

LEADING THE RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY
GLOUCESTERSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2019/20 TO 2024/25

Cabinet Date	20 December 2019
Environment & Planning	Councillor Nigel Moor
Key Decision	Yes
Background Documents	Cabinet (24 July 2015), <i>Responding to the Climate Emergency: Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy 2019/20 to 2024/25</i> , Gloucestershire County Council
Location/Contact for inspection of Background Documents	<i>Responding to the Climate Emergency: Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy 2019/20 to 2024/25</i>
Main Consultees	Environment Scrutiny Committee (17 Jul 2019) Gloucestershire Air Quality & Health Partnership (23 Jul 2019) Gloucestershire Climate Change Consultation (23 Aug – 23 Sep 2019) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (4 Sep 2019) Gloucestershire Youth Climate Panel (21 Sep, 5 Oct 2019)
Planned Dates	See 'Main Consultees'
Divisional Councillor	All
Officer	Colin Chick, Director of Economy, Environment & Planning 01452 3286320 colin.chick@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of Report	To seek Cabinet's approval of the draft Climate Change Strategy, including the Immediate Action Plan and resource implications.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the Immediate Action Plan and endorses the Climate Change Strategy (Annex 1); 2. Adopts the Gloucestershire Climate Change manifesto (Figure 1) and seeks the support of our partners at Leadership Gloucestershire to join the county council's commitment; 3. Approves up to £90,000 in-year investment to cover the costs of developing and implementing the strategy and for the staffing and green electricity proposals, from 2019/20 existing corporate budget; 4. Subject to the Council approving the £1million Climate Change and Air Quality 'Action Fund', to delegate authority to the Director for

	<p>Economy, Environment & Infrastructure to determine how the Fund will be used to support delivery of the Climate Change Strategy, in consultation with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cabinet Members for Environment & Planning; Finance & Change; Public Health & Communities; and ○ Directors of Finance; Public Health. <p>5. Notes the findings from the public consultation and the feedback from the Gloucestershire Youth Climate Panel (Annex 2)</p>
<p>Reasons for recommendations</p>	<p>The results of the public consultation (Annex 2) demonstrate concern by the public and businesses in Gloucestershire about climate change and its impacts. Having declared a climate emergency and held a very successful summit in May, the council must now lead the way and take decisive action in tackling climate change.</p>
<p>Resource Implications</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For 2019/20, up to £90,000 in-year investment to cover the costs of developing and implementing the strategy (£9k), staffing (£70k) and renewable electricity costs (£11k), from the existing 2019/20 corporate budget. 2. Funding is being sought through the council's 2020/21 budget setting process (Medium Term Finance Strategy – MTFS) for the following, which is due to be considered at the county council meeting in February 2020: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. £1million Climate Change & Air Quality 'Action Fund' as a one-off bid for 2020/21. Funding will be allocated to projects and initiatives that will deliver on the objectives set out in the climate change strategy. ii. £188,000 going forward including 1.5 FTE staffing, renewable electricity costs and renewable energy/ battery storage Outline Business Case (OBC), grid connection and planning. <p>Additional information on the resource implications is provided in the main report.</p>

Background

1. An information report went to Cabinet in July, providing a comprehensive overview of actions and progress over the past 15 years to reduce the council's carbon emissions. This included Cabinet's commitment in December 2018 to review the council's ambition and the effectiveness of its policies in delivering sustainable development in Gloucestershire; the events leading up to the council declaring a climate emergency in May; the Climate Change Summit a week later; and the commitments made at the Summit by the Cabinet Member for Environment & Planning.
2. When declaring the climate emergency in May, the council unanimously committed to:
 - Reduce the council's carbon emissions by at least 80% by 2030; with the remaining being offset, resulting in a 'net zero' organisation;
 - Deliver a carbon neutral county by 2050 and work with partners to identify what actions would be needed to deliver a stepped target of 80% carbon reduction by 2030.
3. The Council has been quick to act in response to the climate emergency declaration, developing the Climate Change Strategy and action plan to provide community leadership and urgent action. The council cannot do this alone and will seek the support of Leadership Gloucestershire¹ and other partners.
4. As well as developing the strategy, the council has:
 - Exceeded its corporate emissions reduction target of 60% by 2020/21 on 2006/07; with a 70% reduction achieved in March 2019.
 - Established the Gloucestershire Youth Climate Panel, comprising 40 young people aged mostly between 16 and 25.
 - Carried out a public consultation over the summer with a series of questions to understand attitudes to climate change and potential actions. The results (Annex 2) demonstrate concern by the public and businesses in Gloucestershire about climate change and its impacts.
 - In September, committed to work with our Leadership Gloucestershire partners to ensure that all new public buildings and residential and commercial developments in Gloucestershire support the move to zero carbon.

Immediate Action Plan: *Actions by April*

5. Time is of the essence. In the short term we have identified immediate actions that the council will take by April 2020. A comprehensive plan to reduce carbon emissions over the medium and long term will take more time to develop and require wider engagement with partners, communities and businesses. We will approach this challenge by producing a five year rolling action plan and updating it annually.
6. By April 2020 the county council will:
 - i. **Seek to agree with Leadership Gloucestershire and other partners** how we will work together to bring about a co-ordinated approach and action plan in response to the climate emergency.
 - ii. Launch the **Million Trees Challenge**, working with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, The Woodland Trust, public and private landowners to plant a million additional trees across the county by 2030.

¹ [Leadership Gloucestershire](#), chaired by the county council, brings together public sector organisations that allocate and spend significant resources in Gloucestershire. Its role is to provide vision, leadership and strategic direction in areas where it is vital to work together to meet the needs of the people and communities of Gloucestershire in the most cost effective way.

- iii. Establish a **£1m 'Action Fund'**, in 2020/21 to develop and incentivise the adoption of low carbon initiatives and improved resilience to climate change.
 - iv. Extend our **£1m energy efficiency invest to save fund ('Salix Fund')** to all Gloucestershire public sector organisations to reduce their corporate carbon footprints, committing at least £250k.
 - v. **Buy only 100 per cent renewable electricity** for our buildings, street lighting and council schools to put us ahead of our emergency declaration target of an 80% carbon reduction by 2030.
 - vi. **Generate electricity** from the Javelin Park Energy from Waste facility to power around 25,000 homes a year.
 - vii. Pledge its ongoing commitment to the **Gloucestershire Youth Climate Panel**, working closely with its members to develop a plan to challenge and influence the actions taken by individuals, communities, organisations and businesses.
 - viii. Review the **Local Transport Plan (LTP)** in view of the climate change emergency and consult on the revised LTP in January 2020. This will include policies for all transport modes: public & community transport; cycle; freight; highways; rail; walk.
 - ix. Tender a contract to install over 200 new electric vehicle charging points by 2023, as part of a county-wide **Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy**.
 - x. **Recruit** staff to develop and monitor a five year rolling action plan to ensure ongoing delivery of the Strategy.
7. In addition to these immediate actions we will develop and deliver medium and long term measures to reduce carbon emissions. These initial measures, below, will be further developed taking account of feedback, new information and emerging opportunities. More details will be published in annual updates to the five year rolling action plan. We will:
- xi. Work with our partners to ensure that all **new public buildings** and residential and commercial developments support the move to zero carbon and improve resilience.
 - xii. Work with our partners to aim for **all new development sites** to deliver high quality green infrastructure in line with the 'Building with Nature' standards, developed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.
 - xiii. Work with our partners to **stress test public sector assets and services** against climate change; particularly drought, hot dry spells, snow and low temperature, strong winds, heavy rainfall and flooding.
 - xiv. Establish an **Expert Advisory Panel** and a multi-agency **Climate Emergency Response Group** to scrutinise and coordinate delivery of the rolling 5 year action plan.
 - xv. Launch a targeted **Communications Campaign** to raise awareness and help communities and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their resilience.
 - xvi. Launch an **Awards programme** to reward innovative carbon reduction ideas and significant achievements by communities and business.
 - xvii. Establish **baseline carbon emissions** for the whole of Gloucestershire.
 - xviii. Identify the potential for **renewable energy generation** on public sector land in Gloucestershire and set an appropriate target to be achieved by 2025.
 - xix. Investigate the feasibility of **District Heating Networks**, starting in Gloucester, centred on Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, The Docks and Javelin Park, aiming to deliver at least one by 2025.
 - xx. Identify ways to reduce carbon emissions in our **£150m highways investment** plan.
 - xxi. Look to be an early adopter of innovative **commercial energy recovery** technology.

- xxii. Agree targets and funding for cleaner **public and schools transport** services.
- xxiii. Implement effective climate change impact assessments into the **council's decision making** process.
- xxiv. Develop options and recommendations for a Gloucestershire **Carbon Offsetting Scheme**.
- xxv. Expand our **Green Staff Travel Plan** and develop a **Clean Fleet Replacement Plan**.

Climate Change Strategy

- 8. The strategy (Annex 1) provides an overarching framework for Gloucestershire over the next five years, setting out what we will do, working with local communities and partners.
- 9. The Council and its partners cannot deliver a carbon neutral county alone; the strategy will support, encourage and assist everyone to play their part.
- 10. In order to respond urgently to the climate emergency and ensure resources are available to deliver short-term actions the '*Actions by April*' immediate action plan has been developed
- 11. If approved, there will be ongoing monitoring of the rolling action plan to ensure ongoing progress towards achieving objectives.
- 12. Plans will evolve and be developed using baseline data and its analysis to assist the setting of short, medium term and long term plans to deliver the required carbon savings.

Climate Change Manifesto

- 13. The following manifesto (Figure 1) has been developed to demonstrate our commitment to delivering the strategy. If the strategy is approved by Cabinet the Leader of the Council, as chair of Leadership Gloucestershire, will ask our partners to also sign the manifesto.

We have to change and fast – our ambitions...

In response to the climate change emergency we pledge to collectively reduce **Gloucestershire's carbon emissions by 80% by 2030** when compared to 2005, and **secure a carbon neutral county by 2050**.

We will do this by implementing the Gloucestershire Climate Change strategy, **working with our partners** to:

- Reduce Leadership Gloucestershire's carbon emissions **by 80% by 2030**, aiming for 100% ('Net Zero') by 2030 through carbon offsetting.
- **Show leadership**, make our policies and budgets deliver our climate ambitions and strengthen the Gloucestershire Sustainable Energy Strategy.
- Grow our **low carbon economy**.
- Help all our residents, businesses and partners to **radically reduce carbon**.
- Take care of our communities to **limit the impact of climate change** on them.
- Maintain and enhance the **quality of our natural environment**, protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the county.
- Lead an innovative new project to **plant a million trees by 2030**.
- Work towards **all new buildings being zero carbon**.
- Help residents to **reduce household carbon and save money**.
- Invest in and encourage **renewable energy**.
- **Reduce vehicle emissions from transport** to support quality of life, health and carbon reduction.
- Launch '**Green Gloucestershire**' awards that recognise excellence in tackling climate change.

Figure 1: Gloucestershire Climate Change manifesto

14. These are bold ambitions but will be underpinned by delivery and monitoring to ensure we achieve our aims. The investment recommended in this report is intended to demonstrate a strong commitment and to encourage everyone in the county to follow our lead.
15. The strategy has been developed following extensive consultation and engagement using the outcomes from the Climate Change Summit, consideration by Environment Scrutiny Committee, Gloucestershire Air Quality & Health Partnership, Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee, Gloucestershire Youth Climate Panel and the public consultation.
16. Approval of the strategy by cabinet will enable us to take this proposed overall approach for the county to our Leadership Gloucestershire partners and other partners, for agreement on how we can work together to drive forward urgent action across the county.

Options

- i. Do nothing – having declared a climate emergency and held a very successful summit, the council will lose credibility and might be criticised if it does not meet public expectation and be seen to act relatively quickly. The climate change challenge still remains.
 - ii. 'Doing it properly' – doing the best we possibly can within the resources available to bring about the required changes, working with others to secure additional resources, delivering the strategy and an ongoing five-year programme.
17. The second option 'Doing it properly' is the approach being recommended – officers will draw up a detailed action plan for year 1 by March 2020, with headline actions for years 2-5.

Resource Implications

18. The strategy is expected to have significant resource implications in the short, medium and long term. In order to respond quickly, it is proposed to establish a £1m Climate Change & Air Quality 'Action Fund', which will be used to begin delivering against the objectives set out in the climate change strategy. Funds will be allocated based on a bidding process. The bids will be assessed and the decision taken to allocate the funds based on the objectives of the climate change strategy being achieved. This will help us determine how much it will cost to do things differently, to then bid for resources to do so.
19. Additional staffing resource is proposed to support delivery of the strategy. To respond quickly recruitment and appointment would be during this financial year:
 - 1 FTE permanent Climate Change & Air Quality Officer (up to £46,615 inc on-costs) to support delivery of the strategy; and
 - 0.5 FTE permanent Senior Communications & Social Marketing Officer (up to £23,308 inc on-costs); communications is key to helping take the next steps forward.
20. There is the opportunity for an immediate impact to be made by switching the county council's electricity supply to 100% renewable energy, which would put us ahead of the emergency declaration target of 80% reduction in our emissions by 2030.
21. This could be done under the current energy supply contract with WME for all council property, street lighting, signs, signals, bollards, and council-maintained schools at an additional pro-rata cost of £10,700 for 2019/20 (0.3% of the total electricity cost for these sites). The price then drops under WME's new contract for supply, with an additional annual cost on existing prices of just over £8,000 for 2020/21 onwards (0.15% of the total electricity cost for these sites). The contract with WME runs to 31st March 2021, with an option to extend for 2 further years.

22. By 2018/19 the county council had reduced its carbon (CO_{2e}²) emissions by 70%, ahead of the 60% reduction target by 2020/21. This leaves residual emissions of 8,100 tCO_{2e}. Emissions from grid electricity accounted for 5,830 tCO_{2e}. Purchasing renewable electricity would reduce residual emissions to 2,270 tCO_{2e}; a reduction of 92% on the 2006/07 baseline. As such, based on our 2018/19 data, purchasing renewable electricity would keep us ahead of our trajectory and put us ahead of the emergency declaration target of 80% reduction in our emissions by 2030.
23. Up to £90k in-year staffing and renewable electricity costs would be met from the existing 2019/20 corporate budget.
24. The £1m Climate Change & Air Quality 'Action Fund' would be a one-off bid for 2020/21 under the MTFS.
25. An MTFS bid of £188k going forward including 1.5 FTE staffing, renewable electricity costs and renewable energy/ battery storage Outline Business Case, grid connection and planning.

Risk Assessment

26. The public consultation (Annex 2) demonstrates concern by the public and businesses in Gloucestershire about climate change and its impacts. Having declared a climate emergency and held a very successful summit in May, the council might be criticised if it does not meet public expectations or if it fails to act quickly.
27. The cost of green electricity is a fixed rate on top of current standard grid electricity rates, i.e. an additional 0.5p per kWh, so the price risk is the same as for standard grid electricity. However, many authorities are now looking to switch to green electricity in support of their emergency declaration; if we don't make a decision soon demand may outstrip supply causing the additional unit cost to go up.

Officer Advice

28. That the strategy and initial action plan is approved for implementation and to take to Leadership Gloucestershire seeking its members to match the council's commitment in accordance with Option ii. above ('Doing it properly').

Equalities considerations

29. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the recommendations of this report. However, climate change has the potential for significant implications for people's health, wellbeing and safety; particularly for those on low incomes, vulnerable people especially the young and the elderly, and people with additional learning, physical and mental needs. It follows that delivering the strategy will therefore have a positive impact. There is also the need to ensure effective engagement of all demographic groups.

Consultation feedback

30. Of the county council members consulted, all have been very supportive of the approach being taken to develop the strategy and action plan. Environment Scrutiny Committee requested that the proposed Youth Climate Panel membership of 30 be reviewed; officers undertook to do so and of the 58 applications received 40 were appointed.

² tCO_{2e} = 'tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent', which is a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints. The idea is to express the impact of each different greenhouse gas in terms of the amount of CO₂ that would create the same amount of warming (global warming potential). That way, a carbon footprint consisting of lots of different greenhouse gases can be expressed as a single number. The conversion factors used in the UK are published annually by Government – [Government emission conversion factors for greenhouse gas company reporting](#).

31. The first meeting of the Youth Climate Panel was held on 21st September, with around 30 Panel members. The purpose of the meeting was to get them working together and to agree how they want the Panel to work. The key message from the day was that they want to do something and not just talk about it, or for this to be a token engagement. Some panel members have since got together in their districts to come up with ideas of priorities and actions to take; some of them met on 5th October to consider the draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Their comments and suggestions have been reflected in the strategy and action plan (Annex 1).
32. The public consultation comprised a series of questions to understand attitudes to climate change and potential actions; 1,000 residents (representative by population across the districts, by age and by gender) and 200 businesses responded to the telephone survey, with 2,293 online surveys completed. The headline results are provided in Annex 2 (Key Findings p33 onwards), the conclusions being that:
- There is a lot of concern about climate change amongst both residents and businesses;
 - 84% of residents, 88% of businesses; 97% online responses said that they were concerned about the impact of climate change (either a lot or a little).
 - A high proportion of residents and businesses also believe that they understand what is meant by the term carbon neutral.
 - Whilst many did believe it possible to be carbon neutral by 2050, there was some concern that the aim is unrealistic and the difficulty of getting everyone on board to make the changes.
 - Residents and businesses were clearly aware of the benefits of reducing the effects of climate change and were aware of changes that would have the greatest impact. However, businesses felt their main contribution would be to recycle more.
 - Most were open to the suggestions made in terms of encouraging carbon footprint reduction.
 - The nature of the self-selecting sample of the online survey meant that these respondents were more concerned and more knowledgeable than residents from the telephone survey.

Performance Management/Follow-up

33. The strategy includes an '*Actions by April*' immediate action plan that, by March 2020, will be developed into a more detailed live 5-year rolling action plan. The county council will ensure its delivery by ongoing monitoring of the rolling action plan, that will provide the detail as to how we will continually measure and improve progress to achieving our objectives.
34. It is proposed that an outline action plan is developed for Cabinet approval each November, developed into a detailed plan in agreement with Leadership Gloucestershire for the following year by March, implemented from April.

Report Title	LEADING THE RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY: GLOUCESTERSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2019/20 TO 2024/25
Statutory Authority	Education, Highways, Lead Local Flood, Public Health, Strategic Planning, Transport, Waste Disposal.
Relevant County Council policy	Corporate Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, July 2008 Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, 2014 Local Transport Plan 2015-2031, 2016 (being revised) Looking to the Future 2019-2022, 2018 Climate Change Emissions Reduction Pledge, 2018 Air Quality Strategy, 2019 Motion 836 – Carbon action plan motion, 2019 Motion 844 – Future proofing public buildings and developments in Gloucestershire, 2019
Sustainability checklist:	
Partnerships	Significant partnership working will be required to further develop the action plan and deliver the strategy.
Decision Making and Involvement	The Cabinet will consider the future formulation of the strategy and the Council will determine the overall financial implications as part of the budget setting process.
Economy and Employment	Significant positive implications for growing the low carbon economy in Gloucestershire and improving its resilience.
Caring for people	Reduced fuel poverty and better public health, from reduced emissions and better air quality, and improved resilience to the impacts of a changing climate, especially for vulnerable people.
Social Value	Maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits to the local area from carbon reduction and climate resilience.
Built Environment	Improved Green Infrastructure and climate resilience.
Natural Environment' including Ecology (Biodiversity)	Improved Green Infrastructure and climate resilience.
Education and Information	Youth Climate Panel and schools engagement.
Tackling Climate Change	Carbon Emissions Implications? Positive Vulnerable to climate change? No; will improve resilience
Due Regard Statement	Has a Due Regard Statement been completed? No

Human rights Implications	There are no direct implications arising from this report. However, the global impacts of climate change and likely conflicts over scarce resources (e.g. fresh water) are expected to result in significant population displacement (climate refugees), and risks of exploitation and human rights violations.
Consultation Arrangements	Ongoing consultation with partners and the Youth Climate Panel in the development and delivery of the live 5-year rolling action plan. Individual actions may include public consultation, e.g., the Local Transport Plan.