

Item No. 9.	Classification: Open	Date: 6 February 2024	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy	
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 were proud to be one of the first local authorities to declare a climate emergency in 2019 and we are committed to doing all we can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030.

As we entered the 2020s, experts warned 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.

We are approaching the mid-point of our ten-year strategy. It is right that continue to take urgent action to cut carbon and work with others to amplify the calls to our Government and the global community to do the same. But, even if the world stopped producing carbon tomorrow the effects of carbon emissions will continue to be felt and worsen in the coming years. This is why alongside reducing carbon we also need to increase action on climate resilience and adaptation in the borough.

We are already seeing the impact of climate change with more extreme temperatures and local flooding. The strategy commits us to creating a more resilient borough. In it, we will take steps to build resilience to overheating, and preparing for extreme temperature, whilst reducing the risk of flooding, conserving water and improving drought resistance. We will improve food security and protect the biodiversity of the borough.

As we publish our strategy, the London Resilience Review, set up by the Mayor of London, has published its interim report on resilience in the capital. Our work is aligned with their interim findings, and I am confident that over the next few years, Southwark will be a leading voice in building resilience in the capital.

This strategy sits alongside our climate strategy and adds a new programme of work to complement our existing climate action. We published it as a draft last year, and following a full public consultation have made changes in response which will make it even more ambitious. I would like to thank everyone who took

part in the consultation and helped improve this work. This new stream of work is essential in the borough's response to the climate emergency as we prepare for and try to build a resilient low carbon future together in Southwark.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the adoption of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy which will tackle climate risk in the borough.
2. Notes the scale of challenge and ambition in the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and asks that officers deliver the action plan.
3. Incorporates the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy with the Climate Change Strategy as part of the 2025 Climate Change Strategy refresh.
4. Welcomes the investment already made to support tackling climate change in the borough, but recognises the need for further action and therefore allocates an initial £1m of funding from the Climate Change Capital Fund to start delivery of the action plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. The recent impacts from extreme weather in the UK highlight the urgency of adapting to climate change. The record-breaking temperatures we have seen recently have brought unprecedented numbers of heat-related deaths, wildfire incidents and significant infrastructure disruption. Despite efforts to limit the man-made causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, a level of harmful change in our climate is now unavoidable and the council must take further action to adapt to these changes.
6. Climate adaptation is the process of on-going adjustments to reduce the impact of climate change on our society as well as allowing us to take advantage of the opportunities a changing climate could provide.
7. Climate resilience is equally important as it is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to dangerous events, trends, or disturbances that are a result of climate change. At the borough level, we must quantify and understand these risks so that we can build resilience to them using the levers that are available to us.
8. The council is continually developing its understanding of this process to ensure it makes effective decisions in a changing climate. As well as its own work, it is also leading and working with boroughs across London to improve resilience and adaptation. Adaptation can mean difficult choices but the council will continue to be led by its commitments to fairness and climate justice when developing adaptation responses. On behalf of our

residents, we will continue our work with the GLA, London Councils, Transport for London, the Environment Agency and other partners to plan for and adapt the borough to the impacts of climate change, including the preparation and implementation of the London Climate Resilience Review. We will utilise adaptive business continuity planning in response to changing need.

9. Southwark is already seeing the impact of climate change and this will only worsen. Adapting the borough and strengthening our resilience is a crucial part of our response to the climate emergency. All ten of our warmest years have occurred since 2002, whereas none of the ten coldest years has occurred since 1963. Summer heatwaves are now 30 times more likely than they would be typically. Climate change means UK temperatures are set to become more volatile with more extremes of both heat and cold.
10. Southwark has a high risk of excessive heating, particularly in the centre of the borough. High heat is felt more significantly in areas with less tree canopy and lower levels of access to green open spaces. The borough is also warmed by waste heat from housing and transport and these sources add to the Southwark's susceptibility to overheating. Dense urban areas also retain more heat which can result in the centre of London being up to 10°C warmer than rural areas.
11. Climate change will have a significant impact on temperature, rainfall and seasonal changes within London. The latest predictions are for warmer, drier summers, and wetter winters, with appreciable changes anticipated through the 2020s. Flooding poses a risk to people, infrastructure, and ecosystems. 60% of Southwark residents live on land that is less than ten meters above sea level, and any changes in sea levels will have a direct effect on Southwark. Current flood defences will need to be renewed in the future.
12. An estimated 75,000 of Southwark's residents are food insecure. Climate change will increase food insecurity and we can expect this to impact on prices and greater food inequality in Southwark.
13. Neighbourhoods at the centre of Southwark have been identified to be most vulnerable to climate risk (London Climate Risk Map, GLA, 2022). The darker red areas in the borough map in Figure 1 below illustrates this high overall climate risk coinciding with areas of income and health inequalities.

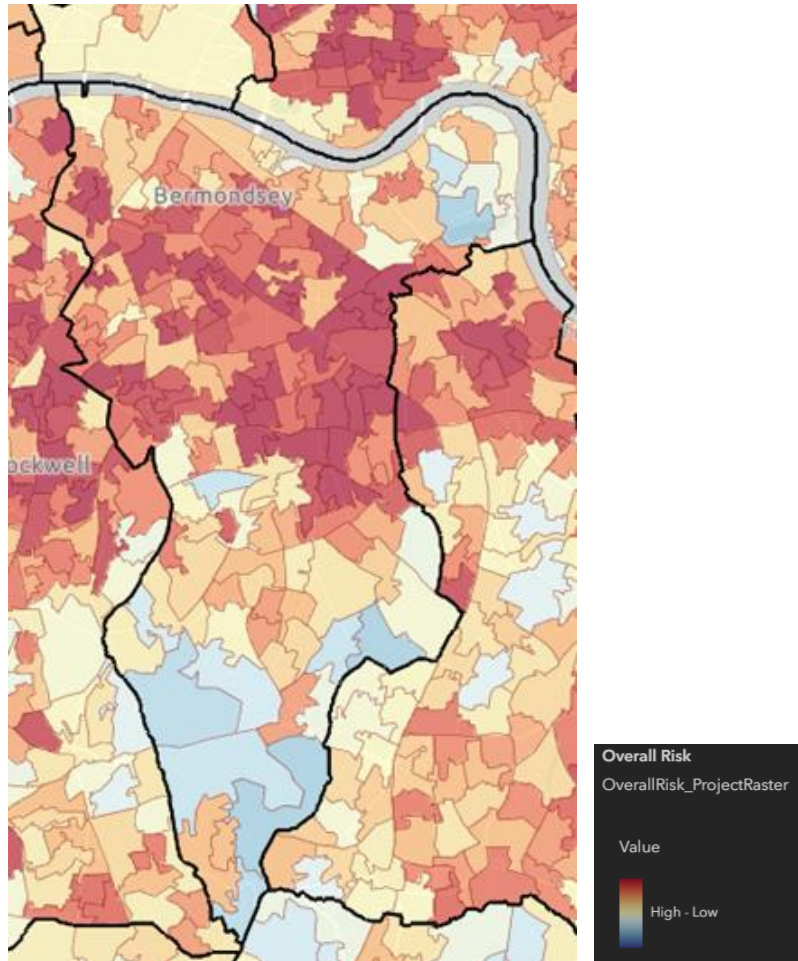


Figure 1: GLA Climate overall risk map showing Lower Support Output Areas in Southwark using the following spatial datasets: Ages Under 5, Ages Over 75, English Proficiency, Income Deprivation, Social Renters, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, Average Land Surface Temperature, Surface Water Flood Risk, PM2.5, NO2, Green/Blue Land Cover, Areas of Deficiency in Access to Public Open Space
 (Source: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/climate-risk-mapping>)

14. The latest Southwark Multi-ward Profiles 2023 data shows that the areas that are most deprived, with the highest health inequalities, are correlated with the biggest negative impacts from a changing climate.
15. Southwark is a proudly global borough. This means many of our residents are connected to friends and families around the world who are impacted by conflict and migration caused by food shortages, water shortages and extreme weather. Climate change and ecological damage will increase this forced migration which will impact on residents here in Southwark.

Policy background

16. There is an extensive climate change policy framework that informs our work to reduce emissions and the preparation of the strategy so that it is fit for purpose to adapt the borough and be more resilient to climate change

impacts. The climate resilience background paper (Appendix 4) provides an overview of the wider policy framework.

17. The climate risk the borough faces will only increase as global temperatures rise, from the levels that are experienced today through to the higher temperatures that are expected at the end of this century. Every five years, the UK's Climate Change Committee (CCC) produces an assessment of national climate change risk called the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). The third and most recent climate change risk assessment, CCRA3, was published in 2022 and assesses the urgency of adapting to climate risk by comparing our current climate to future climate scenarios that model future global rises in mean temperature. These include two key scenarios:

Scenario	Climate impact
(1) A +2°C increase in global mean temperature by the middle of the century (2050), representing a medium-high emissions scenario in carbon emissions.	This would result in warmer temperatures with a greater number of hotter days and less rainfall in summer than today. Our weather would also be stormier, with heavier rainfall when it does rain and higher chances of flooding.
(2) +4°C rise in global mean temperatures at the end of the century, which is the scenario that is consistent with the current limited global ambition for reducing carbon emissions.	This scenario would result in more days above 40°C, and significantly warmer summer mean temperatures. Sea levels will have risen by at least 1 metre and this will require long term, collaborative response across London. Peak river flows will be more extreme due to heavier storms, yet periods of drought will also take place with lower average rainfall in the summer.

18. The CCC advises that organisations should plan for impacts of +2°C mean temperature increase by 2050 and assess the risks of a +4°C temperature rise scenario by 2100. Whilst the council recognises that there is a certain amount of uncertainty associated with future climate change projections, the council must plan for and assess these scenarios.
19. The CCRA3 provides a list of 61 climate adaptation risks and opportunities. The council's approach within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy is to focus on risks and opportunities where we can be targeted enough to form the basis of a focused practical response. This will allow the council to engage with residents in the borough on issues that are already directly impacting them.

20. The council will be taking an adaptive, flexible approach to the delivery of this strategy where it will frequently review and update it as new data, technology and approaches become available to better inform the council's thinking and decision-making. An example of being flexible is the planned major refresh of our Climate Change Strategy in 2025, which will enable the council to review its progression on adaptation and take into account access to new data for the borough. At this point, resilience and adaptation will be built into the council's overarching Climate Change Strategy.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Summary of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

21. Climate resilience and adaptation can cover a huge breadth of issues, from flooding to the impact of global migration. To ensure that this strategy is focused and actions can be delivered, it focuses on key risks where the actions that we take can make the borough more resilient.
22. The strategy also ensures that these actions tackle factors which contribute to climate change. The strategy focuses on solutions that the council can deliver or influence with its partners. For example, the strategy will not try to tackle global food supply chains, but will look at what we can do to ensure a greater use of locally-sourced food to increase local resilience.
23. The council will consider the impact of higher temperatures and risk as it delivers and plans services for its residents, and invests in buildings, places and neighbourhoods across the borough.
24. The strategy considers five themes, which are covered within the latest national Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA, 2022): overheating, flooding, water scarcity, pests and diseases and loss of natural capital. The sixth theme, 'Thriving Natural Environment', has a dedicated section in the Climate Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan, so is not covered here. We will consider further themes as we deliver, develop and adapt the plan.
25. Each theme has a series of action points (Appendix 2) that have been identified to target specific issues and are designed so that they are SMART: specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related. Each action point has a named cabinet member and director who will be responsible for delivery. The Climate Change Team will monitor the delivery of the action plan.

Delivery, monitoring and reporting of the strategy

26. The strategy is underpinned by the need to respond to the impacts of a +2°C temperature increase by 2050 using the resources that are available. The council recognises the challenge of this ambition, so is committed to delivering the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy using the following principles:

Delivery

- Focus efforts on working with the residents and neighbourhoods that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- Ensure climate adaptation and resilience informs the decisions the council takes alongside our other policies and priorities, and ensures new plans and strategies consider climate risk at the earliest opportunity and seek opportunities to realise co-benefits and efficiencies.
- Continues engagement and collaboration with residents and neighbourhoods through programmes, stakeholder panels and other engagement methods such as the council's annual climate day.
- Acts at appropriate scales within the borough. This means focusing on people and the buildings that they live in and use, our public realm, our parks and our neighbourhoods. The council will address risks that affect the entire borough and work closely with partners and neighbouring boroughs to do this.
- Leverage funding and investment to deliver the actions in this plan and make best use of available resources.

Data

- Continues to identify climate risks and impacts to understand how to address them in our decision-making and actions.
- Ensures a sufficiently flexible approach to decisions so that they do not have long-lasting consequences that create obstacles for future adaptation.
- Underpins its response and preparations for climate change by using the best available evidence and data to identify and tackle the climate risks.

Coordination

- Continue to take an integrated approach for the governance of the plan within the council and work to align this with other council strategies.
- Seek out opportunities to reduce emissions and address climate risks at the same time.
- Recognise that although we do not own or manage important infrastructure within our borough (e.g. electricity grid, Rotherhithe Tunnel, TfL 'red route' network) we are a key partner to those who do. We will work with such partners to futureproof infrastructure.
- Continue to work closely with London Councils and other London boroughs to establish and share best practice across London.

Reporting

27. Annual reporting on delivery progress will take place at the end of each financial year, as part of the annual Climate Change Strategy reporting.

Consultation

28. Public consultation on the draft Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy took place for six weeks from 29 August 2023 to 9 October 2023. 124 people completed the online survey and written representations were received from Southwark campaign groups (Extinction Rebellion, Southwark Planning Network, Southwark Law Centre), stakeholders (Historic England, Environment Agency, Natural England) and members of the public. Issues raised included:
- Climate justice and focusing resources on those who are most vulnerable
 - +2°C and +4°C temperature increase scenarios and the latest national policy context
 - More engagement with the community e.g. Citizens' Assembly
 - 'Hot homes' that suffer from excess heat as a result of their heating systems or insulation
 - Nature-based solutions, urban greening, biodiversity net gain and trees
29. Officers have updated the strategy in response to suggestions that were raised through consultation, including:
- An increased focus on those who are exposed to higher climate risk and are most vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate
 - Commitment to ongoing community engagement
 - Updated and new action points for all five adaptation themes: overheating, flooding, water use, food and trade, and pests and diseases
30. Climate Change Team officers also engaged with relevant council teams during and after the public consultation process to revise and agree the proposed action points, and feed into the strategy.
31. The Consultation Report (Appendix 3) provides a further summary of the public consultation process and how we have responded to the consultation responses that were received.

Policy framework implications

32. Once adopted, the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy will append to our main Southwark Climate Change Strategy "Tackling the Climate Emergency Together". Combined, they will provide our strategy and plan to tackle the climate emergency and build a more resilient future for Southwark. The strategy contains a new schedule of climate adaptation and resilience actions for our climate action plan that will be delivered alongside the existing actions.

33. Other council plans and strategies will need to consider how climate risk and adaptation will be addressed. This will be required when policies and strategies are reviewed to ensure that they align with the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy. In some areas, a review will be needed sooner than previously planned if a quicker response is needed. For example, the council's new Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which will be prepared under its legal biodiversity duty, will need to consider the impacts of a changing climate.
34. The partial review of the Southwark Plan, the council's local plan and key planning document setting out our framework for planning and regeneration in the borough, will offer the opportunity to align new and updated planning policies to meet emerging climate risk.
35. There will also be opportunity to consider climate adaptation impacts for our public realm and neighbourhoods through the Streets for People Strategy and the Southwark 2030 programme.

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

Community impact statement

36. The impacts of climate change do not impact all people equally. Economic and social inequalities are exacerbated, and sometimes even caused, by the impacts of our changing climate. It is therefore necessary to implement preventative steps through this strategy in a way that is fair and proportionate to the impacts felt. In no way should adaptation measures cause further negative outcomes for communities already affected by climate change.
37. The council recognises the need to continue to work with our local community on climate change, ensuring the work we undertake is developed in partnership with residents, businesses and other stakeholders. Climate adaptation and resilience work will form part of our stakeholder partnership workstreams alongside reducing carbon emissions, so we can learn and adapt our projects to maximise their impact.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

38. The council recognises through our work that, while everyone is affected by climate change, the extent of that impact is not equal. As stated in our main Climate Change Strategy, climate change has the biggest impact on those who are poorer or have underlying health conditions. Our strategy has a central objective to focus on those who are most vulnerable to this impact, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents who are often most disproportionately affected. Social justice will be at the centre of our approach.

39. The council has undertaken a full Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix 5) for the strategy and have concluded that overall, the strategy will have a positive impact as it aims to reduce the impact of climate change on those who are most vulnerable and their protected characteristics. Officers will continue to assess equalities impacts and promote equality through the delivery of the individual action points.

Health impact statement

40. Action towards climate change and particularly climate adaptation will promote improvements in health, for example by reducing pollution, mitigating against extreme temperatures, and encouraging active travel. Delivering health benefits for our residents is a key objective of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy as it defines measures to address overheating in the borough and minimise pests and diseases that could be experienced through a changing climate.

Climate change implications

41. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy directly addresses how the council will focus on adapting the borough and making it more resilient to climate change. It is crucial to the council's climate response. The purpose of this work is to make the borough more climate resilient and continue to tackle climate change through our interventions. At all stages this strategy will seek to maximise its impact on tackling climate change.

Resource implications

42. The council recognises that we do not currently have the resource to deliver our climate ambition, however, there is much that can be done now, and a strong case for us and other councils to make to government for the necessary investment.
43. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy sets out where resources will be a particular issue for the council. Actions will be reviewed on a quarterly basis, to help identify gaps in resource, where additional support is needed and identify 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 and Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, but the council recognises that multiple council teams are responsible for the delivery of actions, and that tackling climate change is shared responsibility and a part of the role of all officers in the council.

Legal implications

44. 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 implementation of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Financial implications

45. As the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy will append the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, while much of the delivery of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy can be delivered within existing budgets it is recognised that additional capital resource will help to prioritise work and speed up delivery. This report asks Cabinet to agree to allocate £1m of funding from the council's Climate Capital Fund to deliver actions contained within the plan.
46. The council will also identify areas which are beyond the scope of council resources and bring forward proposals to identify external funding or calls on government for funding.

Consultation

47. See paragraphs 28-31 above.
48. Full public consultation was carried out on the draft Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy between August and October 2023 with response feeding into the final draft of the strategy and action points.
49. The council's annual Climate Change Strategy 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 (SB09012024)

50. This report seeks approval of the adoption of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and its incorporation with the Climate Change Strategy as part of the 2025 Climate Change Strategy refresh.
51. The council has the statutory authority to produce this strategy in accordance with the powers of general competence prescribed by section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The development (and further development) of a climate strategy is an executive function of the council which can be considered by Cabinet in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and Part 3B of the council's Constitution.
52. In approving the recommendations of this report Cabinet must be mindful of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires the council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people with a "protected characteristic" and others.
53. The community and equalities impact statements set out within paragraphs

36 to 39 recognise and acknowledge the unequal and potentially disproportionate effects and impact of climate change on those with protected characteristics, and note that a focus of the new strategy is to implement preventive measures which are designed to reduce the impact on and generate positive benefits for vulnerable individuals in the community, as well as to maintain engagement with groups representing these protected characteristics. Paragraph 39 summarises the findings of an Equalities Impact Assessment which has been undertaken and produced in connection with the development of the new strategy, and which should be considered by Cabinet in making this decision.

54. The report describes the extensive consultation that has taken place in producing this strategy and the steps that have been taken to ensure that the exercise has been carried out fairly and has involved a diverse range of stakeholders, in particular those with protected characteristics most affected by climate change. It also indicates how the strategy has been changed and developed in the light of the responses received from this consultation process. Cabinet will need to conscientiously take into account the results of the consultation as described in the report when making its decision on this strategy.
55. There are no other significant legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report. However, any necessary legal advice will be provided to officers in relation to individual decisions resulting from the implementation of the new strategy and the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Strategic Director of Finance (ENG23/137)

56. The strategic director of finance notes the recommendations to Cabinet to approve the adoption of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and its incorporation with the Climate Change Strategy as part of the 2025 Climate Change Strategy refresh.
57. The strategic director also notes the financial implications and the request to Cabinet to agree to allocate £1m of funding from the council's Climate Capital Fund to deliver actions contained within the plan.
58. Officer time and other costs associated with the recommendations will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Climate Resilience Background Paper	Climate Change Team	
Link: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/206967/Climate-Resilience-Background-Paper.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy
Appendix 2	Action Plan
Appendix 3	Consultation Report
Appendix 4	Climate Resilience Background Paper
Appendix 5	Equalities Impact Assessment

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor James McAsh, Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets	
Lead Officer	Caroline Bruce, Strategic Director of Environment, Neighbourhoods and Growth	
Report Author	Tom Sharland, Head of Climate Change and Sustainability	
Version	Final	
Dated	25 January 2024	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	25 January 2024	