

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Planning and Development) (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Cabinet	20 January 2022

Chorley Council Climate Change Strategy; Approval to Consult

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Yes
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to undertake a process of consultation on the draft Climate Change Strategy

Recommendations to Cabinet

2. To approve the draft Climate Change Strategy for public consultation.
3. To delegate approval to the Executive Member to adopt the strategy after the consultation subject to there being no material changes to the strategy.
4. To note that this is an ambitious programme of activity and is likely to require further investment/resourcing which will be overseen by the Climate Change Working Group and the Executive Member (Resources).

Reasons for recommendations

5. Climate Change is a priority for the Council, and we must prepare and adopt a Climate Change Strategy to demonstrate the steps we are taking to move towards zero carbon and deliver our programme of activity. Without a strategy in place, the Council will not be able to deliver on the declaration made in 2019 to be net zero by 2030.

Other options considered and rejected

6. To not have a strategy. This was rejected as the evidence for change is compelling and as a Council, we must demonstrate a commitment to making a difference with a

programme of activity to deliver tangible outcomes including benefits for nature and reduction in carbon emissions.

Executive summary

7. The Draft Climate Change Strategy sets out the Council’s vision, strategic aims, priorities, and action plan for climate change for the period 2022-24. It is intentionally a non-technical document which aims to set out in an accessible format what we want to deliver for Chorley and how we will go about it.

Corporate priorities

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe, and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

The Climate Change Strategy

9. The Climate Change Strategy is a non-technical document which sets out the vision (to achieve net zero by 2030), strategic objectives and priorities for climate change.

10. The vision for the Climate Change Strategy is as follows;

Our goal as a Council is for the borough to be net zero by 2030

11. There are 5 Climate Change Objectives;

- To understand the carbon footprint of both the Council’s activities and the Borough as a whole, now and in the future, so we can develop robust plans and track our progress
- To dramatically reduce our carbon emissions as a Council and be an ambassador for change.
- Work with our residents, partners, and local businesses to influence behaviour and deliver local projects to drive down the carbon footprint of our Borough.
- To significantly increase the tree coverage across the borough and promote nature recover
- Enable Chorley to be climate resilient and better equipped to cope with changes in the natural environment including extreme weather events

12. There are nine priorities which are incorporated into the strategy action plan which is at the back of the document, which includes 40 projects or schemes and is therefore an ambitious programme of activity.
13. The strategy action has been informed by the Green Task Group of Overview and Scrutiny, the priorities identified by the Climate Change Working Group plus a series of workshops held with officers and Elected Members

What the strategy will deliver

14. Key works within the strategy action plan include:
 - a. The establishment of a long-term Council Asset decarbonisation action plan
 - b. Community training and engagement through community events, school visits and online communications
 - c. Continuing work with organisations such as LCC, NW Energy Hub and community groups
 - d. Continue to lobby government to improve the sustainability of policy such as planning policies
 - e. Integration of building sustainability policy within council policy
 - f. The completion of a Chorley and South Ribble Waste Strategy which will include actions such as single use plastic audits within the Council
 - g. Annual carbon footprint audits of the Council and the Borough

The Chorley Council Carbon Footprint Report

15. Accompanying the strategy is the Chorley Council Carbon Footprint Report (Appendix Two). This is a report which is considered best practice and is data which Councils are expected to make available. It will inform the investment in our assets with a view to achieving decarbonising our buildings, vehicles, processes and so forth.

Our Consultation Strategy

16. It is anticipated this strategy will attract a lot of media and public attention therefore it is important we have a plan for the consultation and maximize ways to promote engagement. We know already following recent events we have held that young people are very passionate about climate change and are keen to see the strategy and give the Council constructive feedback.
17. The consultation will be set up using CitizenSpace (online), using a series of multiple choice and open-ended questions. Citizenspace allows us to download all the feedback from the survey for analysis to help inform future plans and the CitizenSpace survey link is easily shared on other digital platforms, with the option to create a paper/pdf version of the consultation where required.
18. There will be many opportunities for Elected members to get involved in the consultation. All members will be provided details of how to submit feedback via the online portal, officers will hold drop in sessions for Elected Members to ask questions and for more detail on the measures within the strategy, and we will ensure Parish Councils are involved too with a presentation at Parish Liaison meeting and full details sent to all Parish Clerks.
19. A range of communications channels will be used where appropriate to reach a range of audiences, to include:

- Press releases - to local and regional press, plus news section of the Chorley Council website
- Social media on the Chorley Council Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn channels (including sponsored Facebook posts to reach those that do not follow the Chorley Council social media channels),
- Emails to those who have consented to emails via MyAccount
 - Those subscribed to receiving consultations (approx. 4000)
 - Those subscribed to receiving business news (approx. 3000)
 - Those subscribed to receiving information on council news and events (9000)
 - Direct emails to parish council and schools for inclusion in their newsletters.
 - Inclusion in 'In the Know'
- Website content (Climate Change pages, and news section of Chorley Council website).
- Specific bodies including LCC, NW Energy Hub, Friends of the Earth, NW Community Energy Group and Churches Against Climate Change
- Engagement with schools in the Borough to get the feedback of pupils/a younger audience.
- Potential for drop-in sessions / in person feedback and tie in with other related events where the views of residents can be captured.
- All Elected Members and Parish Councils will be emailed the details and encouraged to engage.

20. Following Executive Cabinet approval, we will prepare the materials and run a consultation for 8 weeks early February 2022 to the end of March 2022, to give plenty of time for engagement & feedback and then take a report to the Executive Member (Resources /Climate Change) for approval to adopt.

Comparison against grading systems

21. Numerous organisations have compiled scoring criteria for Local authority action plans. Grading platforms include the Friends of the Earth 50 Point Climate Action Plan for Councils and the more recent Climate Emergency UK Council Climate League.
22. This strategy has been compared against both grading systems to ensure its robustness compared to other Councils and against the expectations of the public. All feasible actions have been added to the programme, factoring in the current workload of specific teams.

Climate change and air quality

23. The work noted in this report has taken all efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change and low air quality. This work encompasses all Council work, actions, and aims towards the mitigation of climate change and sustainability
24. As a remediation effort, the strategy has been designed as a digitally friendly document to limit the requirement for printing

Equality and diversity

25. Overall, the Climate Change Strategy will have a positive effect on sustainability, reputational and health impact assessments. The equality impact assessment shows that the strategy has no significant impact on different groups within the community.

Community is a strategic theme of the strategy ensuring residents are involved in improving their local area and equality of access for all and will therefore have a positive general impact to this community.

26. The full Integrated Impact Assessment can be found in Appendix three.

Risk

27. The risks associated with this work are concerning the failure to mitigate the impact of climate change locally, and the challenge to achieve the targets and ambitions of the Council to deliver on the net zero carbon emissions goal of 2030. Possible delays in delivering the actions relating to nature recovery and sustainability in the environment when working with external stakeholders.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

28. The Council provided for a one-off budget of £500k which is monitored via the capital programme. This is regularly updated and allocated as requests come in. Any resource requirements beyond this will be sought via additional approvals.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

29. No comments at this time.

Appendices

Appendix One the Climate Change Strategy Draft
Appendix Two the Chorley Council Carbon Footprint Report
Appendix Three the Climate Change Integrated Impact Assessment

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