

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019/2020 REPORT NO. 57

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Cabinet: 8 July 2019

REPORT OF:

Executive Director – Place

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| Agenda – Part:1 | Item: 3 |
| Subject: Response to Climate Change Emergency | |
| Wards: All | |
| Key Decision | |
| Cabinet Member consulted: Cllr Nesil Caliskan, Cllr Guney Dogan, Cllr Ian Barnes | |

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Enfield Council has actively reduced greenhouse gases and energy use through our 2020 strategy *Sustainable Enfield*. By 2017, the Council had reduced its carbon footprint by 45% vs 2008/09, exceeding its own target three years early. The Council has set a new target for a 60% reduction of carbon emissions by 2025.
- 1.2 However, there is increasing recognition of the damage to planet and danger to people and biodiversity from climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Special Report on Global Warming (October 2018) is the latest warning of the catastrophic consequences of the planet warming to above 1.5 degrees Celsius and confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.
- 1.3 Enfield Council will take a greater leadership role for the borough to acknowledge the threat that climate change poses and do all in its powers within its available financial resources to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** To approve the Council in joining other local authorities to declare a 'climate emergency' that requires urgent action.
- 2.2** To approve, for recommendation to Council, a commitment to make Enfield Council carbon neutral by 2030 – or earlier if possible – and undertaking to move all strategic, budgetary and policy decisions in line with this shift.
- 2.3** To establish a Climate Emergency Task Force of officers and members to determine how to achieve this target and to explore what more can be done to cut greenhouse gas emissions in the Council's operations and supply chain, as well as across the borough, and to:
 - Update the Sustainable Enfield plan by 2020 and submit it to Cabinet for approval
 - involve all our partners, but especially the Youth Parliament, in updating the plan
- 2.4** To recommend to the Pension Policy and Investment Committee that they consider revisions to the policy on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) within its Investment Strategy Statement. The new policy will require the Fund to review its holdings in companies ensuring they do contribute towards a de-carbonised economy. In particular, the Fund should continue to actively reduce its holdings in fossil fuel companies over a planned period of time.

3. BACKGROUND

Enfield Council has a strong track record in leading carbon reduction and innovative energy projects through its *Sustainable Enfield* programme. To date, the Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 45%, exceeding its own target three years early.

Council Operations

- 3.1** In our own operations, we have invested, and continue to invest, to improve the energy performance of Council buildings. We have invested £2.7 million in eleven schools and three corporate buildings that already generates over £400k annual energy bill savings. For example, we have recently installed 150Kw of solar panels on the Civic Centre, providing renewable energy to the building.

- 3.2 We also help residents to save money, energy and carbon, focusing on fuel poverty through a variety of projects. The Council has installed ground source heat pumps in eight tower blocks featuring 400 ground source heat which reduce bills for tenants. We also used the Smart Homes project to insulate 343 homes and ECO funding to improve the energy performance of 101 flats at Scott House in Edmonton.
- 3.4 The Council has reduced total gross greenhouse gas emissions over the past five years, by around 17%. This includes gas and vehicle fuel, shown on the pink bars and electricity consumption, shown on the blue bars. The spike in 2012-2013 was due to a long and very cold winter.

Table 1

Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2009/10 to 2017/18



- 3.5 The green tariff, shown by the green bars, represents the amount of renewable energy. For example, from wind and solar, through our contract with Laser Energy Buying Group.

Council Energy Use

- 3.6 As for energy usage, the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme measures our actual energy consumption, which we are legally required to report to the Environment Agency each year. Our reported energy consumption has reduced by over 60% over the last five years. This success has been driven by our energy saving projects, during a time when we've increased the use of our remaining

buildings, expanded our schools and provided additional street lights.

- 3.7 Enfield Council has been awarded Council of the Year in the Greater London Energy Efficiency Awards.

Across the Borough

- 3.8 In the eleven years from 2005 to 2016, Enfield's borough wide carbon emissions reduced by approximately 28%. This is in the context of our increasing population.
- 3.9 The Council has been recognized for innovative approaches to reduce flooding across the borough through rain gardens, river naturalization and introducing wetlands into parks. The Councils' Cycle Enfield programme and ongoing active travel and healthy streets investments reduce reliance on the private car and will lead to fewer transport related carbon emissions and better air quality.
- 3.10 The Council's Local Plan and the New Draft Local Plan seek to minimise the borough's contribution to climate change via the built environment and future development in recognition that emissions relating to buildings or building systems/processes consistently represent a large portion of emissions in the borough.

A Net Zero Carbon Target

- 3.11 A "net-zero" carbon emissions target refers to reaching net-zero carbon emissions by a selected date, but differs from zero carbon, which requires no carbon to be emitted as the key criteria.
- 3.12 Net-zero refers to balancing the amount of emitted greenhouse gases with the equivalent emissions that are offset or eliminated. This should primarily be achieved through a rapid reduction in carbon emissions, with offset mechanisms as secondary.
- 3.13 For Enfield, this implies reducing our current operational (fleet, electricity and heat consumption) carbon footprint from the current c. 30,000 tonnes and offsetting what is not feasible to eliminate so that the balance is zero.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The alternative option is to do nothing more and continue with the existing Sustainable Enfield programme. This is narrowly focussed on our Council operations, when in practice the Council also affects climate change through our purchasing, finance, property ownership and influence on residents and local businesses.

4.2 And the latest IPCC analysis and predictions show that despite the Enfield 2020 targets having been met and increased to 60% by 2025, these targets will not be consistent with the global level of reduction needed to keep warming within 1.5°C and therefore we need to increase our action.

4.3 If the Council does not take a leadership role on a wider range of sources of carbon emissions across the borough and work to reduce emissions further, it is possible that the borough will not reduce carbon emissions fast enough to prevent climate change. The consequences of inaction to address climate change include:

- Increased risk of flooding, subsidence, and damage to buildings and infrastructure through extreme weather
- Health problems, particularly for children, the disabled and older people associated with heat, air quality and respiratory issues
- Higher energy and food costs
- Increases in social injustice and inequality

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Climate change is a concept that we all live with and are affected by, however the future impacts of climate change for the next generation can be catastrophic. Recently we have experienced extremes of temperature in the same month, for example in March 2019 we had both the hottest and coldest days of the year within the space of a 2 weeks. These extremes of weather changes will increase in the shorter term and that can be dangerous for an ageing and sick population of Enfield residents which may suffer from fuel poverty. There is an estimated 11,000 residents in Enfield who are unable to afford to heat or cool their home adequately, if they are already sick and elderly this can lead to excess winter and summer deaths. Last year there was approximately 40,000 excess winter deaths in the UK.

5.2 In many cases the Council will derive economic benefit from tackling climate change both financial and social, whether it's an increase in uptake of renewable technology with longer payback periods or simply

investing in green roofs and adaptations measures such as sustainable urban drainage.

- 5.3 In some instances the business case for acting on sustainability or carbon emissions creates a difficult choice to be made between cost and impact. The presence of a collective commitment to tackling climate change will create a Council-wide policy driver to focus projects and speed delivery.

6. COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

- 6.1.1 The commitment to make Enfield Council carbon neutral by 2030 (or earlier if possible) will incur both revenue and capital financial commitments as well as opportunities which will be incorporated into the council's five year medium term financial plan and capital programme as appropriate. As the proposals are developed and considered the accompanying business cases will be subject to financial due diligence and consider both the financial and qualitative implications over time.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 requires the UK to achieve an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas levels (below 1990 levels) by 2050. The Prime Minister announced on 12th June 2019 that the UK will eradicate its net contribution to climate change by 2050. The statutory instrument to implement this has been laid before parliament and will amend the 2008 Act.
- 6.2.2 The general power of competence (s 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011) allows the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do. The recommendations within this report are in accordance with this power.
- 6.2.3 The recommendations from the newly established Climate Emergency Task Force will have to consider compliance with the Council's Constitution, in particular the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Property Procedure Rules.
- 6.2.4 Any legal agreements required to deliver recommendations in this report will need to be in a form approved by the Director for Law and Governance.

6.3 Property Implications

No immediate implications; to be determined through the Task Force.

7. KEY RISKS

The main risk that the Council is unable to deliver on the commitment to be net zero carbon by 2030. This risk will be explored and described further through the Task Force and the plan.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES – CREATING A LIFETIME OF OPPORTUNITIES IN ENFIELD

The Task Force should consider how the Corporate Plan should be updated to reflect the climate emergency.

8.1 Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods

Declaring a climate emergency and establishing an action plan will influence and direct positive outcomes in the Council's regeneration schemes, transport plans, housing development, and local planning policies. This in turn will make Enfield's neighbourhoods more resilient.

8.2 Sustain strong and healthy communities

Declaring a climate emergency and establishing an action plan will directly support the commitment to work with partners to protect the local urban and green environment and supports our goal to embed public health in all our strategies and projects.

8.3 Build our local economy to create a thriving place

The Task Force will develop the action plan with our partners, including young people. This will help residents to take more responsibility and develop active communities.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

The Joseph Roundtree Foundation found that the most disadvantaged groups in society are also more likely to be affected by the impacts of climate change. Taking action on climate change will have a positive impact on health and reduce health inequality in the borough. Specific impacts will be assessed through the development of the Task Force plan.

10. PERFORMANCE AND DATA IMPLICATIONS

The task force will develop climate change and carbon targets and performance KPIs for the Council to monitor.

11. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Public health across the world and in the UK is closely linked to climate risks – from an increase in extreme events such as flooding and heatwaves to the threat of new diseases carried here from non-native species of mosquitoes, for example.
- 11.2 And of course, climate change poses a serious threat to both national and global economies that we know have a major impact on the wider determinants of health such as having a decent job and a safe and warm home.
- 11.3 In particular, heatwaves are likely to become more frequent. At present, the health burden due to low temperature exceeds that of high temperature. However, heat-related mortality, which is currently around 2,000 premature deaths per year, is projected to increase steeply in the UK throughout the 21st century, from around a 70% increase in the 2020s to around 540% in the 2080s¹. Southern, central and eastern England appear to be most vulnerable to current and future effects of hot weather compared with other UK regions.
- 11.4 On the positive side, many interventions to reduce and mitigate climate change also have a positive impact on public health. For example supporting active travel, the role of accessible green and blue space in mental health, the importance of well insulated affordable homes and the evidence that sustainable nutrition is also healthier nutrition. Making a commitment to take action on climate change is highly likely to have a positive impact on public health.