

## For publication

### Climate Change Action Plan

<b>Meeting:</b>	Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum
<b>Date:</b>	18 March, 2021
<b>Cabinet portfolio:</b>	Deputy Leader
<b>Directorate:</b>	Climate Change Officer

#### 1.0 Reason for inclusion on the work programme

1.1 The purpose of reviewing the topic is to monitor the progress of the Climate Change Action Plan.

1.2 The objectives of the review are to:

- To understand what engagement has taken place or is due to take place with other agencies.
- To ensure that targets are met, to monitor the progress against the steps in the Plan and monitor costs to ensure they are not exceeding the budget those in the Plan.
- To understand what efforts are being made to influence partners and other organisations.
- To review staffing resources assigned to this area of work.
- To include more information in relation to each action within the Climate Change Action Plan.
- To include responses to questions submitted by scrutiny members to the Climate Change Officer.

1.3 This is an update to the reports provided to the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 17 September, 2020 and 21 January, 2021. This item is also connected to the previous 2019/20 work programme item, More Environmentally Friendly Council.

#### 2.0 Summary

2.1 In February 2020 the council adopted a formal climate change action plan.

- 2.2 One year in, progress toward implementation of the climate change action plan has been good, although hampered by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and issues surrounding waste collection services in the borough.
- 2.3 The current situation in terms of delivery is that progress on 30 of the 39 actions laid out in the action plan are either delivered (requiring only ongoing maintenance) or are on target to be delivered as expected. Nine actions are running behind schedule but are still expected to be delivered before the end of the period covered by the action plan (as summarised in figure 1)

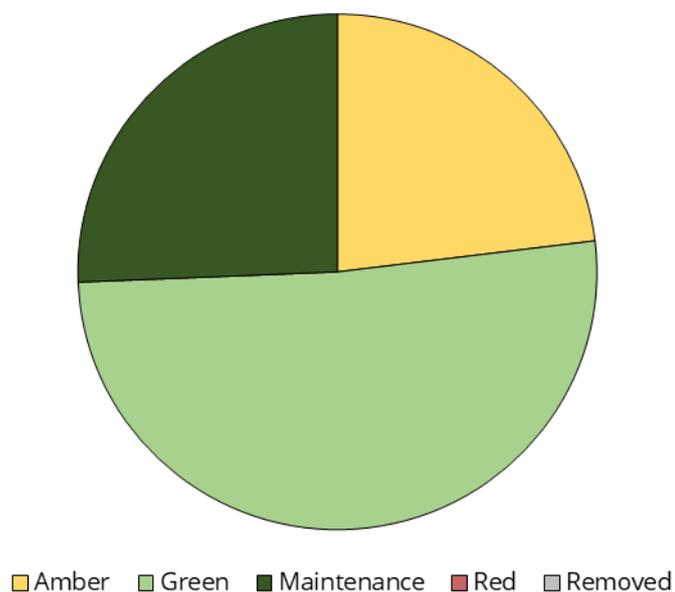


Figure 1. Summary of RAG rated action plan delivery to date

### 3.0 Report details

- 3.1 The full details of current progress are included in Appendix A, but a number of highlights to note include:
- i. CBC has now secured approximately £1.5M towards improving the thermal efficiency of privately owned and private rented sector housing in the borough.
  - ii. Our application for the Staveley Town Deal has been successful in securing £25M, which includes a substantial commitment to sustainable development.

- iii. We have a working version of the Climate Change Communications and Engagement strategy, and this is being implemented. Implementation will include proposals for councillors to engage with their local communities and residents on climate change issues.
- iv. We have identified a partner able to provide carbon literacy training for elected members when Covid restrictions are lifted.
- v. We have exceeded our tree planting targets for the borough during this planting season by around 300% and expect to continue exceeding it for the next two planting seasons.
- vi. We are working closely with partners to develop a new trees and woodlands strategy to inform our future enhancement of the borough's biodiversity, carbon storage, and amenity value.
- vii. The waste team have made a new appointment of a Waste Management Officer, and we are working with a new contractor to recycle domestic waste. This is likely to have a significant impact on our delivery of actions in the Waste category.

#### **4.0 Potential barriers**

4.1 The two main barriers at present are:

- i. Staff time: The climate change officer is currently part time (though this will change in April 2021) more importantly a number of teams have suggested that they could do more to support the council's climate change ambitions if they had the time available.
- ii. The impact of Covid cannot be overstated. This has hampered our efficiency, reduced our ability to engage with a wide range of partners and communities, and refocussed many people on simply managing day to day activities – rather than thinking about larger long-term issues such as climate change. We hope that this will improve as Covid related restrictions are gradually lifted, but our networks and relationships with stakeholders are likely to take time to rebuild.

## **5.0 Future plans and areas for further scrutiny involvement**

- 5.1 The climate change officer will be going full time next month (April 2021) This represents a 40% increase in capacity to work on this agenda.
- 5.2 As Covid restrictions lift it will be more apparent which challenges remain, and which were simply due to lockdown. It is possible that staff will find that they have a greater capacity to deal with climate related work when not working under lockdown, and in any case future planning and resource constraints will become more obvious.
- 5.3 As the first year of delivery of the climate change action plan has now elapsed; a review of outstanding actions, and opportunities will be conducted during the first quarter of 2021/22 to ensure that the plan remains relevant and challenging. In particular, one critical aspect of work going forward will be the determination of how the climate change working group operates in future, and its terms of reference.
- 5.4 We recognise the importance of the scrutiny process and value the committee's input, but we have no specific actions to recommend at present. In terms of wider member involvement, we hope that you will all:
- i. Take up the opportunity for carbon literacy training when it becomes available. The subject of climate change can be enormously complicated, and councillors have a valuable role in countering misinformation within their communities.
  - ii. Develop your community networks and use them to, firstly spread information about the council's plans to address climate change, but also, to feed back to officers the opportunities and needs of local groups. A large element of the climate change communications and engagement plan is to reach groups which may not have an existing environmental focus, and councillors are ideally placed to make contact and get them engaged.

## **6.0 Implications for consideration**

- 6.1 The situation appears to be broadly positive with delivery under way on most objectives. It is, however, impossible to ignore the fact that the year 2020/21 has been particularly challenging for delivery. This has led to slippage on a number of areas, as described above. Future delivery may

be affected by earlier challenges, and it is as yet unclear what (if any) effect this will have on the delivery of the wider plan.

## Document information

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<b>Background documents</b>	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
<b>Appendices to the report</b>	
Appendix 1	Climate Change Action Plan progress summary March 2021
Appendix 2	Comms and Engagement Strategy
Appendix 3	Responses to questions from the last meeting