

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 30 September 2019
Report for: Decision
Report of: Scrutiny Task and Finish Group - Climate Emergency

Report Title

Climate Emergency

Summary

On 28 November 2018 the Council Declared a Climate Emergency and Commissioned a Task and Finish group to complete a number of activities to instigate the Council's response to that Emergency. This report gives an update on the Group's progress against those activities and lays out recommendations for how the Council should continue in its efforts to tackle the Climate Emergency.

Recommendation(s)

That the Executive consider the recommendations made in section 6 of this report and submit their response alongside the report to Full Council.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Alexander Murray – Governance Officer
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Background Papers: None

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The report calls for an adjustment to the Council's Corporate Priorities in recognition of the council's declaration of a climate emergency
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	The report links directly to the GM 5 Year Environment Plan for Climate Change and links into a number of other GM Policies such as the Spatial Framework.
Financial	In the short term the report calls for the funds that were to be allocated for use by the task and finish group to held and be reallocated for use by a new Board/ Executive Member for Climate Emergency. It also calls for a new post to be created to lead on the Climate Emergency. There are a number of other recommendations that will have a financial impact although this has not yet been calculated.
Legal Implications:	If a new Committee is created with devolved powers it will require changes to the Council's governance structure and constitution.
Equality/Diversity Implications	
Sustainability Implications	That the Council will set new targets around sustainability that all staff and partners will work towards.
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	Resources will be required to support for a new Committee and a new Scrutiny Committee. A new position to be created to lead on Climate Emergency within the Council.
Risk Management Implications	
Health & Wellbeing Implications	
Health and Safety Implications	

1. Background

1.1 At its meeting on 28 November 2018 Trafford Council acknowledged the climate crisis emanating from accelerating man-made global warning and recognised.

“That at the current level of commitments, the world is on course for 3°C of warming with irreversible and catastrophic consequences for humans and the natural world”

1.2 In declaring a climate emergency, Trafford was placing itself amongst the forefront of local authorities recognising that carbon reduction could not be left to Government, that it was a matter for all of us and all organisations.

1.3 Council resolved to commission a task and finish group to:

(i) Seek advice from experts to develop a carbon budget and set a challenging target date for carbon neutrality in Trafford;

(ii) Consider systematically the Climate Emergency impact of each area of the Council's activities;

(iii) Make recommendations and set an ambitious timescale for reducing these impacts;

(iv) To assess the feasibility of requiring all report risk assessments to include Carbon Emission Appraisals, including presenting alternative approaches which reduce emissions wherever possible;

(v) Report to full Council with the actions the Council needs to take to address this emergency.

1.4 This report seeks to give an update on the progress that has been made against each activity:

2. Activities commissioned by Council

2.1. Activity 1: Seek advice from experts to develop a carbon budget and set a challenging target date for carbon neutrality in Trafford;

- Expertise
a budget has been allocated to recruit expertise and the Council is currently liaising with a company which has a track record of working in partnership with Local Authorities within Greater Manchester.
- Carbon Budget
Amey One Trafford is obligated to submit statistics on behalf of Trafford Council to central government in relation to the Council's carbon footprint.

2.1.1 The statistics that Amey One Trafford, and previously the Council, reported between 2005 and 2017 fed into the national Carbon footprint report below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2017>

2.1.2 These statistical returns will form the starting point for calculating Trafford's carbon footprint which will be developed further through the input of experts appointed by the Council. Once Trafford's carbon footprint is identified the Council working alongside experts, private industry, other public services, and local VCSE groups will set a challenging target date for a carbon neutral Trafford and develop a Carbon Budget with annual targets to track progress in reduction down to carbon neutrality.

2.2.0 Activity two: Consider systematically the Climate Emergency impact of each area of the Council's activities;

2.2.1 This activity has not yet begun but it is envisaged that once calculated the carbon footprint will be a critical component of decision making and procurement within the Council. To understand the true impact that each area of the Council's business has on Climate Emergency will be something to be looked at in conjunction with the experts who will be working out the current baseline and carbon budget for Trafford.

2.2.2 Government guidance to measure and report Greenhouse Gas emissions remains a useful document with still worthwhile case studies from 2009

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-how-to-measure-and-report-your-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

2.2.3CASE STUDY: Tesco plc – How does a large organisation identify which of its activities release Greenhouse Gas emissions into the atmosphere?

Tesco has been reporting on its Group direct carbon footprint since 2007, and prior to that had been reporting on the energy use of its stores since 2002.

2.2.4 The starting-point for deciding what to include in the reported carbon footprint was that it should include all operations over which Tesco or its subsidiaries had direct control. The aim was to inform where to focus emissions reductions measures within the business, as well as providing a comprehensive and transparent picture for external stakeholders.

2.2.5 The main direct Tesco emissions-generating activities are the operation of stores and distribution centres (“property”), the transport of goods (“distribution”) and employee business travel.

2.2.6 Other activities are excluded for two main reasons: a lack of data (e.g. emissions from waste) or because they fall outside Tesco’s direct control (e.g. use phase of goods). It is possible that any of the activities currently excluded may be included as better information becomes available or as Tesco is able to influence those activities more directly. It is also important to note that Tesco is taking steps to reduce emissions in some areas even though full data is not yet reported, e.g. through carbon foot printing products and diverting 100% of waste from landfill.

2.2.7 Tesco reports overall emissions figures in its annual Corporate Responsibility Report: this includes a total carbon footprint, a carbon intensity footprint (emissions per square foot net sales area), and specific KPI figures for emissions from stores and distribution operations.

More detailed figures are published on the company website:

www.tescopl.com/plc/corporate_responsibility_09/environment/climate_change/leading_by_example/carbon_footprint

2.2.8 Tesco also reports annually to the Carbon Disclosure Project, and in 2009 was awarded the Carbon Trust Standard for year-on-year reductions to its emissions in the UK. Its carbon footprint reporting is externally assured by external auditors, with the assurance statement published on the website. The Tesco diagram below shows which activities were included and excluded in its 2009 emissions reporting.

2.2.9 Trafford will have to make similar choices to Tesco in activities included in its carbon footprint. There has been unanimity that Trafford has responsibilities that extend beyond the immediate workforce, premises and subcontractors. The Group are therefore minded that whilst the Trafford carbon accounts might be broken down, that they still report more widely beyond council carbon usage. The clearest areas where this is true are in terms of planning and development in the area, procurement, licensing, and building control.

3. Activity 3: Make recommendations and set an ambitious timescale for reducing these impacts;

3.1 The Group feel that the completion of activity 1 and 2 will be vital in enabling the completion of activity 3 and recommend that the Council is to do all three of these activities working with experts and wider Trafford partners. While a specific date is yet to be set the Group feel that it should be no later than 2038 in line with the Greater Manchester target. While setting a date for carbon neutrality helps to focus the Council and its partners it must be remembered that the reduction of the amount of carbon produced is the overall goal, with even slight reductions being a step in the right direction.

4. Activity 4: To assess the feasibility of requiring all report risk assessments to include Carbon Emission Appraisals, including presenting alternative approaches which reduce emissions wherever possible;

4.1 The Group recommend that all Council reports which require implications to be considered, such as Executive Reports, include Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications as an area to be considered instead of just sustainability and update the guidance to officers to bring it in line with the Council's current targets, as per Appendix 1. This is to preclude an end to end review of the Council's project management documentation to ensure that consideration of the Climate Emergency is an intrinsic part of the process from conception through to implementation. The level of consideration required needs to be set out by the Council to balance the urgency of tackling the Climate Emergency against the cost and time required to perform the prescribed assessment. However, the Group feel that prior to a decision being made the carbon footprint of a proposal and the alternative options needs to be provided. By doing this decision makers would be able to help the Council achieve its Carbon Budget as they would be presented with the relevant information prior to making their decision.

5. Activity 5: Report to full Council with the actions the Council needs to take to address this emergency.

5.1 Over the course of the meetings of the Group it has become clear to members that while a task and finish group can quickly assess the ways in which the Council could respond to the Climate Emergency, it is not the correct mechanism to deliver the change required. The group recognise that activities one through four as set out by the Declaration of a Climate Emergency are integral parts to the creation of the Council's response. Therefore, these activities should not be conducted by a time limited group but rather should become part of the work programme of a new element of the Council's governance structure created specifically to deal with the Climate Emergency.

5.2 The group believe that the way for the Council to do this is through the creation of a new Committee with a membership that includes Executive Members as well as lead officers from Public Health, Licensing, Procurement, Amey, Highways, and Planning. The Board would need to have oversight of all of the Council's plans to reduce carbon emissions across Trafford. The Group propose that it should be such a Committee that is to hire and work alongside experts in completing activities one to three and would also lead on the delivery of activity four. The Committee would monitor the Council's progress on meeting its annual carbon budget set out by the completion of activity one and would have oversight of the delivery of any actions identified for the achievement of the Council's climate objectives.

5.3 The Group believes that an Executive Member or Members should be dedicated to addressing the Climate Emergency. In addition the group recommends that the Council appoint an officer dedicated to the Climate Emergency who would support the Committee and report directly to the Corporate Director of Place and the Executive Member responsible for the Climate Emergency. This officer would need to be of a sufficient level of experience to be able to drive Climate Emergency work within the Council and have sufficient authority to lead on any projects to this end.

5.4 The Committee would need to have oversight of the delivery of the Council's Climate Emergency agenda but the Group feel that the first item for completion, once in place, should be the identification of the Trafford Carbon Footprint, setting of a Carbon Budget and date for Trafford to reach Carbon Neutrality (no later than the 2038 set by GM), and to set out an action plan to achieve those targets. The Group believe that the hiring of experts will be necessary to aid in this work and the Group see the work Anthesis have done with Manchester City Council as a good example of how this can be achieved. Once the Council's Carbon Budget is calculated the Group recommend that it be published on an annual basis alongside the Council's Annual Financial Budget. The Committee would then regularly monitor the Council's performance against the Carbon Budget throughout the year to help ensure that targets are met.

5.5 In addition to the creation of a new Committee the Group recognise the need to have adequate arrangements in place to scrutinise this Committee and the delivery of the Climate Emergency work programme. The Group believe that due to the scope and the importance of this work programme it is not feasible for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise this in addition to their ongoing work programme. Therefore the Committee request that either an additional Scrutiny Committee or a sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be created with the sole focus upon the Climate Emergency. During discussions the Group expressed that they would prefer that a full additional Scrutiny Committee be created.

5.6 One recurring issue that arose at each meeting of the Committee was the impression that despite declaring a Climate Emergency the Council did not seem to adequately prioritise the Climate Emergency. When speaking to Council officers and Trafford residents the Members found that many were unaware that a Climate Emergency had been declared or that the Council was driven to tackle the Climate Emergency. As a first step to remedying this situation the Group recommend that the Council list the Climate Emergency as an additional priority within the Council's Corporate Plan. The Group are aware that Climate Change is included under Priority 6 Green and connected however, only one of the six bullet points under this priority mention Climate Change. The Group feels that given the Council has declared a Climate Emergency the current position within the Corporate Plan is inadequate and it needs to be elevated to a prominent position.

5.7 The fact that many officers within the Council do not know that Trafford has declared a Climate Emergency highlighted to the group that engagement within the workforce was required. One of the best ways to increase awareness of the work that the Council was doing and could be doing is through training of the workforce. At meetings the Interim Director of Public Health informed the group of carbon literacy training which was available from a local charity. Over the time that the task and finish group has been running the charity approached a number of Councils including Trafford about piloting their carbon literacy programme. The group supported Trafford piloting this training and recommend that the Council use this opportunity to roll out a full carbon literacy programme across the Council. The Group ask that this training be provided to staff at all levels in the workforce,

Councillors, and key partners to ensure that carbon literacy becomes embedded within the culture of the organisation.

5.8 To support Carbon Literacy becoming part of the Councils culture the Group also recommend that Climate Emergency Champions be created within the organisation. The Group ask that suitable individuals be identified by the Corporate Leadership Team to become Champions and that these individuals be among the first cohort to receive Carbon Literacy Training. The group would like for the Climate Emergency Champions to be representative of the whole organisation coming from all departments and levels of seniority. The demographic of champions should ensure that the Climate Emergency and the Carbon footprint become an intrinsic part of the Council's business as usual, especially the decision making process.

5.9 The elevation of the Climate Emergency within the Corporate Plan, the roll out of Carbon Literacy Training, and the identification of Climate Emergency Champions will help to increase awareness within the Council and across Trafford of the Council's commitment to address the Climate Emergency. However, the group feel that the Council needs to develop an all-encompassing communication and engagement strategy around the Climate Emergency within Trafford. The strategy should involve a wide range of communication and engagement with staff and Trafford residents. The Climate Emergency should be noted on the front page of the Council's website with a dedicated area of the website and intranet populated with all the work the Council is doing to tackle the Climate Emergency, resources that residents and staff can use to make a difference, and links to groups or websites, for example the City of Trees website.

5.10 The Council needs to act as a leader of the community helping to coordinate and facilitate the efforts of residents. The Council needs to work with existing resident groups and look at the possibility of creating a citizen's assembly to act as a focal point for engagement. Through the Interim Director of Public Health the Council have a connection with Dr Malcolm Oswald who helps to organise citizen's juries and could help the Council in developing an assembly. The student and pupil demonstrations in Manchester have shown that the Climate Emergency is an issue that is of the highest importance to children and young people and the Council should look at ways to utilise this interest and energy in tackling the issue. The Group suggest actions such as holding school competitions for the best carbon reducing ideas across Trafford or coordinating and facilitating young people's Climate Emergency groups.

5.11 The Group met with an officer from Oldham Council, who are leaders in Community Energy Projects. The Officer explained the projects which sought to use money borrowed by the Council in order to create social enterprises for the purpose of installing solar panels and other forms of green energy on buildings, such as schools, to provide all their energy needs. The community company borrows the money from the Council to install the solar panels on a building and then shares are sold to members of the public. The money from the shares then goes back to pay off the debt to the Council. If not enough shares are sold for the Council to recoup their money they can either continue to receive payments from the community company, which has a guaranteed income from the building using their energy, or they can convert the remaining debt into shares. When this was done in Oldham the Council used £250,000 to buy solar panels to fit on a school, sold £160,000 of shares and turned the remaining £90,000 pounds into shares in the community company. While the impact of such projects upon the area's carbon footprint was small the projects had a large positive effect upon the community. It is in this respect that the group would

like the Council to consider investing in and supporting such projects e.g. The Fuse in Partington.

5.12 During their meetings the group looked at a number of documents regarding actions that local authorities could take to combat the Climate Emergency and reduce their carbon footprint. Out these documents the Group believe the Friends of the Earth 33 actions for Local Authorities and the Greater Manchester 5 Year Plan provide a useful starting point for the council to act upon. Appendix 2 contains the Friends of the Earth 33 actions for Local Authorities mapped against the actions from the greater Manchester 5 year Environment Plan. This table has an additional column marked "Trafford position" as through the Groups discussions there have been indications that the Council is already working towards a number of these goals. The group requests that the Executive asks Officers to complete this column so that Trafford's ongoing work is clear. Out of the 33 actions there are a number that the Group believe can and should be implemented as soon as possible. These actions have been listed below amongst the other recommendations from this report.

6. Summary of Recommendations

6.1 It is felt by the group that while the task and finish group was a short term measure to work out how the Council should respond to the Climate Emergency a longer term solution is required. There are a number of elements that the group feel are critical in the work going forward which are listed below;

1. That a Committee be established to coordinate the Council's work relating to Climate Emergency.
2. That the Committee complete activity one through four with the support of external experts and partners.
3. That the Committee have executive membership as well as lead officers from Public Health, Licensing, Procurement, Amey, Highways, Planning, and any other key areas identified.
4. That there be a lead Executive member dedicated to the Climate Emergency.
5. That a dedicated officer role, reporting to the Corporate Director of Place, be created to drive the Climate Emergency Agenda forward.
6. That the Committee will oversee the action plan and monitor Trafford's performance against carbon reduction targets.
7. That the Councils Carbon Budget be published annually alongside the Financial Budget.
8. That an additional Scrutiny Committee or Sub Committee be established with the sole purpose of Scrutinising the Council and their partners in relation to the Climate Emergency.

9. That Climate Emergency Implications and sustainability be listed as an area to be considered in reports and that the guidance to officers be updated to bring it in line with the Council's current targets as per appendix 1.
10. That Climate Emergency be added to the Corporate Plan an additional priority forming part of the annual report and performance monitoring.
11. That the Council roll out Carbon literacy training across the workforce and Councillors.
12. That Climate Emergency champions be recognised within the organisation.
13. That a comprehensive Communication and Engagement Strategy be developed and considers the following methods;
 - Dedicated Climate Emergency Section of the Council's Website
 - Wide distribution of the Public Health Annual Plan
 - Internal communications (sections on the intranet)
 - Have Climate Emergency resources available at Council Buildings
 - Hold Climate Emergency events or sessions at libraries
 - Hold Climate Emergency challenge among Trafford schools
 - Support of existing Climate Emergency VCSE groups within Trafford
 - Utilising Citizens Juries (Dr Malcolm Oswald)
 - Support the creation of a citizen's assembly
 - Community energy projects
 - Advertise and champion the resources created by Greater Manchester on tackling Climate Emergency
14. That the Executive consider the 33 Actions for Local Authorities laid out by Friends of the Earth and implement as many as possible.
15. That the Executive consider immediate implementation of the following actions as quick wins;
 - Buy Green Energy
 - Adjust the Council Social Value weighting in procurement so that reducing carbon footprint, planting trees etc. are counted as elements of social value
 - Increase number of EV Charging points in Trafford
 - Stop promoting measures that increase greenhouse gasses
 - Install food waste collection bins in all Council buildings (including in kitchens for employees)
16. That the Executive ask officers to complete the Trafford position column of appendix 2.