

Report of	Meeting	Date
Interim Deputy Chief Executive (Introduced by Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment))	Executive Cabinet	Thursday, 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2023

## **Chorley Council Sustainable Building Policy - Approval of Policy**

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an overview of the proposed Chorley Council Sustainable Building Policy.
2. To provide information regarding the integration of the policy from relevant teams throughout the Council.
3. To seek approval for the adoption of the Chorley Council Sustainable Building Policy.

### **Recommendations to Executive Cabinet**

4. To approve the adoption of the Chorley Council Sustainable Building Policy.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

5. The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, and as part of this set the ambitious goal to be net zero by 2030 for both the borough and the council. The integration of low carbon and sustainable measures into all existing and new developments is a key factor in progressing the Council to reach it's goal of net zero by 2030.

### **Other options considered and rejected**

6. To reject the proposal of the policy and to continue retrofitting and development with existing practices.

### **Executive summary**

7. The Chorley Council Sustainable Building Policy has been developed as a cross council effort to ensure feasibility. The focus of the policy is capturing the work the council already completes and ensures sustainable development is the highest priority of all work completed.

- The Sustainable Building Policy has been developed for use on Council building's which the Council has full control over or new developments.

### **Corporate priorities**

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	<b>A green and sustainable borough</b>
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

### **Background to the report**

- The development of a sustainable building policy for the Council is an action within the Climate Change Strategy:

“Develop and implement a sustainable policy for Council buildings to ensure that all development the Council undertakes meets sustainability and net zero targets and there is a clear action plan for existing buildings to be decarbonised”

### **Reasoning behind a sustainable building policy**

- There is a need for a sustainable building policy to ensure that the carbon footprint of the Council continues to decrease towards meeting the Council's own goal of being net zero by 2030.
- Whilst efforts are currently taken towards lowering the carbon footprints of buildings such as meeting BREEAM ratings on new developments, this solidifies the Council's existing efforts and commits the Council to taking further efforts to ensuring that work lowers the Council's carbon footprint.
- There are a number of councils who have publicly released their sustainable building policies including Shropshire, West Sussex, Scarborough and West of Vale Horse. However, from communications through UK100 it is estimated that around 1/3 of councils nationally have internal sustainable building policies. The publicly accessible policies were used as a guide when developing the proposed policy.

### **Overview of the sustainable building policy**

- The sustainable building policy has been developed alongside asset management officers. Both officers completed and passed a low carbon retrofitting assets course to ensure policy development is well informed and feasible.
- The sustainable building policy has been developed to differentiate between new developments and the refurbishment of existing developments. This is due to the increased ability to have lower carbon buildings when building new developments than when retrofitting existing developments.
- The policy has 12 focus points for new developments and 10 focus points for refurbishment of existing developments. These include minimising heat loss, renewable energy generation, waste reduction and consultation with the climate change team.

17. An exception form has been produced alongside the policy for focus areas which cannot be completed within a development for a specific reason. Exception reports are to be approved by SMT prior to continuation of the project.
18. The exception report follows a similar format to that of the corporate project exception report for ease of completion and the simple format allows for a fast turn over time with regard to completion and submission.
19. Regarding refurbishment of existing assets, a condition has been set within the policy, so the policy is only in place for refurbishments over £200,000. This allows for smaller renovations and requires work to take place without the policy coming into force however larger whole building refurbishments will need to factor in low carbon improvements. Any which cannot be done can be explained within an exception report for approval.
20. The success of the policy will be monitored through the annual carbon footprints, which are completed for each building within the Council's control. The carbon footprint reports for 2021 and 2022 will be coming in due course for review.
21. The addition of this policy is not expected to add issue during the planning application process of development, with most measures not adding additional approval procedures. The new local plan is expected to cover a number of items covered within this policy, however the local plan will not be enforceable for at least another year.

#### **Comments from Assets and Developments Team and other relevant teams**

22. The Head of Property and Development and the Head of Operational Assets have reviewed the policy and exception report and have provided comments regarding the policy provided below:
  - a. Implementing the sustainable building policy across new build and refurbishment projects supports the Council net zero goal and will offer significant benefits across the property estate and new developments. This will include energy and cost savings through efficient resource use, a reduced carbon footprint, improved indoor air quality, enhanced occupant health and productivity, lower water consumption, decreased waste generation, and a positive impact on the environment and local community. The policy also contributes to meeting regulatory requirements, attracting environmentally conscious tenants, and positioning properties for long-term value and resilience.
  - b. Due to the higher upfront costs and specialised requirements a thorough consideration of sustainable building practices will be considered at project inception and an exception report will be prepared if these practices make a scheme unviable.
23. HR have stated that the current proposal has no HR implications.

#### **Comments from the Climate Change Working Group**

24. The draft policy was reviewed by the working group on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
25. The Climate Change Working Group agreed with the proposed policy and acknowledged the progress the policy will allow the Council to take towards net zero by 2030.

## **Climate change and air quality**

26. The work noted in this report has an overall positive impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.
27. In particular the report impacts on the following activities:
  - a. **net carbon zero by 2030,**
  - b. **energy use / renewable energy sources**
  - c. **waste and the use of single use plastics,**
  - d. sustainable forms of transport,
  - e. air quality,
  - f. flooding risks,
  - g. green areas and biodiversity.
28. This policy will lower the Councils overall carbon footprint and aid it getting it closer to net zero.

## **Equality and diversity**

29. The work noted within this report has been evaluated for equality and diversity within the climate change strategy integrated impact assessment.

## **Risk**

30. There are no risk implications of the policy as it stands, risk implications during the implementation of the policy during construction will be evaluated for each individual policy.

## **Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

31. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report at this stage, however as schemes are brought forward in the future, their cost effectiveness will need to be assessed considering the impact on the revenue budgets of the council and the affordability of this.

## **Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

32. The adoption and implementation of a Sustainable Building Policy is designed to make a positive contribution to the council's environmental commitments and comply specifically with our Climate Change Strategy. This policy will apply to Council buildings. From a legal perspective there are no concerns with what is proposed.

## **Background documents**

33. There are no background papers to this report

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Chorley Council Sustainable Building Policy  
Appendix 2 – Exception Report

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This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution.