



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>COUNCIL: WEDNESDAY 22 JANUARY 2020.</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 9</b>
Subject	<b>CLIMATE ACTION FOR WEST OXFORDSHIRE</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change Email: david.harvey@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Ness Scott, Climate Change Manager Tel: 01993 861344 Email: vanessa.scott@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report sets out: a) A proposed framework and timescales for developing a Carbon Action Plan as the mechanism for delivering West Oxfordshire District Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. b) A proposed framework and timescales for developing a Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire, influencing change and driving forward Climate Action across the District working with partners and stakeholders including residents and community groups, planners and developers, land owners and businesses.
Annexes	None
Recommendations	a) To note the contents of the report and proposals to develop and publish: a Carbon Action Plan for the Council by August 2020 and a Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire by February 2021; and b) That the Council agrees to the proposed structure and way forward for delivering Climate Action for West Oxfordshire, including the continuation of the Climate Change Working Group and the biannual consideration of progress reports and recommendations from the Group, as referenced in paragraph <a href="#">2.10.1 below</a> .

Corporate priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy</li> <li>2. Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>3. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services</li> </ol>
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Consultation has been carried out by the Climate Change Manager with key Officers and colleagues within West Oxfordshire District Council, with delivery partners and with Officers from neighbouring Oxfordshire District Councils. This consultation process has informed the Climate Change Manager's proposals within this report.</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

### **I.1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

I.1.1. This report sets out:

- a) A proposed framework and timescales for developing a Carbon Action Plan as the mechanism for delivering West Oxfordshire District Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
- b) A proposed framework and timescales for developing a Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire, influencing change and driving forward Climate Action across the District working with partners and stakeholders including residents and community groups, planners and developers, land owners and businesses.

I.1.2. Whilst the report sets out a proposed framework, further research and dialogue with Council Members and Officers carried out in partnership with key stakeholders will shape future proposals and priorities. This work programme will therefore be evolving and will need to be responsive to outcomes of consultation.

### **I.2 BACKGROUND**

I.2.1. In December 2015, the Paris Agreement was adopted by 195 nations at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and included the aim of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change by *“holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.”*

I.2.2. Shortly after the Paris Agreement, UNFCCC invited the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – and leading world body for assessing the science related to climate change – to produce: *Global Warming of 1.5°C, an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty.*

I.2.3. The IPCC special report highlighted how limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require *“rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.”* The research and findings of IPCC's research informed UK Government's next steps and in June 2019, UK Government became the first country to legislate long-term climate targets by introducing a legally binding net zero target to end the UK's contribution to global warming entirely by 2050.

I.2.4. In recognition of the urgency and importance of local action in response to a global concern, on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019, West Oxfordshire District Council declared their Motion to address the climate and ecological emergency.

### **I.3 THE MOTION**

I.3.1. On 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the following Motion was agreed:

*“Climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges facing us today and the UK is taking a leading role in addressing this issue. Investing in green industries and decarbonising our economy we will leave the environment in a better state for the next generation. One of the ways in which this has been achieved is by phasing out coal power, leading to the longest time since the Industrial Revolution without using coal to generate electricity. This Council will recognise this achievement of a reduction in the use of fossil fuel, particularly in*

*light of the Climate Emergency accepted by Parliament recently; commits to work towards the reduction of emissions for the benefit of both present and future generations thus fulfilling our Stewardship responsibility for the planet - handing it to subsequent generations in a better state than which it was left to us!*

*To enable the Council to fulfil this aim, this Council adopts the following statements:*

- 1. West Oxfordshire District Council recognises the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change and therefore declares a climate and ecological emergency.*
- 2. The Council is determined to be carbon neutral by 2030 and to encourage others in the District to follow its example.*
- 3. The Council will form a panel of residents and create a cross party working group to report back to the Council by January 2020 to assist in the formulation of its Plans.*

*In support of this, Council authorises the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, to take the necessary steps to implement the above.”*

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

### **2.1 ACTION TO DATE**

- 2.1.1. Positive steps have been taken in response to the Council’s Motion.
- 2.1.2. Councillor David Harvey has been appointed as Cabinet Member for Climate Change.
- 2.1.3. A Climate Change Manager has been appointed (November 2019) to co-ordinate the production of a Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire, delivering the Council’s commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
- 2.1.4. West Oxfordshire District Council is preparing a new Council Plan, 2020-2024, which is due to go to Full Council in January 2020 and incorporates Climate Action as a leading priority.
- 2.1.5. A cross-party Climate Action Working Group has been formed to drive forward Climate Action in West Oxfordshire. Three meetings have been held: in September 2019, in November 2019 and one more recently in December 2019. At each Working Group meeting, decisions have been taken to inform and evolve local priorities for how the Council will respond to the climate and ecological emergency. Plans to mitigate for climate and ecological change will be considered as interrelated issues by the Working Group.
- 2.1.6. Development planning and opportunities to influence the drafting of policy and supplementary planning documents in areas of strategic growth across West Oxfordshire – so raising standards for sustainable design and construction to an exemplary level – formed the focus of more recent discussion by the Climate Action Working Group in November 2019. Proposals were made to embed an expectation that Developers should be designing now to the enhanced, Future Homes Standard, which proposes homes from 2025 to achieve 75/80% reduction in CO2 emissions over and above current AD L Building Regulations (2013). Enhanced sustainability standards and innovative design solutions, with a particular emphasis on the strategic sites, were discussed as a priority for the Planning Team alongside a proposal for a refreshed Supplementary Planning Document to set out the Council’s expectations of applicants. The Working Group went on to identify an action to respond to Government’s recent consultation on the Future Homes Standard and AD L 2020 to

- i) endorse the highest standards proposed for improving energy-performance in new homes and ii) lobby for the introduction of the Future Homes Standard sooner than 2025.
- 2.1.7. Further projects are being implemented with Council support and contribute towards the overarching objectives of the Council's Motion:
- 2.1.8. The Council will soon be awarding a contract/s to an Installer for the site selection, installation and operation of electric vehicle charging points across the District which supports and facilitates a local transition to low- and zero-emission vehicles.
- 2.1.9. The Council actively supports and funds a number of projects that make a continued positive contribution towards delivering Climate Action in West Oxfordshire, for example:
- a) From April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, Solar PV was installed and operational at Carterton Leisure Centre and provides a direct, renewable supply of electricity to the Centre. This was made possible through the Council investment of £155,000.
  - b) With revenue funding from the Council, the National Energy Foundation (NEF) provides support to residents in West Oxfordshire under their 'Better Housing, Better Health' scheme and offers callers a 'warm and well assessment' and advice on measures and grants available to make home improvements. With an estimated 22,000 fuel-poor households across Oxfordshire, initiatives such as this offer the Council further potential in the future. The NEF are established in their field and offer links to existing partnerships such as the Local Energy Advice Programme (LEAP) who carry out, on behalf of NEF, house visits where this need has been identified. The NEF currently targets the provision of advice to 80 households per year within the District. With additional funding, and a capital budget, the NEF would be in a position to help residents in fuel poverty to install energy-efficiency measures. The NEF estimates that 10% of residents they currently assist over the phone in the District would benefit from a capital funding contribution for home improvements.
  - c) The Wychwood Project is also supported by the Council through both core funding and office accommodation. The Project delivers, through engagement with the community, habitat creation projects, biodiversity and ecological enhancement and land management. In doing so, their work is making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and ecological emergency in West Oxfordshire. Opportunities for staff to volunteer on future tree-planting days organised by The Wychwood Project are being promoted across the Council to raise awareness and encourage staff engagement in climate action.
  - d) The Council is also currently considering, at Full Council in January 2020, the potential for a further investment into Southill Solar Community Project, West Oxfordshire, which will contribute to the development and operation of strategic-level renewable energy infrastructure within the District.
- 2.1.10. The above are just three examples of projects that deliver now, and have the potential to deliver in the future, positive action with support from the Council. Maximising and building on existing relationships and projects such as these will be key in identifying resource, mobilising action and engaging with local residents and community groups to address climate change in the future.

## 2.2 A CARBON ACTION PLAN FOR WEST OXFORDSHIRE

- 2.2.1. The Council’s motion sets out a commitment to becoming a carbon-neutral Council by 2030 and is referred to within this report as a leading priority. In setting an example of good practice within the Council’s own operations, there is potential to influence partners and stakeholders at a District level by implementing raised standards and sharing the lessons learned.
- 2.2.2. To achieve the Council’s aim by 2030, a credible, science-based strategy for the Council will need to be developed. This has been referred to, from this point, as a Carbon Action Plan.

## 2.3 SETTING A BASELINE

- 2.3.1. The first step in developing a Carbon Action Plan will be a need to understand the Council’s baseline carbon emissions and the quantity that will need to be removed in order to be operating as a carbon-neutral Council. Once a baseline has been set, all projects and activities for carbon-reduction can then be monitored. Based on the current methodology, the Council’s carbon emissions for 2018/2019 have been audited and are now available online:  
<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2073158/WODC-DECC-report-for-2018-19.pdf>
- 2.3.2. This data represents carbon emissions that the Council have direct control over. They include ‘direct’ emissions under Scope One and include gas consumption of buildings and fuel consumption of Council fleet and vehicles. ‘Indirect’ emissions fall under Scope Two and Scope Three and encompass purchased electricity from a third-party supplier and business mileage and emissions associated with grid losses of purchased electricity.
- 2.3.3. This carbon accounting methodology is consistent with the approach taken across Oxfordshire Councils and adopts conversion factors published by The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Table I. Greenhouse gas and carbon-emissions for WODC, Annual Report 2018/2019.

Annual 2018/19			
Scope	Source	CO <sub>2</sub> e (kg)	CO <sub>2</sub> (kg)
One	Gas Consumption	986,004	984,182
	Liquid Fuel - Fleet	181,917	176,922
	Liquid Fuel - Waste	387,722	382,340
	<b>Total Scope 1</b>	<b>1,555,643</b>	<b>1,543,445</b>
Two	Purchased electricity	487,326	483,556
	<b>Total Scope 2</b>	<b>487,326</b>	<b>483,556</b>
Three	WTT Gas	136,731	
	WTT Liquid Fuel - Fleet	42,225	

Annual 2018/19			
Scope	Source	CO <sub>2</sub> e (kg)	CO <sub>2</sub> (kg)
	WTT Liquid Fuel - Waste	92,321	
	Business travel - staff mileage	58,474	58,099
	Electricity T&D	41,542	41,214
	WTT Electricity	72,272	
	WTT Electricity T&D	6,163	
	<b>Total Scope 3</b>	<b>449,726</b>	<b>99,314</b>
	<b>Total emissions</b>	<b>2,492,696</b>	<b>2,126,314</b>

\*WTT (Well to tank): An average of all the GHG emissions released from the production, processing and delivery of a fuel or energy vector.

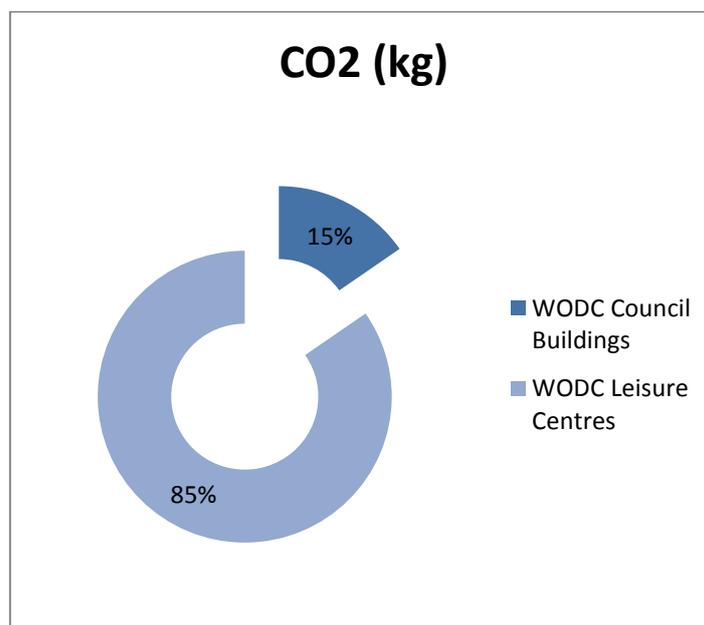
Table 2. Key for greenhouse gas and carbon-emissions scope.

Scope	Emissions source	Description
1	Gaseous Fuel Consumption	Natural gas fuel combusted on Council sites and in Council Owned Leisure centres.
	Liquid Fuel – Fleet	Liquid fuel (petrol) used by the Council owned vehicle fleet.
	Liquid Fuel – Waste	Liquid fuel (diesel) used by Council operated waste collection vehicles.
2	Electricity generation	Electricity consumption from corporate buildings, public conveniences, car lighting, P&D machines and Leisure facilities.
3	WTT Gaseous fuel	Emissions associated with extraction, refining and transportation of the raw gaseous fuel from source to Council owned assets.
	WTT Liquid fuel – fleet	Emissions associated with extraction, refining and transportation of the raw liquid fuel from source to the Council fleet.
	WTT Liquid fuel – waste	Emissions associated with extraction, refining and transportation of the raw liquid fuel from source to the Council waste collection fleet.

Scope	Emissions source	Description
	Business travel	Vehicle mileage per fuel type (diesel, unleaded, hybrid and unknown) travelled by staff for business purposes.
	Electricity T&D	Emissions associated with grid losses - the energy loss that occurs in getting the electricity from the power plant to the organisations that purchase it.
	WTT Electricity generation	WTT emissions associated with electricity generation.
	WTT Electricity T&D	Emissions associated with installation of the electric grid infrastructure which allows for electricity transmission.

Source: *The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (2017) A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, Revised Edition.*

Figure I. Scope One, gas consumption, carbon emissions for WODC, Annual Report 2018/2019.



2.3.4. Data gathered on the Council’s carbon emissions, and baseline position, is key to being able to focus and prioritise carbon-reduction measures, identifying timescales and resources required for their delivery. In Figure I, for example, current data on gas consumption across Council buildings illustrates very clearly where the largest carbon impact is for the Council and where there is, therefore, greatest potential for improvements. WODC Leisure Centres are shown here as having the highest gas consumption which illustrates the fact these buildings have a wide audience and support high visitor numbers.

- 2.3.5. The next carbon-emission reporting cycle is 2019/2020 which will take place at the end of March 2020.
- 2.3.6. It is proposed that the Council approaches an industry specialist in carbon accounting for a peer review of the current methodology in West Oxfordshire in order to validate the approach and ensure the 2020 carbon-emissions baseline is both credible and stands up to scrutiny.
- 2.3.7. The reason for proposing a validation process is that, despite all Councils using the same Scope One, Two & Three carbon emissions to record their carbon impact, there can be local variations. For example:
- a) Scope Three emissions can extend beyond just business mileage and include, for example, employee commuting, the transportation and distribution of waste overseas. Advice should be sought on whether the Council should extend their carbon accounting for Scope Three emissions.
  - b) Data is currently gathered from various sources, from energy supplier to leisure contract manager, and is received in various forms and units of measurement which are then used as the basis of a conversion to calculate the Council's total carbon emissions. Within a standardised scope, there may therefore be variation in how data on, in particular, fuel consumption is recorded and then assessed. Advice should be sought on the assessment methodology being adopted as this will form the template for future monitoring.
- 2.3.8. Subsequent to an initial validation exercise, it is proposed that the regular monitoring of Council's carbon emissions and reductions is an activity the Council continues to carry out and resource in-house. This would facilitate a commitment within a Carbon Action Plan for monitoring of progress towards targets, releasing annual reports to the public.

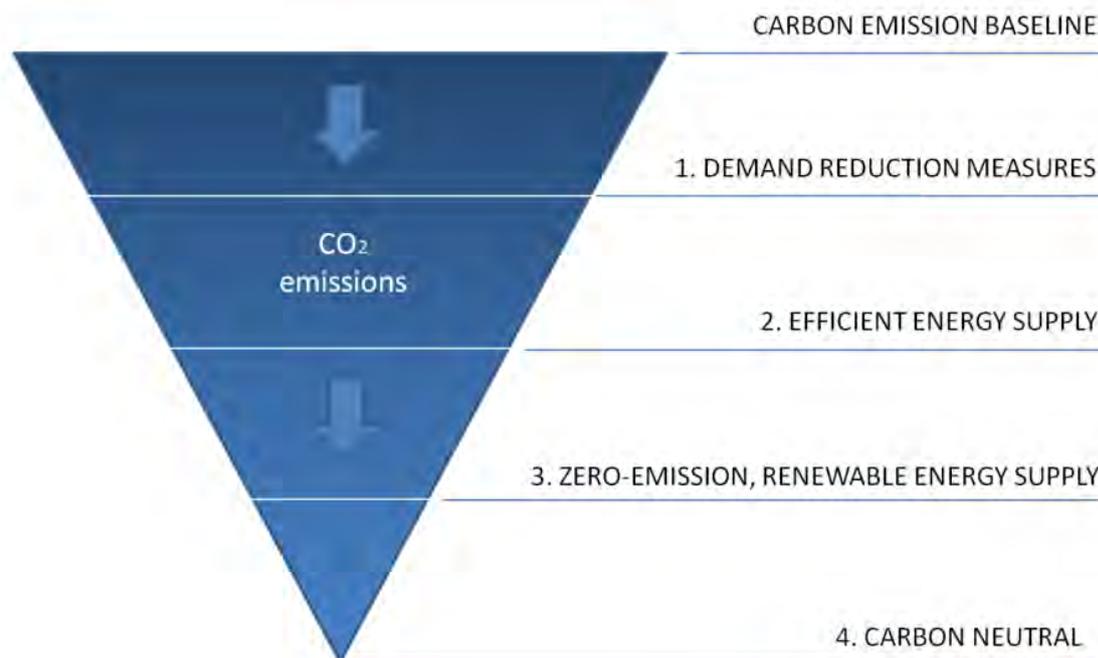
## **2.4 CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK**

- 2.4.1. A Carbon Action Plan for West Oxfordshire will be developed through partnership, engaging with Officers who have a direct responsibility for reducing carbon emissions through Council operations, the procurement of contracts and in service delivery. A Climate Action Network for West Oxfordshire will be formed to bring together everyone sharing and taking ownership of the Council's aim.
- 2.4.2. Key Officers identified as having a direct link to Council operations that fall under Scope One, Two and Three carbon emissions will be asked to participate in a Climate Action Network to ensure the wide adoption of principles for Climate Action. Officers have been identified covering a range of areas including Assets, Contracts, Finance and Technology.
- 2.4.3. Within the fourth quarter of 2019/2020, a workshop session will be held with Officers to identify priorities for action, identifying resources and/or capital or revenue funding requirements to implement projects for carbon reduction. A Carbon Action Plan will be produced for the purposes of internal consultation; for review with Cabinet and with cross-party Climate Action Working Group members. Indicative milestones are set out in Table 5 of 2.10. A final Carbon Action Plan will be put forward to Full Council for approval in July 2020.

## 2.5 PRINCIPLES OF THE ENERGY HIERARCHY

- 2.5.1. Science-based, carbon-reduction targets will need to inform decisions taken on what actions are prioritised within the Carbon Action Plan. In order to facilitate this, principles that align with the energy hierarchy are recommended as a consistent reference point and as a basis for comparing and prioritising resources.

Figure 2. Principles of the energy hierarchy.



- 2.5.2. Principles of the energy hierarchy prioritise measures to first reduce energy and fuel demand in the interests of minimising human's dependence on natural resources. The more we can reduce our demand over time, the less energy we need to find. The next step in a robust energy strategy for the Council is to supply what energy is required, in an efficient way and through low- and zero-carbon technology. These two steps, in combination, can make a significant impact in terms of demand and carbon-emissions reduction and lower the proportion of renewable energy then required to offset the Council's remaining carbon emissions, whether this is done directly or indirectly via a third-party supplier.

## 2.6 CARBON ACTION PLAN, HIGH-LEVEL OBJECTIVES

- 2.6.1. By adopting principles of the energy hierarchy as a consistent theme, high-level objectives can focus the discussion of a Climate Action Network. A more granular set of actions would then be identified as part of a Carbon Action Plan. Some actions and projects have already been identified by Officers working across the Council for example and will sit within this framework.

Table 3.

<b>Current carbon emissions</b>	Scope One 'direct' emissions	Gas consumption in Council buildings	<p>Identify opportunities for energy-demand reduction, efficient-energy supply and renewable energy across existing, Council buildings and Leisure Centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a full Energy Audit of all existing, Council-owned buildings to include costed, energy-efficiency measures.</li> </ul> <p>Energy-reduction and 'fabric-first' measures include, for example, i) minimising heat loss through the insulation of walls, floor, roof and windows; ii) installing waste water heat recovery systems; iii) installing building management systems and controls to manage heat supply.</p> <p>Efficient heating through either immediate or end-of-life replacement of plant and transfer across to low- and zero-carbon technologies such as heat pumps, biomass, hybrid-heating solutions.</p> <p>A life cycle assessment (LCA) at this point would also allow the Council to better understand the embodied carbon associated with a retrofit programme. It is recommended that a LCA extends beyond simply fabric measures and assesses the embodied carbon associated with the Mechanical &amp; Electrical (M&amp;E) engineering requirements of new plant.</p>
		Fuel consumption across Council fleet	<p>Identify resource efficiencies, reducing the demand for mileage where possible working with UBICO and partners.</p> <p>Assess viability of introducing low-emission vehicles to the fleet.</p>
	Scope Two 'indirect' emissions	Procurement of Electricity	<p>As above, identify opportunities to reduce electricity demand across existing Council buildings and Leisure Centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within the scope of a full Energy Audit of all existing, Council-owned buildings include costed, energy-efficiency measures.</li> </ul> <p>Measures to reduce electricity demand include, for example, installing LED</p>

			<p>lighting; installing building management systems to control heat and power demand.</p> <p>Supply the remaining demand for electricity through the procurement of renewable energy, either directly and/or indirectly via a third-party supplier. Evaluate the options for supply and offset of remaining carbon emissions associated with the Council's operation via investment into renewable energy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require that all electricity and gas procured through an energy contract and supplied by a third-party is renewable and green.</li> </ul> <p>An <i>Energy Procurement Briefing</i> is being prepared in support of this high-level objective and directly relates to the Council's Carbon Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess opportunities for investment into strategic-level, renewable energy infrastructure on Council buildings, Council-owned land and in other areas of the District in order to offset remaining carbon emissions.</li> </ul> <p>Having implemented steps of the energy hierarchy by i) reducing energy demand, ii) supplying low- and zero-carbon energy efficiently, there will be residual carbon emissions to offset before being able to announce the Council is operating as carbon neutral.</p> <p>It is possible to offset these residual carbon emissions by investing in and installing renewable energy infrastructure. For example, "A typical 250kWp solar PV system will offset approximately 64 tonnes of CO2" source: solarsense-uk.com. The total Solar PV required to offset the Council's equivalent residual carbon emissions can thus be calculated to inform future investment decisions.</p>
	Scope Three 'indirect' emissions	Business mileage	<p>Identify resource efficiencies, reducing the demand for staff and Councillor mileage where possible. For example, developing new initiatives in support of reducing the need for staff travel.</p> <p>Facilitate sustainable transport options by, for example, carrying out a review of staff facilities encouraging cycling to the work place; installing</p>

			EV charging points for staff with electric/hybrid vehicles, promoting remote working and video calls to reduce the requirement for staff travel.
<b>Future carbon emissions</b>	Scope One, Two & Three emissions		<p>For all new development and services developed across the Council, identified as directly increasing energy or fossil-fuel demand for the Council, require steps to reduce, mitigate and compensate for the additional carbon emissions over and above the Council's baseline so not to undermine the Council's targets for carbon neutrality by 2030.</p> <p>Design new buildings and/or extensions to a standard of net zero-carbon, and require a LCA to ensure the embodied carbon of a new building is considered in design and construction.</p>

## 2.7 A CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY FOR WEST OXFORDSHIRE

2.7.1. Running alongside the development of a Carbon Action Plan for the Council, will be a Climate Change Strategy as the umbrella document that will bring together internal and external stakeholders to engage on and deliver in partnership, Climate Action across the District.

2.7.2. To address the climate and ecological emergency in its widest context, a Climate Change Strategy would aim to be far-reaching and extend into all areas and disciplines. It would need to consider the state of our natural environment currently, opportunity for protective measures, conservation and enhancement across all disciplines to reduce future impact on climate change.

Cross-cutting issues include:

- Energy and carbon reduction
- Flood risk and water conservation
- Waste: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle
- Biodiversity and landscape
- Air quality
- Sustainable transport

2.7.3. A Climate Change Strategy would provide the framework for then developing targeted Action Plans that each contribute towards a set of strategic objectives.

2.7.4. Strategic objectives would need to be agreed through a process of consultation. However, for the purposes of demonstrating how a Climate Change Strategy can be framed, providing the structure for the planning and delivery of Climate Action in West Oxfordshire, the following are proposed in draft form. Refer to Table 4 overleaf.

Table 4. Cross-cutting issues and draft strategic objectives.

Cross-cutting issue	Draft strategic objectives
Energy & carbon-emissions reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a Carbon Action Plan for West Oxfordshire to deliver the Council’s commitment to becoming carbon-neutral by 2030.</li> <li>• Work across Council functions, with partners in the District, County and at a National level, to: deliver projects that reduce energy demand and dependence on fossil fuels; design new homes and community places meeting exemplary standards of fabric design and efficient-energy supply whilst managing the risk of overheating; build future energy security and resilience through investment into local and district-wide low- and zero-carbon energy infrastructure.</li> <li>• <b><i>Whilst not within the Council’s motion for West Oxfordshire, Councils across the County are working towards a District-wide target for carbon neutrality. If adopted by the Council in the future, a District-wide carbon-emissions baseline would need to be well researched and understood prior to developing a programme of work to deliver a new, District-wide target.</i></b></li> </ul>
Flood risk & water conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work across Council functions, with partners in the District, County and at a National level, to reduce &amp; manage flood risk through measures of adaptation &amp; mitigation, designing sustainable flood risk management and urban drainage solutions.</li> </ul>
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work across Council functions, with partners in the District, County and at a National level to reduce waste at source (including Single Use Plastics); developing innovative and sustainable waste management solutions; and facilitating low-carbon solutions for waste recycling and disposal.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity & landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work across Council functions, with partners in the District, County and at a National level to protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural landscape, contributing to net-biodiversity gain, improving access to natural green spaces for education, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Implement strategic-level, habitat recovery and creation projects (e.g. woodland) through land management for people and biodiversity. Work as a partner in the delivery of biodiversity work for Oxfordshire’s Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) and emerging Nature Recovery Network.</li> </ul>

Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work across Council functions, with partners in the District, County and at a National level to ensure air quality is considered within the wider context of measures being implemented for climate change adaptation and mitigation.</li> </ul>
Sustainable transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work across Council functions, with partners in the District, County and at a National level to facilitate sustainable and innovative transport infrastructure and solutions for cycling, walking and low/zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>

## 2.8 CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK, WIDER ENGAGEMENT

- 2.8.1. A Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire will be developed through partnership, engaging with Officers responsible for service delivery where there is a direct impact, and opportunity or capacity to influence and engage with external stakeholders, on Climate Action.
- 2.8.2. Officer's within a Climate Action Network will include individuals who already engage with stakeholders and delivery partners including: Council suppliers and sub-contractors including leisure service providers; planners & developers; housing team, social housing landlord, residents & owners of private dwellings; public-sector bodies, e.g. health, law enforcement, justice system, free schools, libraries & museums; local community & interest groups; quangos & third-sector NGOs; private sector & landowners; farmers & NFU (National Farmers Union).
- 2.8.3. Within the first quarter of 2020/2021, an initial workshop session will be held with Officers to identify projects as a priority under the Climate Change Strategy. Cross-cutting issues within a Climate Change Strategy will provide the focus of Officer-led, Action Groups organised with the objective of developing targeted, Action Plans.
- 2.8.4. The Action Groups will not only be tasked with identifying projects needed to deliver Climate Action but will also be tasked with agreeing ways to engage with external stakeholders and delivery partners to facilitate project delivery. If we take Development Planning as one area that influences change for Climate Action and extends to include all cross-cutting issues, it will be important to capture not only current plans to embed exemplary standards for sustainable design and construction within the Area Action Plan for the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village near Eynsham for example, but also look at ways the Council may be able to engage more widely and work in partnership with developers and land owners to deliver sustainable design through development, outside the scope of current planning policy.
- 2.8.5. Indicative milestones for the delivery of a Climate Change Strategy are set out in Table 5 of 2.10. Once all projects have been developed, gone through steps of consultation, resource and/or capital investment will need to be prioritised. Costed options thereafter will be put forward to Full Council for consideration and decision.

## 2.9 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 2.9.1. With the outline of a Carbon Action Plan for the Council taking shape it is recommended that, at this stage, methods of public consultation and community

engagement are developed to inform the development of a Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire.

- 2.9.2. A first tier of consultation, seeking the public's views on what the Council should prioritise within a Climate Change Strategy, is recommended to inform initial officer dialogue.
- 2.9.3. It is proposed that the Council then carries out a wider and more extensive consultation and engagement exercise on a Climate Change Strategy in the autumn of 2020, and once the Carbon Action Plan has been completed and approved. This then provides the platform to both engage on the Climate Change Strategy and communicate the positive steps the Council has taken in becoming carbon neutral by 2030. As part of a more extensive consultation exercise, the concept of a residents' panel will be developed to ensure the views of local communities and residents are represented and reflected within the final Strategy.
- 2.9.4. It is recommended that the Council use existing forums and events wherever possible to maximise opportunities for consultation, completing this in a resource- and time-efficient manner. To engage with Parish Councils, consultation may be carried out through the pre-existing Parish Forum for example.

## 2.10 MILESTONES & REPORTING

2.10.1. Indicative milestones for the delivery of a Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire are set out in Table 5 below. The cross-party, Climate Action Working Group will continue to meet with the purpose of driving forward Climate Action in West Oxfordshire. Biannual reports will be produced and presented to Council to communicate progress and agree key decisions.

Table 5.

INDICATIVE MILESTONES	2019/2020		2020/2021												
	Qtr 4		Qtr 1			Qtr 2			Qtr 3			Qtr 4			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Council</b>															
Climate Action report presented to Council	■	■						■							
Biannual report to Council							■								
<b>Cross-party Climate Action Working Group</b>															
Working Group meetings		■		■		■		■		■		■		■	
<b>Carbon Action Plan 2030</b>															
External validation of carbon accounting methodology	■	■	■												
Climate Action Network, officer workshop		■	■												
Carbon Action Plan draft produced: short/medium/long-term projects identified			■	■	■										
Internal consultation and sign-off					■	■	■								
Carbon Action Plan final draft to Council for approval							■								
Carbon Action Plan published								■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Carbon Action Plan implemented									■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Climate Change Strategy</b>															
Public engagement 'Your Views' to inform officer workshop				■	■	■									
Climate Action Network, officer workshop: wider engagement				■	■	■	■								
Issue-specific Action Plan drafts produced					■	■	■	■							
Internal consultation and sign-off								■							
Public and stakeholder consultation events									■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Climate Change Strategy final draft to Council for approval													■	■	
Climate Change Strategy published														■	■
Climate Change Strategy implemented														■	■

## **2.11 COMMUNICATION**

- 2.11.1 All communication on the Council's progress for Climate Action in West Oxfordshire will need to run in parallel. Opportunities for press releases, internal communications with staff, external communications with West Oxfordshire residents, businesses and local groups, will all be maximised to ensure messages are regularly shared and information provided, so that others can benefit from the Council's experience and guidance.
- 2.11.2 The WODC website is currently being redesigned and will feature a new page for Climate Action in West Oxfordshire which will act as the central location for all resources, strategy documents and action plans being produced by the Council.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The Council's budget proposals include a provision of £200,000 per year for the next three financial years. The draft budget report has been through the Council's scrutiny process.
- 3.2. Over the long term, a reduction in the Council's consumption of carbon-based energy will deliver a revenue benefit to the Council. As part of both this Strategy and the emerging Commercial Strategy it is expected that business cases will be produced to support additional investment in green infrastructure.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. There are no perceived legal implications associated with the proposals within this report.

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. The pathway to becoming a carbon-neutral Council by 2030 is underpinned by data. Many Councils are now reviewing their methodologies for how they account for carbon emissions to ensure a robust, scientific-based strategy for carbon neutrality can be developed. This is not to say that Councils have not been accounting for their carbon in recent years. But there is no standardised approach for Scope Three and there can be local variation between methodologies. It is therefore proposed that the Council approaches an industry specialist in carbon accounting for a peer review of the current methodology used in West Oxfordshire in order to validate the approach and ensure the 2020 carbon-emissions baseline is both credible and stands up to scrutiny.
- 5.2. The reason for proposing a validation process is that, despite all Councils using the same Scope One, Two & Three carbon emissions to record their carbon impact, there can be local variations. For example:
  - a) Scope Three emissions can extend beyond just business mileage and include, for example, employee commuting, the transportation and distribution of waste overseas. Advice should be sought on whether the Council should extend their carbon accounting for Scope Three emissions so an informed decision can be made.
  - b) Data is currently gathered from various sources, from energy supplier to leisure contract manager, and is received in various forms and units of measurement which are then used as the basis of a conversion to calculate the Council's total carbon emissions. Within a standardised scope, there may therefore be variation in how data on, in particular, fuel consumption is recorded and then assessed. Advice should

be sought on the assessment methodology being adopted as this will form the template for future monitoring.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1. The impacts of implementing Climate Action for West Oxfordshire will have an equal impact on all services, customers and staff as there is a shared benefit to the objectives of this report.

## **7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The proposals within this report will have a direct, positive impact on the Council's operations with regard to carbon reduction and wider, positive benefits towards climate change mitigation and adaptation across the District.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1. No other alternative strategies for delivering Climate Action for West Oxfordshire have currently been considered.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1. The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

Meeting minutes and motion agreed at Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

- 9.2. These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Woodgreen during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.