbon dioxide saved by reducing business mileage in 2020/21. Although this has been due to lockdown, we are likely to continue to work agilely more often and continue to hold online meetings.
- Changes to grassland management, including reduced mowing and the purchase of new equipment to cut and collect mowings, all of which has benefited pollinators by allowing wildflowers to thrive.

3.7 Although good progress is being made against the actions in the plan, we still don't have enough detailed information about what our baseline emissions are and what the precise carbon savings of the measures we are taking are likely to be, in order to be able to accurately establish whether we are on track to meet the net zero carbon target by 2030. We will look to gather this information in the coming months and use it to inform an update of the action plan. Alongside this any recommendations made by the committee will be used to help shape the development of the plan which will be brought to Council in November.

4 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 This report is an update on progress, rather than a decision or policy change, so does not need to complete an evaluation. However, the Climate Emergency Action Plan has

significant positive contributions to make to the Well-being Goals with no negative impacts. There are no significant positive or negative impacts on the protected characteristics, safeguarding or corporate parenting. The principles of Long term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration and Involvement have been used throughout the development of the Action Plan.

5 REASONS:

- 5.1 To ensure that progress towards achieving the council's agreed policy aim is maintained and that the council is open and accountable to the citizens of Monmouthshire in demonstrating the activity that is being undertaken to achieve this important goal.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The activity within the Climate Emergency Action Plan all have different resource implications and will be funded in different ways. Some are zero cost, some will be grant funded, some will be funded by prudential borrowing and invest to save schemes. It is anticipated that where additional funds are needed these will be subject to subsequent decision making processes.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan, October 2019](#)

8 AUTHORS:

Hazel Clatworthy, Sustainability Policy Officer
Matthew Gatehouse, Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny

Tel: 01633 644397
E-mail: matthewgatehouse@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01633 644843
E-mail: hazelclatworthy@monmouthshire.gov.uk