

Item No. 10.	Classification: Open	Date: 10 July 2023	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Climate Change Strategy Annual Progress Report and Action Plan Update	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor James McAsh, Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR JAMES MCASH, CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, CLEAN AIR AND STREETS

We declared a climate emergency in 2019 and committed to doing all we can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. As we entered the 2020s, experts were warning that this decade is pivotal and that the world had to take action to stop irreversible damage to our planet and a climate catastrophe. We have made climate change one of our top priorities and embarked on an ambitious programme to cut carbon. At the heart of our strategy is our commitment to being transparent about the scale of the problem, the work we are doing and also the challenge ahead.

This paper contains our annual report. This shows much of the work that has been happening in Southwark over the last year. Our borough emissions and our council emissions have fallen and looking ahead we are continuing to take action and invest in carbon reduction. But, despite the fantastic work we have been doing, it is still not enough and the report also sets out that we are not on track to be carbon neutral by 2030. We again challenge government to do more, and to seriously invest in a carbon free future. While there are examples of good work from government it is too little and lacks the ambition we need to tackle the climate emergency.

Alongside our report back we are increasing the scope of our climate work and publishing a draft resilience and adaptation strategy. We will start consulting later in the summer and intend for this to then form part of our climate strategy, to make the borough more resilient to the effects of climate change, and doing so in a way that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Our annual report is one of hope, examples of people coming together, or action in our borough and showing great examples of what can be done. But we know that going forward we need to redouble our efforts and need others, especially government, to step up and do more.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the Cabinet

1. Welcomes the progress that Southwark has made tackling the climate emergency in the last year and the updates to the Climate Action Plan.
2. Notes the draft the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and asks officers to consult on this, before returning to Cabinet in December 2023 with a final paper to be appended to the Climate Strategy.
3. Notes the proposed external governance structure, which sets out how the council will build relationships with key external partners in the borough on climate change.
4. Welcomes the investment already made to support tackling climate change in the borough, but notes with concern the lack of resources which have been made available by government to reduce carbon.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. The council is committed to being open and transparent about the work it is doing on climate change. Our strategy and action plan are intentionally ambitious and set out the scale of the challenge that we face. As part of our commitment to transparency we committed to publishing an annual report so that our residents, businesses and partners could see what has been achieved and what is still to happen.
6. In July 2022, we published our first annual report. We also updated the action plan to make our actions SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) to increase transparency and accountability. Since then we have published this action plan online and updated our web pages to make it easier for residents to find out about progress.
7. We have committed to every year making updates to the action plan. As we deliver actions on the plan, we are reporting on this, and making changes with new targets for the year ahead. As well as these annual updates, we will be undertaking a major review of the action plan and strategy in 2025.
8. This climate strategy and action plan is our plan to work towards being carbon neutral. While much of the plan focuses on what the council can directly do, our strategy involved working with residents, partners and others to ensure that everyone with a stake in our borough is part of delivering a more sustainable and greener future. Within the council we have been aligning policies with the climate strategy from the Sustainable Food Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan to the proposed Streets for People Strategy.

9. In addition to the annual report and update to the action plan, this report is also proposing a new section to the strategy which focuses on climate change resilience and adaptation. When being developed, the council focused on carbon reduction but committed to bringing back changes which would consider how we can make the borough more resilient to the effects of climate change, and how we could do it in a way that reduces carbon and our impact on climate change. This paper also contains a draft climate resilience and adaptation strategy, which following consultation, will form a new section of the climate strategy and will lead to new actions in the climate action plan as a sixth strand of our climate change response alongside buildings, transport, energy, a circular economy and biodiversity.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

10. This report includes our annual progress report (appendix 1) highlighting the progress, opportunities and challenges that have faced the borough in the last 12 months, and looking ahead to what we plan to achieve over the next year.
11. Alongside our progress report, we have updated the Climate Action Plan (appendix 2), capturing both work that has progressed over the last year, and setting new targets for the year ahead. Subject to approval by cabinet, this will be published on the council's website.
12. Finally, we are publishing a new section for the Climate Change Strategy, the draft Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy (appendix 3). This builds on the current strategy and sets out how as well as tackling the climate emergency we make the borough more resilient to the effects of climate change. Following consultation, the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy will form part of the climate strategy and will be accompanied by new actions in the climate action plan.

Annual Report

13. Climate Change is already impacting Southwark and the world. Our annual report is an update on the work we are doing and the progress we have made. Earlier in the year, we held a climate day at London South Bank University which brought together many fantastic local organisations who are playing their part in tackling climate change. Residents, businesses and other organisations shared ideas, attended workshops and learnt more about the work that is happening here in Southwark. We were honoured to be joined by His Excellency, the High Commissioner of Fiji who spoke about the impact of climate change on his country and how whole communities are being moved and living today with the real impacts of climate change.
14. The annual report in appendix 1 shows how the work we are doing here in Southwark is having a direct impact on countries like Fiji and this event showed the importance of the borough's work. It celebrates the work we

have been doing and the partners we have worked with to tackle the climate emergency together in Southwark.

15. This report presents highlights of our work, but there is still much more going on across the borough. It focuses on those projects which have had an impact both borough wide and on those directly related to reducing emissions including the council's own emissions from its buildings, vehicles and procurement.
16. The report also looks ahead to the next 12 months and the priorities we have set as a council. It recognises that major challenges remain, particular around funding, resource, expertise and data. The scale of the challenge is greater than ever before, with our net zero target seven years away. The council remain ambitious and focused on this target, and recognises the need to act with increased urgency. However, the report sets out the scale of the challenge, and that at the current rate we will not meet this target. We must again reiterate the need for radical government action and investment if boroughs like Southwark are to reach net zero.
17. The annual report presents the most recently available data to demonstrate the current state of emissions reduction. Data has been processed for the 2021/22 financial year, covering the period from April 2021 to March 2022, for both borough wide emissions and those associated directly with the council. The council is building its data capacity to monitor performance and use data to drive change. This is the first step in the council building its knowledge and expertise on emissions monitoring, and will also result in greater ownership and understanding of emissions reduction opportunities going forward.
18. While our commitment is to work across the whole borough to tackle the climate emergency, we strongly believe that we must lead by example and tackle our own emissions first. This report details emissions from the council's operational estate, including; offices, libraries, youth centres, sport facilities, leisure centres, street lighting and vehicle fleet. This also includes shared facilities on our housing estates, such as lighting, lifts and boiler houses.

Climate Action Plan - Update

19. As detailed in 2021, to ensure clear ownership of actions, set achievable milestones and track the progress on our actions going forward, the council has developed a SMART Climate Action Plan. As part of the annual reporting process, the content of this document is reviewed in detail and updated. The proposed update to the Climate Action Plan is included in appendix 2 of this report.
20. This process focuses on reviewing the actions contained within the Climate Action Plan, understanding if they are fit for purpose and where possible strengthening the council's ambition with improved wording. At the same time, new actions are also identified that contribute towards the council's

work to reduce emissions across the key themes contained within the action plan.

21. The update then focuses on the work achieved to date, agreeing new milestones and key performance indicators to assess performance going forward. The risk to delivery has also been reviewed and how this relates to funding, resource, time or technical expertise.
22. Our approach to tackling climate change is an iterative process. As we learn more, better understand what is working, see good practice elsewhere, we can continue to explore new opportunities and make improvements. There is a particular opportunity, especially with the online dashboard, to use emissions data to better inform our work, by closing the gap between high level data modelling and specific emissions savings attributed to individual projects and services. This will help us develop more detailed emissions pathways and will be a focus of the year ahead.
23. As set out below we are publishing a climate resilience and adaptation strategy to, in due course, form part of our overall climate strategy and response. When this is agreed, we will add new actions to the action plan in relation to resilience and adaptation and will report on these alongside our other actions.
24. The action plan remains very ambitious. We are clear that we need to do all we can to be carbon neutral and as such this is an action plan which we recognise is challenging, and also one that to deliver completely will require Government to raise their ambition and commitment to tackling the climate emergency.

Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

25. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, Southwark has developed and is now delivering a climate strategy and action plan with an ambition to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030. Working with our communities, we have already made progress decarbonising buildings, making walking and cycling easier and delivering projects across the borough to reduce carbon and invest in a more sustainable future, many of which are shown in the annual report (appendix 1).
26. While we recognise the need to continue our efforts to reduce carbon and move to a net zero future, we also need to adapt for a warmer world and ensure we are resilient to the changes that are already starting to happen and that we expect to intensify in the coming years. According to the Climate Change Committee, no single sector in England is prepared for the impacts of climate change, with the last ten years being a “lost decade” for government action.
27. The council is therefore strengthening our response to the climate emergency, through the development of a resilience and adaptation strategy, included as appendix 3. It sets out the principles behind why we

need to create a more resilient borough that can overcome the current and future impacts of climate change in a just, equal and fair manner. It is a starting point, and subject to approval the council will be consulting on the draft strategy in August and September 2023.

28. This is a draft paper. If agreed by Cabinet we will start a period of consultation and engagement with stakeholders, residents and business on a series of draft actions to listen and adapt our approach to meet the key needs of those who live and work in the borough. Following consultation an updated strategy and action plan will be brought to Cabinet for approval in December 2023.
29. This strategy focuses on resilience and adaptation as it relates to climate change. We will focus on those actions that we can take that will not only make us more resilient, but also where taking these actions we can have a positive impact on the environment and reducing carbon.
30. This strategy appends Southwark Climate Change Strategy “Tackling the Climate Emergency Together”. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy sets out a new dimension to our climate work, but does not change our overall approach or the values behind our work. We intend for this to be viewed as an addition to the Climate Change Strategy to give a complete picture of our ambition and plan to tackle the climate emergency together and build a more resilient future for Southwark.

External engagement

31. We can only tackle the climate emergency if we work together in Southwark. External engagement and partnership working is essential to reduce carbon emissions and achieve our ambitions. We initially established various groups as part of this which have had varying degrees of success. We are now proposing making changes to how we engage to ensure that we are working and communicating effectively with core groups in the borough to help guide our wider engagement and action.
32. **Community Stakeholder Panel** – This group will be made up of organisations which represent local people and which are established to represent and advocate for the interests of their group, and/or are involved in issues which are related to climate change and sustainability. This will consist of a mixture of charities, community organisations, campaign groups, trade unions, faith and residents groups. The groups will all be anchored in Southwark and its community and will all have an interest in representing the views of their members in the climate change debate. This group will assist in driving behaviour change as well as being a voice for different parts of the borough’s diverse community.
33. **Delivery Partner Network** - Buildings and transport are the biggest contributors to scope one and two carbon emissions in Southwark. We want to work with organisations that have significant buildings, land holdings,

staff numbers and commercial movement as these can all have a significant impact on climate change. This group will therefore focus on large businesses, major employers and anchor institutions in the borough.

34. **Local Business Network** - Collectively, smaller businesses in the borough have a large impact on carbon emissions. This diverse group of businesses, traders and retailers manage a large property portfolio, generate heavy footfall with both employees and customers, and have a large supply chain to support their business activities. This network will consider how to engage the widest numbers of businesses in a meaningful way.
35. **Experts Panel** – The council established an expert panel in 2021 to ensure that we had access to expertise to inform our work with the latest science and understanding of climate change. The panel met once in March 2021 ahead of the publication of the final climate strategy and proved a valuable resource, we propose to reconvene it to help shape our work going forward.
36. **Climate Schools Network** – This group has already been established and has nine members so far. The council will be looking to expand our offer to schools and support them in their own journey to establish climate action plans and reduce emissions through a range of initiatives. This also remains an action within the CAP and we will continue to work with partners such as Ashden on their Let's Go Zero programme.

Policy framework implications

37. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy is currently in draft. Subject to approval it will be taken to public consultation and an updated climate strategy and action plan will be brought back to Cabinet in December for adoption.
38. At that point the strategy will be added as an appendix to the borough's main Climate Change Strategy, with a view to combining the two documents in 2025, when the council is committed to a full refresh of our Climate Change Strategy.
39. Actions related to resilience and adaptation will be brought back to Cabinet in December in a SMART format to match those contained within the existing Climate Action Plan. Subject to approval they will then be added to the Climate Action Plan, published online and reported on annually.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

40. The council recognises the need to continue to work with our local community on climate change, ensuring our work is developed in partnership with local residents, businesses and other stakeholders. We are proposing to significantly strengthen the work we are doing with these

groups, as detailed within the report. As present the council's action plan is very much focused on work the council to doing itself and there is significant opportunity for it to reflect work that is ongoing in the borough as a whole. The opportunity to learn and adapt our projects, working in local partnership to maximise their impact, is a priority for the council in the year ahead.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

41. We recognise through our work that while everyone is affected by climate change, the extent of that impact is not equal. As stated in our 2021 report, climate change has the biggest impact on those who are poorer or have underlying health conditions. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents are disproportionately affected, and social justice must be at the centre of our approach.
42. A full equalities impact assessment will be prepared prior to consultation on the strategy to ensure the council is engaging with the widest possible range of residents, particularly those with the protected characteristics mentioned in paragraph 41. The consultation itself will continue to build on the previous work of the Citizens' Jury in hearing from a full cross section of the borough's residents.
43. The equalities impact assessment will be updated throughout the process as the Climate Resilience and Adaptation strategy moves towards final adoption.

Health impact statement

44. Action towards climate change can promote improvements in health, for example by reducing pollution, mitigating against extreme temperatures, and encouraging active travel.
45. Health benefits will also be a key consideration of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, which will include measures to address overheating in the borough and will also have a section focused on minimising pests and diseases that could be experienced through a changing climate.

Climate change implications

46. This report directly addresses how the council is continuing to focus on climate change within its work, ensuring it underpins all we do as a council. The report demonstrates the progress and improvements made over the last year, sets out priorities for the year ahead and looks to strengthen our response to the changing climate that we are already experiencing.

Resource implications

47. The Climate Action Plan sets out where resource is an issue for the council in delivering the stated actions. Actions are reviewed on a quarterly basis,

with a highlight report sent to directors and reviewed by the cabinet member. This identifies gaps in resource, where additional support is needed and potential solutions. The council is in the process of expanding the Climate Change Team to respond to this need and increase the delivery of actions within the Climate Action Plan, with these posts having been agreed separately to this report.

Legal implications

48. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report; however, any necessary legal advice should be sought in relation to individual decisions resulting from the ongoing implementation of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Financial implications

49. The council has committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and has invested in excess of £100m in its capital programme. In addition, in February 2021, cabinet approved a capital budget of £25m as part of the council's capital programme to help tackle the Climate Change Emergency.
50. £21m of the £25m has been allocated to strategic projects that meet our carbon reduction ambition as set out in the council's climate action plan. Recent work undertaken includes the installation of the energy saving measures, including heat pumps, at the Burgess Park sports hub and the Peckham Library upgrade. LED Street Lighting, cycle hanger and EV charging programmes have also seen their delivery rapidly increased through this funding, while the council also planted its first Tiny Forest at Peckham Rye. The climate change capital budget is supporting a wide range of programmes across the council.
51. Officers will also be continuing to explore external and central government funding in contributing towards the council's agenda for climate change. As noted in the annual report, there are significant funding pressures that remain within the council, particularly with regards to the Housing Revenue Account. This has a direct impact on the council's opportunity to retrofit our housing stock.
52. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report are contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.
53. The climate change strategy sets estimates that the cost for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030 is £3.92bn. While the council will continue to use its resources as efficiently as it can, this scale of funding requires government or other private investment.

Consultation

54. Full consultation was carried out prior to the publication of the initial Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan in July 2021. As noted above, the addition

of the new Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy will be consulted upon in August and September 2023, the outcome of which will be brought back to Cabinet later in the year, included a full summary of the results.

55. This report sets out how we will improve engagement with five key stakeholder groups. Our annual report is also part of our commitment to transparency so that our residents and others can see the action that is being taken and the progress that is being made.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Assistant Chief Executive - Governance & Assurance

56. Cabinet is asked to note and approve the recommendations set out on page 1 of this report. These recommendations fall within the powers of cabinet for determination in accordance with Part 3B of the Council's Constitution.
57. The council has a duty, pursuant to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
58. The relevant protected characteristics include race, age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.
59. The report recognises at paragraphs 41-42 the disproportionate impact of climate change on those with protected characteristics particularly Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents of the borough. Officers have confirmed that a comprehensive equalities impact assessment will be prepared prior to consultation so that the consultation on the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy itself will be fair and reach a diverse range of residents in the borough, in particular those with protected characteristics most affected by climate change (notably race).
60. Council assembly on 14 July 2021 approved a change to the council's constitution to confirm that all decisions made by the council will consider the climate and equality (including socio-economic disadvantage and health inequality) consequences of taking that decision. This has been considered by the very nature of the report itself and specifically in paragraphs 43-45 above.

Strategic Director, Finance

61. The strategic director of finance notes the recommendations to Cabinet in respect of the reports (Appendices 1, 2 and 3) on the annual progress on the Climate Change Strategy, the Climate Action Plan Update and the draft Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy.
62. The strategic director of finance notes the investments made to date to help tackle the Climate Change Emergency and the significant investment (current best estimates of £3.92 billion) required for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030.
63. The strategic director also notes the cross departmental effort to explore external and central government funding options in contributing towards the council's agenda for climate change. Officers should ensure all applications for all types of new grants and external funding are considered and approved (via the Grant Gateway process) by the Strategic Director of Finance and a Strategic Director.
64. Officers' time and any other costs associated with this recommendation will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Climate Change Strategy for Southwark. Cabinet July 2021	Online	Paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk
Link (please copy and paste into browser): Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday 13 July 2021, 11.00 am - Southwark Council (item 8)		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Annual Report
Appendix 2	Climate Action Plan Update
Appendix 3	Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor James McAsh, Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets	
Lead Officer	Chris Page, Climate Change Director	
Report Author	Tom Sharland, Head of Climate Change & Sustainability	
Version	Final	
Dated	27 June 2023	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Y	Y
Strategic Director of Finance	Y	Y
Cabinet Member	Y	Y
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		27 June 2023