

Meeting:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	Thursday 28 May 2020
Title of report:	Carbon Management Plan 2020/21 - 2025/26
Report by:	Cabinet member environment, economy and skills

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose and summary

To approve the council's new Carbon Management Plan which sets out the council's approach to deliver carbon neutrality by 2030/31 and sets an interim target of a 75% reduction of the council's own carbon emissions by 2025/26.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) the Carbon Management Plan (2020/21 – 2025/26) which sets out an interim target for the council to reduce its organisational carbon emissions by 75%, based on 2008/09 levels by 2025/26 is approved.**

Alternative options

1. Not to approve a new carbon management plan
 - This would negatively impact the council's ability to deliver the policy commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030/31.
2. To approve a carbon management plan with an alternative interim target for 2025/26.
 - The proposed interim target for 75% reduction has been recommended based on the balance of setting an ambitious, yet deliverable target.

Key considerations

3. Background

A Carbon Management Plan (CMP) is a strategic document which sets out an organisations own aspirations to reduce the environmental impact of its operations. In 2011, the council published its first Carbon Management Plan committing to reduce emissions from the Council's operations.

- This committed the council to a target reduction of its own CO2 emissions of 30% by 2015/16 against a 2008/2009 baseline.
 - After the successful delivery of a 29.4% reduction in 2015/16, a second Carbon Management Plan was published in 2017, which committed the council to a stretch target of a 40% reduction by 2020/21.
4. In 2013, the council jointly developed and became a signatory for a countywide carbon reduction target.
 - "Re-energising Herefordshire" committed Herefordshire to reduce countywide carbon emissions of 80% by 2050 against a 1990 baseline, which mirrored the targets within the Climate Change Act 2008.
 - Signatories of this countywide commitment included public sector organisations, business, local communities and environmental groups.
 5. The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report clearly states the following:

This Special Report also shows that recent trends in emissions and the level of international ambition indicated by nationally determined contributions, within the Paris Agreement, deviate from a track consistent with limiting warming to well below 2°C. Without increased and urgent mitigation ambition in the coming years, leading to a sharp decline in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, global warming will surpass 1.5°C in the following decades, leading to irreversible loss of the most fragile ecosystems, and crisis after crisis for the most vulnerable people and societies. (Source: IPCC, 2018: Global Warming of 1.5°C.)

6. The government plans to legislate to achieve net-zero emissions in the UK by 2050. Recently, the UK was also confirmed as the joint hosts of the next UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in 2020.
7. At the meeting of full council on the 8 March 2019, the council declared a Climate Emergency and unanimously resolved to call on the executive to produce a successor to the current Carbon Management Plan (2019-2023) within the early months of the new council
8. This is the Council's third Carbon Management Plan and builds on strong momentum reducing the council's organisational carbon emissions. CMP-2 achieved its target (40% reduction on baseline) two years early.
9. This plan sets out the Council's aspiration to become carbon neutral by 2030 and is the first of two plans each setting out our approach for the 5-year periods 2020/21 – 2025/26 and then 2025/26 – 2030/31.
10. CMP-3 is based on extensive evidence, research and analysis into how best to approach the challenging target, and setting an interim target for 2025/26.
11. The associated action is a dynamic plan which needs to constantly evolve as goals are met, new challenges and opportunities arise.
12. There is an element of uncertainty in reaching the target due to the constantly changing nature of addressing climate change and emissions. However, based on the information available; (including previous emissions data and projections of future programmes' savings), the range of potential reductions is between 65% and 84% during the period to 2025/26. 75% is realistic, achievable and a substantial move towards the net carbon neutral target by 2030/31.
13. The CMP-3 has been designed to be user-friendly and covers the key areas of achieving the 2025/26 interim target.
14. CMP-3 will be published on our website and used to determine and measure our progress towards carbon neutrality.
15. Internationally, as well as nationally, plans and policies committing nations to the reduction in emissions are at the forefront of many agendas. The UK has committed to becoming net carbon neutral by 2050.

Community impact

16. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC report suggested significant reductions are needed by 2030 for the earth to avoid a 2 degree Celsius rise in average global temperatures and the significant climate-related impacts that would come with that change.
17. Climate change impacts communities across the UK including Herefordshire. The rural nature of the county will add stressors to communities including, access to low carbon services and infrastructure as well as the potential impacts from extreme weather events such as flooding.

18. The resulting improvements in local air quality, improved public health and efficiencies from addressing the climate emergency will positively contribute towards the delivery of the council's county plan objectives of 'Securing better services, quality of life and value for money' and 'Enabling residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives.'
19. The development of CMP-3 and associated action plan will be developed to jointly contribute to the delivery of the council's wider strategic aims including the Health and Well-being strategy, Local Transport Plan, Air Quality Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and Accommodation strategy.
20. Additionally local leadership on carbon reduction will promote healthy lifestyles through local food choices, will support business diversification into low carbon goods and services, and will encourage active travel choices and the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles.

Equality duty

21. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
22. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. We believe this decision is for back office functions, partners and contractors as well as having a wider public interest. Our consideration is that the delivery of the carbon management plan, with its approach to reducing carbon dioxide emissions across the council's footprint, will have a positive impact on our equality duty.

Resource implications

23. The early reductions will be achieved by projects supported by the following budgets and grant funds:
 - Climate Fund (revenue budget)
 - Energy Efficiency (capital budget)
 - Office and Car Park Lighting Replacement (capital budget)
 - Solar Photovoltaic Panels (capital budget)
 - SEPuBu - grant fund to support sustainable energy in public buildings

- Halo Energy Efficiency (capital budget)
24. Future project proposals will continue to be developed on an individual bases and business cases and capital bids will be considered on an invest-to-save basis under separate governance.
 25. Whilst there is no direct impact on property, asset rationalisation does form a part of the plan. Once again, this will be covered in separate governance reports on a case-by-case basis.

Legal implications

26. There is currently no legal requirement to adopt a carbon management plan. The power to do so is conferred by Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. Under the general power of competence.

Risk management

27. There are a number of risks and opportunities involved with trying to achieve the target stated in this carbon management plan. There are noted below:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Risk: Not achieving the target: The 75% reduction will require concerted and consistent effort, combined with strong leadership. Not achieving this target risk reputational damage.	Mitigation: The methodology behind calculating expected emission reductions has been carefully considered. Here the range shows an expected reduction of between 65% and 84%. As such we have proposed the interim target of 75% which we consider to be ambitious, yet achievable.
Risk: Influencing: Emission sources which are not directly controlled by the council do fall under our scope of emissions. This means the council will need to influence others (e.g. partners and schools) in order to achieve reductions.	Mitigation: The council will build on existing relationships and contractual obligations with our partners to continue to reduce carbon emissions.
Opportunity: Leadership: The council is committed to leading a local response to the climate emergency and is uniquely placed to do so.	By successfully delivering this plan and our commitment to become carbon neutral this will demonstrate the necessary leadership.

Consultees

28. Political groups have been consulted and no objections or comments were received.

Appendices

- Carbon Management Plan 2020/21 – 2025/26.

Background papers

- None identified.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

CMP Carbon Management Plan

ICT Information and Communications Technology

IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change