Background

This framework sets out a series of high level recommendations of how North Northamptonshire should tackle the causes and impacts of climate change.

The recommendations provided in the framework cover three key aspects, these are

- Reducing emissions to lessen the causes of climate change;
- Adapting to the current and future impacts of climate change; and
- Raising awareness in communities to the causes and impacts of climate change.

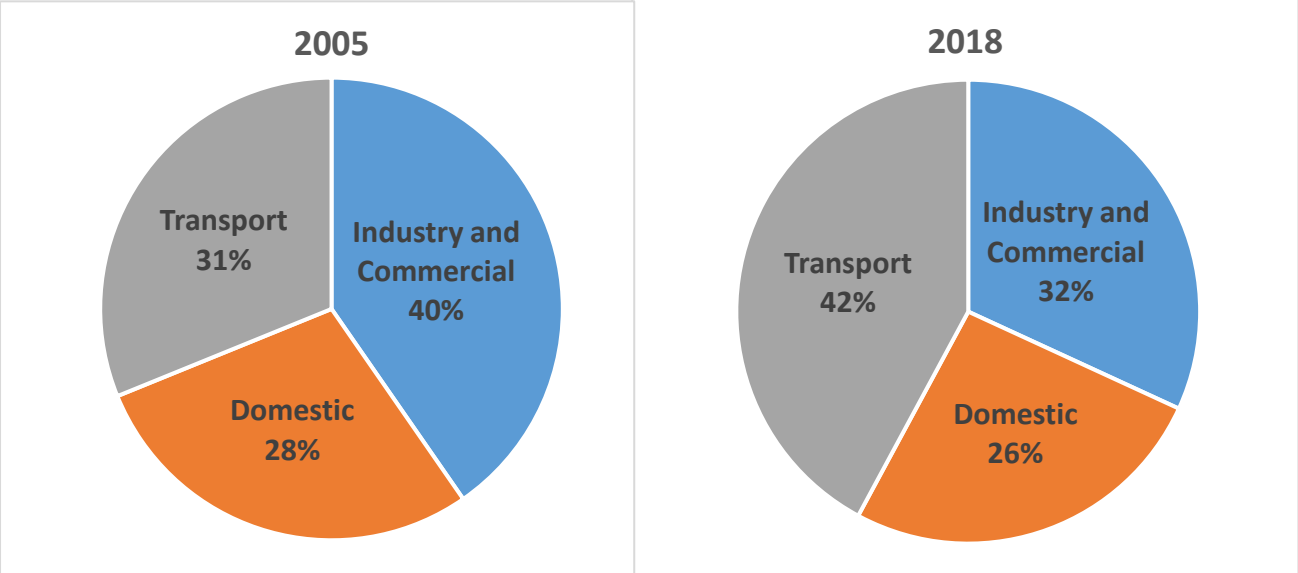
Background information on emissions in North Northamptonshire and the impacts of climate change, which require adaptation, are provided below. Much of this information has been sourced from the partnership Northamptonshire Climate Change Strategy 2020-2023.

It is acknowledged that as a Unitary Council, North Northamptonshire will only have a limited ability to affect a direct reduction in emissions at a local level, and as such partnership working will be key. We can each play our part in making our best efforts to effect such a step change and allow partners to adopt even more challenging targets and to commit additional resources should they wish.

Trends in emissions data

The Framework supports reducing emissions across North Northamptonshire with specific recommendations for the three key carbon emission sectors; transport, industry and commercial, and domestic.

Local authority carbon dioxide emissions are published annually by government[1], with the latest available data relating to 2018 together with revised figures for each year since 2005. Two sets of these figures are published – a full data set and a reduced set showing only emissions within the scope of influence of local authorities. It is data from the latter that is quoted. The main difference between these is that it excludes large industrial sites, railways, motorways and land-use.

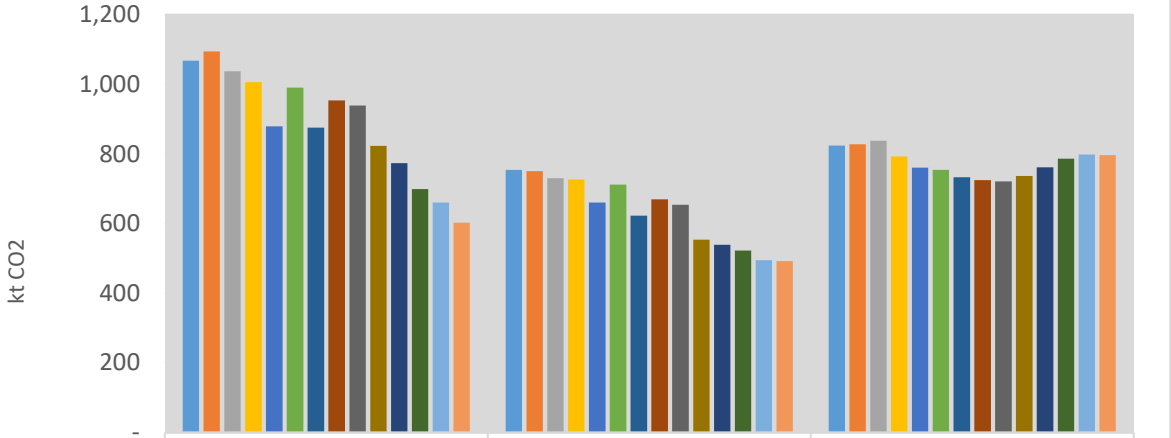


[1] Local Authority carbon dioxide emissions data 2005 – 2018 - https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018

Figure 1: CO_2 emissions by sector in North Northamptonshire

Figure 1 above shows the percentage breakdown of CO_2 emissions by sector in North Northamptonshire in 2005 and 2018. This highlights that in 2018, North Northamptonshire's transport sector produced the greatest proportion of the county's CO_2 emissions at 42%, where as in 2005 it was the industry and commercial sector, with 40%. Since 2005 the domestic sector has seen a 2% decrease in the proportion of CO_2 emissions in the county, and the industry and commercial sector an 8% proportional decrease.

The consumption figures between 2005 and 2018 as presented in Figure 2 show that the overall trend is a gradual reduction in the domestic and industry and commercial sectors, whilst transport after a promising trend of diminishing carbon emissions between 2005 and 2013, has seen a near year on year increase since then, in line with national trends. In this regard, reducing carbon emissions from the transport sector is a key priority area of focus both nationally and locally, one which is heavily influenced by central government policy.



	Industry and Commercial	Domestic	Transport
2005	1,068	754	824
2006	1,094	750	828
2007	1,038	731	838
2008	1,006	727	793
2009	880	660	760
2010	991	712	755
2011	876	623	733
2012	954	670	725
2013	939	654	721
2014	823	554	737
2015	774	540	762
2016	700	523	786
2017	661	495	798
2018	603	492	797

Figure 2: CO_2 emission trend per sector in North Northamptonshire

Therefore, overall emissions have fallen in all sectors since 2005, but at a slower rate in the transport sector (a reduction of only 3.3% compared to 34.7% and 43.5% respectively in the domestic and industry and commercial sectors). Overall the reduction in total emissions for North Northamptonshire is 28.5%, as detailed in Table 2.

Year	North Northamptonshire			England
	Total emissions (kt CO_2 p.a.)	Population (thousands)	Per capita emissions (t)	Per capita emissions (t)
2005	2,646.4	297.0	8.9	7.1
2006	2,672.2	301.2	8.9	7.0
2007	2,606.1	306.2	8.5	6.8
2008	2,525.8	309.7	8.2	6.6
2009	2,300.4	312.2	7.4	6.0
2010	2,458.0	314.6	7.8	6.2
2011	2,232.3	318.0	7.0	5.6
2012	2,348.9	321.5	7.3	5.9
2013	2,314.1	324.0	7.1	5.7
2014	2,114.4	327.9	6.4	5.0
2015	2,075.2	331.8	6.3	4.8
2016	2,008.5	337.0	6.0	4.5
2017	1,954.2	341.8	5.7	4.3
2018	1,892.0	345.5	5.5	4.2
Percentage reduction	**-28.5%**	**16.3%**	**-38.5%**	**-40.6%**

Table 1: Total CO_2 emissions and per capita North Northamptonshire vs. England

The figures in Table 1 show that the per capita emissions in North Northamptonshire have decreased by 38.5% over this thirteen-year period with a 28.5% decrease in total emissions. For England as a whole, there has been a slightly higher reduction in the per capita emissions from 7.1 to 4.2 tonnes per year (a decrease of 40.6%). North Northamptonshire is thus slightly above the national average in terms of per capita emissions.

Whilst the percentage decrease trends in the emissions for North Northamptonshire have been similar to those for England as a whole, there have been significant differences between the decreases in the local authority areas within North Northamptonshire. Table 2 summarises the total emission reductions in each current district and borough, as well as North Northamptonshire as a whole.

Current Local Authority area	2005 emissions (kt CO_2)	2018 emissions (kt CO_2)	Percentage reduction
Corby	690.4	420.7	39.1%
East Northamptonshire	640.1	490.3	23.4%
Kettering	742.2	589.5	20.6%
Wellingborough	573.7	391.5	31.8%

North Northamptonshire	**2,646.4**	**1,892.0**	**28.5%**

Table 2: Total emissions by current local authority area

These figures indicate that there have been greater percentage reductions in Corby and Wellingborough in particular and lower reductions in East Northamptonshire and Kettering. These differences appear to be primarily due to the respective changes in the Industry and Commercial sector in these areas.

When the emissions for each current local authority area are expressed as per capita (see Table 3 below), a slightly different pattern emerges due to differing rates of population growth, with Corby experiencing a significantly higher reduction of other areas at 53.1%.

Current Local Authority area	2005 per capita emissions (t)	2018 per capita emissions (t)	Percentage reduction
Corby	12.7	5.9	53.1%
East Northamptonshire	7.8	5.2	33.2%
Kettering	8.6	5.8	32.0%
Wellingborough	7.8	4.9	36.5%
North Northamptonshire	**8.9**	**5.5**	**38.5%**

Table 3: Per capita emissions by current local authority area

Impacts and adaptation

One hundred potential impacts of climate change in the UK were identified in a Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) carried out in 2012[2]. The government agreed to update this assessment every five years with the latest version released in 2017. This identified the top six areas of inter-related climate change risks for the UK[3] (with further details provided on these impacts below):

- Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure;
- Risks to health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures;
- Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy supply and industry;
- Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity;
- Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
- New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive and non-invasive species, affecting people, plants and animals.

The CCRA evidence reports inform the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), which have been created to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change that are inevitable due to past and current greenhouse gas emissions. It establishes what government, businesses and society can do to

[2] Climate Change Risk Assessment Evidence Report 2012 - http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=10067_CCRAEvidenceReport16July2012.pdf

[3] Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 - https://www.theccc.org.uk/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017/introduction-to-the-ccra/

become more climate ready, in response to the latest Climate Change Risk Assessment. The last NAP was published in 2018, covering the period up to 2023[4].

The NAP stems from the Climate Change Act 2008[5] which obliges government (including local authorities) to produce and review climate adaptation policies. The initial NAP - which was published in 2013 - established a strategy for adapting to the potential impacts of climate change highlighted in the Climate Change Risk assessment 2012.[6] The latest programme has a greater degree of specificity: it includes a set of objectives, the CCRA risks addressed, actions with the organisations responsible for delivering them, timescales, and monitoring, whilst keeping to the original priorities of addressing the six areas of inter-related climate change risks in the CCRA.

Flooding and costal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure

Flooding already poses a severe threat to people, communities and buildings, and climate change is expected to increase the frequency, severity and extent of flooding.

A temperature increase of 2°C, which is now considered to be a modest climate change projection, could result in as much as a 40% increase in the number of residential properties in the UK exposed to frequent flooding (1 in 75 years average) by the 2080s, with a rise of 4°C potentially resulting in as much as a 93% increase in the number of residential properties exposed to frequent flooding[7].

In North Northamptonshire, large swathes of agricultural land and heavily urbanised town centres provide the ideal conditions for surface water flooding. Indeed, surface water flooding is the greatest source of flood risk posed to North Northamptonshire's residents, with tens of thousands of residential properties already predicted to be at risk without taking into account future climate change[8]. With a rapid speed of onset, surface water flooding can be difficult to respond to, particularly if pre-emptive measures have not been taken to mitigate its risk[9].

The economic damages associated with flooding can be severe, impacting upon built infrastructure, business competitiveness and agricultural productivity. Equally, there is evidence to suggest that, for individuals, the stress of experiencing flooding can continue for a long time after the flood water has receded[10]. From a mental health perspective, this can be most pronounced in the two years which follow the incident[11]. Dangerous pathogens carried by flood water can cause illness and disease, the

[4] National Adaptation Programme 2018 to 2023: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/climate-change-second-national-adaptation-programme-2018-to-2023

[5] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents

[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-government-report

[7] Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017: Projections of future flood risk in the UK https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CCRA-Future-Flooding-Main-Report-Final-06Oct2015.pdf.pdf

[8] Northamptonshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy https://www.floodtoolkit.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Northamptonshire-LFRMS-Report-Final-November-2016.pdf

[9] For more information on how to prepare for a flood, visit the Flood Toolkit - https://www.floodtoolkit.com/emergency/preparation/

[10] The Effects of Flooding on Mental Health. Health Protection Agency, 2011.

[11] Alderman, K., Turner, L.R., & Tong, S. (2012). Floods and human health: A systematic review. Environment International, 47, 37-47.

trauma of losing possessions which may have a sentimental value, and the smell and dampness which can take months to erase from homes are all factors which could contribute to the prevalence of poor mental health amongst individuals who have experienced flooding.

Risks to health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures

Future changes in climate are likely to result in both changes to mean temperatures and increased weather variability. Ensuring that the risks to health, well-being and productivity associated with these changes are appropriately accounted for in policy is of paramount importance, but at present there are few comprehensive policies in place to adapt existing homes and other buildings to high temperatures, manage the urban heat island effect or safeguard new homes.

Older people are particularly vulnerable to the detrimental health impacts associated with high temperatures, and in the UK the proportion of the population aged over 75 is projected to increase from 8% in 2015 to 18% by 2085, and this is likely to exert increased pressure on the health and care systems.

The proportion of older people in North Northamptonshire is therefore due to grow, and careful consideration needs to be given to how to mitigate the risk of this population being adversely affected by warmer temperatures. For instance, there is a risk that insulating homes to improve thermal efficiency could result in overheating.

The average number of hot days per year is increasing, as is the chance of severe heat waves. Past events provide evidence that extreme temperatures can significantly inhibit production and well-being: in July 2016, with temperatures in London of over 30°C, a surge of health problems and transport disruptions were reported, and the media even reported increased levels of violence[12].

These impacts are particularly pronounced in urban centres, and therefore it is essential that measures are taken to minimise the adverse effects of high temperatures for people of all ages.

Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy supply and industry

Climate change will result in changes to the way that water circulates through the water cycle, and this, coupled with significant population growth, is likely to place a great degree of stress on the availability of water in the future.

This presents a risk to the UK economy, with the availability of water for irrigation likely to become a serious limiting factor to agricultural production, and the requirements of freshwater use for cooling in energy generation expected to rise significantly. The public water supply will also be impacted, and the ecology of rivers and lakes may alter in response to reduced water availability, particularly during the summer months, which could have a devastating effect on biodiversity as well as detracting from the amenity value of these environments.

[12] Heat waves, productivity, and the urban economy: What are the costs? http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/news/heat-waves-productivity-and-the-urban-economy-what-are-the-costs/

At present, action is primarily targeted at reducing demand, and water companies, abstractors and governments have worked together to attempt to elicit a change in water consumption behaviour. Adapting to a changing climate necessitates a shift in the way we live our lives, and it is not yet clear how dependent this shift is on the availability of water. Thus, action is needed to conserve water now given the uncertainty of its availability in the future.

Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity

Many ecosystems have already begun to adjust and adapt to the impacts of climate change, but it is likely that their capacity to do so in the future will be significantly constrained by the increasing pressures of habitat loss and fragmentation, pollution, over-exploitation of resources and the spread of invasive species.

A key risk to natural capital associated with a changing climate is the deterioration of productive agricultural land. Higher levels of soil aridity, coupled with reduced water availability for irrigation, is likely to significantly impact upon crop yields and farming versatility. Thus hampering the agricultural output of UK farms and threatening national food security.

Loss of habitat and the corresponding breakdown of ecosystems, in terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine environments, can not only result in the depletion of species populations and thus biodiversity, but also the ability for natural carbon storage, which will become increasingly critical as levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere continue to rise.

Risks to domestic and international food production and trade

Although a changing climate may present opportunities to increase domestic food production, the condition of soils and availability of water, both of which are already impacted by climate change, are likely to be limiting factors to realising these opportunities.

Parts of southern, eastern and central England have already been identified as likely to become unviable for some farming activities due to the intensive water requirements of these activities. The forecasted trend of wetter winters is also likely to exacerbate the problems of soil compaction and erosion, which can severely impact upon agricultural productivity.

Climate change is likely to shift the balance of food production between regions, both internationally and nationally. These changes will influence markets, trade and domestic prices, and the impacts of which are likely to disproportionately affect farmers and lower income households.

New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive and non-invasive species, affecting people, plants and animals.

There is broad agreement within the scientific community that pests and invasive non-native species may increase in number and range in a warmer, wetter atmosphere, and that there is a significant chance of an increase in the prevalence of pathogens that are already present in the UK, as well as new pathogens arriving from overseas.

However, projections of the impact of climate change on human diseases are uncertain, as it is not clear precisely what conditions are likely to prevail in an altered UK climate. As such, surveillance and monitoring of species and pathogens that are likely to pose the biggest challenge in the changing climate should be prioritised.

The Framework

What follows is a set of recommendations prepared in the form of an action plan. It follows a structure which describes the leadership role the Council is asked to take, two sections on work the Council can do as an organisation and a controller of resources, three sections where the Council is a provider of services or a regulator, where it has influence but not control, and finally a section on working in partnership with others and as a promoter and educator.

The action plan picks up those items which the task and finish group considered to be a priority for implementation by the Council in its early life. It does not preclude other actions being implemented where possible; indeed the recommendations in the leadership section asks the Council to ensure it has climate change outcomes at the forefront of everything it does. Ultimately, it should be second nature for the Council to take action which promotes positive climate impacts, and the **appendix 4** listing those ideas proposed by the public is included precisely to demonstrate the breadth and range of matters which could still be incorporated into service design and delivery.

The action plan is a starting point, not an end in itself. The task and finish group were clear that the new Council should ensure it puts its efforts into those interventions which had the biggest impacts. This means that the Council needs to ensure it has tested, properly resourced and evaluated measures before implementing them. Equally, the impact of those measures needs to be captured, and progress reported, and the Council needs the officer and democratic structures to be in place to act, report and scrutinise progress.

The outgoing councils have in various ways already been taking explicit actions to tackle climate change and these are summarised in **appendix 2**. There is no reason why these actions cannot be continued and expanded where possible and indeed, should be, assuming they are found to be effective.

1. Recommendations: Leadership & Ambition

During 2019 Corby Borough Council, Kettering Borough Council, and Northamptonshire County Council declared a Climate Emergency to support the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Paris Agreement target to reduce carbon emissions and to support a limit of 1.5 degree rise by 2030. CBC is a UK100 member and a LGA signatory of the Climate Local Commitment in recognition of the important role that local authorities have in tackling climate change. Northamptonshire County Council and Corby Borough Council have both had an active Climate Change Strategy Actions Plans in place since 2014 and 2008 respectively.

The following table below sets out recommendations as well as the actions the new Council and partners could undertake to deliver climate action in response to the climate emergency. A Task and Finish Group have used LGA Centre for Public Scrutiny's '10 questions' series, which lays out key issues on which a panel of elected members across North Northamptonshire district and boroughs have made the following recommendations. These recommendations do not provide the full detail of how they should be delivered as this will be for the new Council to consider.

The list of recommendations is not exhaustive. Once work from the other Task and Finish Groups is collated and the new Council is established there will likely be further opportunities to expand on these high level recommendations. It also acknowledged that these high level recommendations have not been costed and as such it will be for the new authority to ensure they are adequately resourced or appropriate funding sources and grant opportunities are identified as and when appropriate.

Commitment: The Task and Finish recommend that North Northamptonshire Council shows clear leadership in tackling the climate emergency, as an exemplar for others, and ensures that it embeds throughout the organisation, an awareness of and determination to tackle climate change.			
Justification: Demonstrate leadership at a local level to support climate change action and adaptation.			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 1, 2, 3 & 10	**Measure**	**Timescale (SML)**	**Impacts and contributes to**
1.1 Declare a Climate Emergency at the first opportunity in the life of the Council (see 3.2)	Declaration by Full Council	S	• Corporate strategy and development • Local leadership • Embed climate governance

1.2 Develop a corporate plan for the first five years of the life of the new Council which sets out intended climate change activities. This plan should address - Governance and accountability - Strategy - Risk management - Metrics and targets, including cashable outcomes/invest to save	Endorsement of new plan	S	• Corporate strategy and development • Council money saved • Financial income to councils • Carbon Reduction
1.3 Recognise that there are outcomes that the Council can achieve as an organisation, user of resources and provider of services, but that there are outcomes that can only be achieved in partnership or by leadership, and which rely on community and business engagement	Report annually on own emissions and overall local authority emissions	S	• Council money saved • Improvement to local infrastructure • Carbon Reduction
1.4 Being clear what the "gain" is for every element of expenditure, making sure that a cost benefit analysis is carried out in order to prioritise climate interventions according to their relative impact	Introduce climate cost best analysis	S	• Corporate strategy and development • Measurement and data improvements • Carbon reduction
1.5 Embed political and corporate leadership into its behaviours; Elected members - A cabinet member should have lead responsibility for climate change matters - All members will have a responsibility to support climate action - All members should receive climate change training as part of their induction process - All committee reports should detail the climate change implications of the proposals within them - There should be a responsibility planned on a named overview and scrutiny committee with a remit to oversee climate change related activity by the Council and - the Executive should establish an advisory panel to advise it on climate change measures and risks.	Nominate member lead #trained Insert new report template Introduce new O&SP	S	• Corporate strategy and development • Local leadership • Embed climate governance

1.6 Embed political and corporate leadership into its behaviours; Officers - A Chief Officer should have lead responsibility for climate change matters and the Corporate Leadership Team should collectively deliver the corporate plan on climate change - All tier 1-3 officers should have responsibility for tackling climate change challenges included in their job descriptions - Over time, all employee job descriptions should include responsibility for tackling climate change challenges within them - Staff induction and refresher training should include climate change matters	#staff trained in carbon literacy or equivalent	S	• Corporate strategy and development • Local leadership • Embed climate governance
1.7 Embed political and corporate leadership into its behaviours; Lobbying - Members and officers should take opportunities to lobby government on changes to national rules, which could positively impact on sustainability and climate change, in particular on the introduction of much stronger incentives and standards for new developments.	#consultation responded	S-L	• Local leadership • Embed climate governance
1.8 Embed political and corporate leadership into its behaviours; Partnerships - Close co-operation with West Northamptonshire Council and all other neighbouring councils should be seen as a pre-requisite for effective action, and the Council should seek to align its work with those other councils as a matter of course - The Council should establish a network of groups and individuals who are committed to and able to drive forward initiatives across North Northamptonshire and/or its many separate communities.	#partnerships regional/national #establish partnership for NN	S-L	• Local leadership • Embed climate governance

2. Recommendations: Procurement & Finance

Commitment: The Task and Finish recommend that North Northamptonshire Council shows clear leadership in green procurement practices, as an exemplar for others, and ensures that it embeds throughout the organisation, an awareness of and determination to tackle climate change.			
Justification: Embed green procurement standards and support thriving green economy			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 4	**Measure**	**Timescale**	**Impacts**
2.1 Incorporate green practices into the procurement processes, and introduce the following as where appropriate; - Implement recommendations from procurement paper (see appendix 3) - Adopt a Social Value Approach to procurement which incorporates Future Northants approaches set at a minimum of 12.5%	Review green procurement practices	M	• Support local economy • Improvement to local infrastructure • Carbon reduction and decarbonisation • Council money saved
2.2 Ensure that suppliers and contractors abide by relevant green credentials certification (ISO14001 or equivalent)	Review green procurement practices	S	• Carbon reduction • Support green economy
2.3 Where possible seek to use local suppliers and businesses in order to reduce carbon emissions and promote green practices.	Record #of local providers	S	• Support local economy • Improvement to local infrastructure • Carbon reduction • Improve air quality

2.4 That contract managers be utilised within the procurement process in order to regularly review awarded contracts to encourage best practice	#audits undertaken	M	• Council money saved
2.5 That the Unitary Authority looks towards green bonds and low carbon community benefit funds to finance low impact schemes.	#schemes	M-L	• Support local economy • Green infrastructure

3. Recommendations: Resource management & own housing

Commitment: The Task and Finish Group recommend that North Northamptonshire Council lead by example in reducing its impact on carbon emissions, reduce its own energy use whilst delivery quality services and low energy housing.			
Justification: Lead by example in reducing carbon emissions from the new authority own estate.			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 6	**Measure**	**Timescale**	**Impacts**
3.1 Unify the waste services and to consider setting up an anaerobic food digestion plant in North Northants, to support reduction of fleet movement (a separate task and finish group have reviewed waste). Investigate opportunity to take more creative approaches to recycling	Review of waste of services	M-L	• Reduce organic waste sent to landfill • Capture material for composting • Reduce greenhouse gas emissions • Improve fleet movement • Save money for the Council • Improve local green jobs/local economy
3.2 Establish/continue food waste as part of North Northants waste collection services (a separate task and finish group have reviewed waste).	Review waste services	S-L	• Reduce organic waste sent to landfill • Capture material for composting • Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

3.3 Report on own emissions from fleet and own estate and seek to rationalise assets of the Unitary Authority with a strong emphasis on energy efficiency	Produce carbon management plan & DEC's Produce annual	S	• Reduce own carbon emissions • Satisfy statutory requirements • Save money for the Council
3.4 Work towards the ISO 50001 Certification (or equivalent) for energy best practice standard	Receive certification/award	S/M	• Reduce own carbon emissions and decarbonisation agenda • Provide climate leadership
3.5 Actively upskill its workforce to tackle Climate Change challenges by training existing staff in order to maximise the delivery of green energy schemes/projects and enable efficient maintenance of new technologies.	#trained	S-L	• Improve local green jobs • Reduce own carbon emissions • Upskill local people
3.6 Develop baseline data on the energy efficiency performance for all of the Council's housing stock and reduce the financial impact for tenants in relation to full bills	#average EPC of own stock	S-L	• Reduce fuel poverty • Improve access to heat • Reduce carbon emissions
3.7 Source & secure green funding (example Local Authority Delivery 'LAD' Fund to improve domestic energy efficiency) and take the learning from existing housing projects and apply those features which work in the low carbon design of new publicly owned homes, and adaptation of existing stock (Blue Print Task and Finish Group)	£ of funding secured	S-L	• Contribution to local economic growth • Improve local green jobs • Upskill local people • Reduce own emissions
3.8 Improve housing standards across the whole of the area, by investing in, or partnering to deliver more energy efficient, cheaper to run and adaptable homes, which model what is possible and encourages developers to do the same (Blue Print Task and Finish Group) and plan phase out of gas boilers in Council homes by 2035	#average EPC across all tenures #heatpumps & hybrid boilers	M-L	• Contribution to local economic growth • Improve local green jobs • Upskill local people • Improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions
3.9 Ensure electric charging points are built into new and existing public housing developments (Blue Print Task and Finish Group)	#EV charge points	S-L	• Improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions • Improve local infrastructure

3.10 Investigate the benefit of heat network exploration (e.g. Corby Town Centre)	Investigate heatworks	S-L	• Improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions • Improve local infrastructure • Improve local green jobs

4. Recommendations: Planning, Transport, Energy, Natural & Built Environment

Commitment: The Task and Finish Group recommend that North Northamptonshire Council support a growing NN that future developments embed proven low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future.			
Justification: NN can live, travel and work in a low carbon sustainable community			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 5 & 6	**Measure**	**Timescale**	**Impacts**
4.1 Climate Change should be at the heart of the new NN Local Plan, with ambitious, realistic policies, consistent with social, economic and environmental objectives	Review LP	S-M	• Contribution to local economic growth • Financial benefits to local people • Improved carbon reduction and adaptation
4.2 The plan must be based on robust evidence, including a credible trajectory to net zero by 2050 at latest (NNC may want earlier target for its own operations)	Review LP	S-M	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Contribution to local economic growth • Improved adaptation and biodiversity • Carbon reduction

4.3 We need to prioritise the most cost-effective actions e.g. transport is the largest source of emissions that NNC can influence, so focus on reducing need to travel, encourage modal shift, and enabling switch to electric vehicles.	Improve modal shift	S-M	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Contribution to local economic growth • Improved air quality • Carbon reduction
4.4 Continued focus on Green and Blue Infrastructure planning and delivery likely to be a low cost/ risk option and will deliver multiple mitigation/ adaptation benefits. This will include strategic projects such as Forests for Life, the River Ise Initiative and the River Nene Regional Park.	Improve green and blue infrastructure	S-M	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Contribution to local economic growth • Improved adaptation and biodiversity • Increase carbon offsetting • Health benefits and wellbeing
4.5 Develop and review tree strategy, with 'right tree right place', including rural coverage, industrial coverage and urban trees with priority on Rockingham Forest project, ensuring accessibility to trees for the public where possible.	#tree coverage	S-L	• Improve air quality • Improvement to local infrastructure • Increase carbon offsetting • Health benefits and wellbeing
4.6 Explore scope to exceed Building Regulation energy efficiency standards in advance of introduction of Future Homes Standard.	Review LP	S-M	• Carbon reduction • Financial benefits to local people • Support local green jobs
4.7 Planning policy needs to align with spatial planning for sustainable energy systems, including collaboration with network operators	Develop local energy strategy	S	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Carbon reduction • Financial benefits to local people
4.8 NNC needs sustainability/ design capacity and expertise to support implementation and monitoring of policies and initiatives – corporate approach led by Place directorate	Increase #staff in area	S	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Carbon reduction • Financial benefits to local people
4.9 Use NNC land and developments to drive improvement in standards	#own developments	S-L	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Carbon reduction • Financial benefits to local people
4.10 Develop a local pollinator strategy to be implemented across North Northamptonshire and engagement with Parish Councils	Endorse and publish Pollinator Strategy	S/M	• Improve local biodiversity • Increase carbon offsetting

4.11 Review air quality action plans, measure, monitor ideally on a 3 monthly basis areas of concern	Publish air quality reports & monitor hot spots	S	• Satisfy statutory requirements • Improve air quality
4.12 Explore the possibility of commencing an authority wide cycling, walking infrastructure plan as initiated in Kettering.(Wellingborough SDP)	Publish sustainable transport plan for NN	M	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Improved health benefits • Improved air quality • Carbon reduction
4.13 Encourage good practice projects such as healthy living schemes (such as 'Beat The Street' and 'Park Bingo')	#healthy living schemes	M-L	• Improved health benefits
4.14 Encourage developers to include the use of external electric vehicle charging on new housing developers	#EV conditions made	M	• Satisfy statutory requirements • Improve air quality • Improvement to local infrastructure
4.15 Encouraging Taxi Licensing Applications so that new applications must either possess an Electric or Hybrid vehicle	#EV licensed taxis	M	• Improve air quality • Improvement to local infrastructure • Increase carbon offsetting
4.16 Include the use of green energy areas within new Sustainable Urban Environment developments.	Review LP	M-L	• Improve air quality • Improvement to local infrastructure • Increase carbon offsetting • Local health benefits
4.17 Ensure climate change considerations and future flood risk are factored into flood risk management activity across North Northamptonshire	Report flood risk management activity	M-L	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Climate adaptation

5. Recommendations: Education, Skills and Economy

Commitment: The Task and Finish Group recommend that North Northamptonshire Council encourage and support businesses and educational institutions to take advantage of clean technologies, save energy and support future green economy			
Justification: To reduce carbon emissions and support the local green economy.			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 7	**Measure**	**Timescale**	**Impacts and contributes to**
5.1 Actively engage with businesses and business leaders to ensure initiatives and resolutions to climate implications	#businesses engaged	M	• Contribution to local economic growth • Improvement of local infrastructure • Improved carbon reduction, air quality, waste reduction • Community development and empowerment
5.2 Work with institutions, educational trusts and business to upskill workforce and incentivise 'green actions' in order to become a destination for green jobs	#green jobs	S-L	• Contribution to local economic growth • Community development and empowerment
5.3 Align local activity to SEMLEP local industrial strategy	#green jobs	S-L	• Contribution to local economic growth • Upskill local people
5.4 Support economic activity which supports energy and eco parks (such as Chelveston)	#schemes	L	• Contribution to local economic growth • Improve local green jobs • Improvement of local infrastructure • Reduce emissions

5.5 Develop innovative community-led 'influencer & enabler schemes' (eg Bright Kids model)	#schemes		• Community development and empowerment • Contribution to local economic growth
5.6 Review the support structure of working with a local green community interest company (such as Electric Corby model set up with the support of CBC)	Review CIC	S-M	• Contribution to local economic growth • Improve local green jobs • Improvement of local infrastructure • Reduce emissions
5.7 Investigate the creation of Green Enterprise zones	Review zones	L	• Contribution to local economic growth • Community development and empowerment • Reduce emissions

6. Recommendations: Health, Social Care & Vulnerable Communities

Commitment: The Task and Finish Group recommend that North Northamptonshire Council support the most vulnerable and ensure that NN is a healthy green place to live			
Justification: To ensure a healthy resilient NN with access to healthy warm homes			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 8 & 9	**Measure**	**Timescale**	**Impacts and contributes to**
6.1 Develop and integrate policy work to address public health, inequalities and climate change (Blue Print Task and Finish Group), and undertake a review of Climate Just mapping for NN	Produce plan to support climate vulnerable communities	S/M	• Support community resilience • Improve climate adaptation

6.2 Promote and support energy efficiency, saving and reduction domestic carbon emissions. Endorse and continue the work of the Northants Warm Home Partnership and take up of funds such as LAD2 Strengthen communications about energy efficiency to its residents and tenants and landlords (Blue Print Task and Finish Group).	Reduce fuel poverty % Improve average EPC #heat pumps #homes insulated Reduce domestic CO2e per capita	S- L	• Reduce fuel poverty • Reduce carbon emissions • Financial benefits for local people • Contribution to health and wellbeing. • Improvement to public health • Improved carbon reduction and air quality
6.3 Encourage businesses to roll out cycle to work and healthy living schemes as well as incorporating the schemes for the employees at the Local Authority.	#cycle to work schemes #cycle to work staff	S	• Contribution to health and wellbeing. • Improvement to public health • Improved carbon reduction and air quality

7. Recommendations: Engagement, Partnership & actors

Commitment: The Task and Finish Group recommend that North Northamptonshire Council prioritise activities that deliver the most cost-effective carbon emission reductions possible and capture the public imagination and stimulate behaviour change with all key stakeholders			
Justification: Achieving net zero is a shared commitment with stakeholders and wider community - effective engagement will be essential.			
Specific recommendations/action(s) The following refers to CfPS framework question 10	**Measure**	**Timescale**	**Impacts and contributes to**
7.1 Explore value and cost of a North Northants Citizens Assembly of a cross section of NN society to support new a climate strategy	Run a citizen assembly	S	• Community development and empowerment • Local leadership • Support community resilience

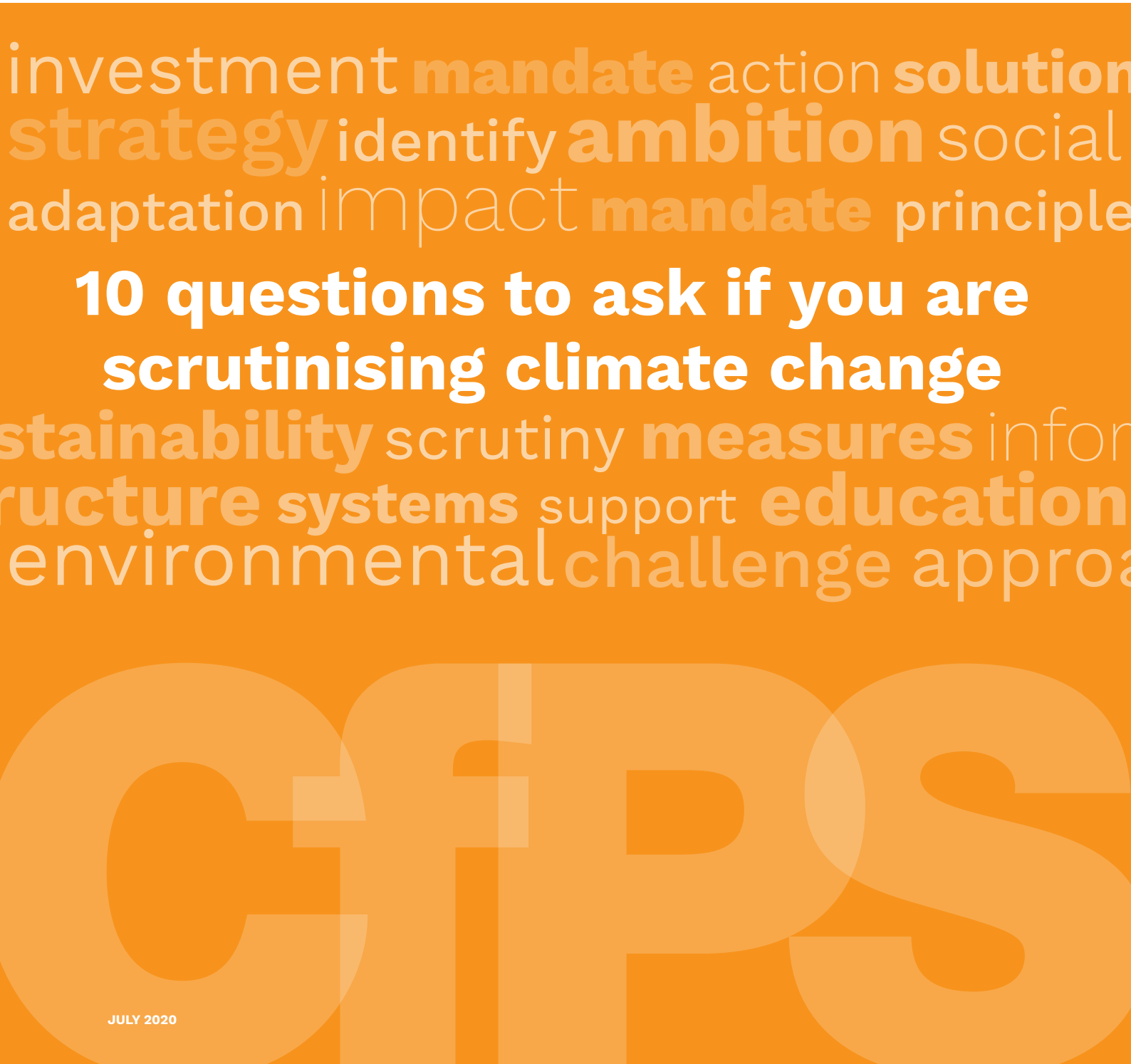
7.2 Enable a helpline that can be accessed by business and residents to gain advice and support with green projects/initiatives.	#trained helpline staff #advice calls/emails	S	• Community development and empowerment • Support decarbonisation agenda
7.3 Promote green practices through the showcasing of projects/schemes with partnership organisations	Produce annual climate engagement plan with communications team	S	• Community development and empowerment • Support decarbonisation agenda
7.4 Set up a county-wide Climate Partnership Group/Forum involving Councillors, residents, young people, community groups schools, parish councils, allotment holders, farmers, landowners, businesses, utilise climate science experts. Subsequent sub groups may be utilised.	Launch Climate Partnership Forum	S-L	• Local leadership • Community development and empowerment • Improvement of local infrastructure • Support decarbonisation agenda • Upskill local people
7.5 Engage in a Community based carbon literacy education scheme engaging with local community groups, schools and businesses.	#trained	M	• Community development and empowerment • Upskill local people • Support decarbonisation agenda
7.6 Expand Climate Ambassadors (Corby) Champions in order to support dissemination of information across the community of NN	#Climate Champions	S	• Community development and empowerment • Local leadership
7.7 Ensure close and mutual co-operation with surrounding and adjacent local authorities in relation to climate change impacts and solutions.	#LA's engaged	S-L	• Improvement of local infrastructure • Support decarbonisation agenda • Local leadership
7.8 Encourage existing and new environmental partnership work across North Northamptonshire, to continue strategy partnership example Northants Local Nature Partnership	#partnerships	S	• Improvement to local infrastructure • Increase carbon offsetting • Local health benefits

7.9 Produce an annual engagement plan to complement any climate change action plan strategy; - Include proactive public commitment to engage - Provide good quality material on website - Discuss the climate effects in Council communications e.g. flood/hot events - Use positive messaging - to support change e.g. economic recovery and tackling climate change go hand in hand. - Demonstrate collective local action - public sector partners, businesses, neighbouring councils, faith and pressure groups - Establish a Climate Change dashboard – highlighting climate related statistics	Produce annual plan	S	• Community development and empowerment • Local leadership • Support community resilience
7.10 Promote Green School Initiatives such as the Eco Schools awards; audit number of schools taking part and encourage youth engagement with local ideas	#Eco schools	M	• Community development and empowerment
7.11 Promote community rewards scheme for green initiatives e.g. Spirit of Corby	#celebrate local green champions	S/M	• Community development and empowerment
7.12 Promote a litter league to encourage proactive community engagement	#promote scheme	S/M	• Community development and empowerment
7.13 Encourage the development and protection of existing country parks to promote green education	#forest schools	S-L	• Community development and empowerment

Centre for Public Scrutiny

Local Government Association

10 questions to ask if you are scrutinising climate change



JULY 2020

Contents

This publication is part of the Centre for Public Scrutiny's "10 questions" series, which lays out key issues on which local scrutineers (councillors sitting on scrutiny committees and the officers who support them) can pose questions to those with decision-making responsibility. Each main question is presented alongside supplementary questions which scrutineers can ask to delve further into the subject at hand.

Introduction

Key points

- The 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report stated that at the current rate the world is on track to reach a global temperature rise of 3 degrees celsius by the end of the century;
- The general consensus is that significant impacts on humans and the biosphere will be apparent with 1.5 degrees of warming;
- Limiting warming to this level may still be possible, if concerted action is taken;
- The Climate Change Act 2008 mandates some of this action – in particular reduction in emissions by at least 80 per cent on 1990 levels by 2050, alongside legally binding carbon budgets and regular reporting of climate risks

Climate change is a critical global problem that will impact environments everywhere and individuals across all levels of society. Tackling climate change is a shared responsibility. It is deeply connected to other policy issues, there are no clearly defined solutions - certainly not at a local level - and new consequences are emerging. Currently, there is a great deal of uncertainty over who should respond to climate change and how this can be achieved. An effective response to climate change is not simply an issue that can be dealt with at the global scale; some form of local action is necessary for lasting environmental, social and institutional change.

Within the local government sector, councils are leading the response and the LGA Climate Change Sector Led Improvement offer is supporting this – full details of the sector-wide approach to this issue can be found at https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change

Councils across the UK have recognised a duty to act. Some are already acting on climate change – often by using their convening power to agree solutions across a whole area, rather than just focusing on the council as an institution. Now, with many having declared a 'climate emergency', there is a growing understanding that response to the challenge needs to be holistic; but even here, there is some uncertainty about what such declarations actually commit councils to in practice. Councils that have made this bold statement now need to show how they will prioritise and embed climate action in all policy areas.

The challenge has been thrown into sharper relief by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. At first glance it may seem that the impact of the pandemic will be positive for climate change. Globally, lockdown measures substantially reduced emissions, and in the UK measures by highways authorities have seen roadways reprioritised to focus on the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. But in the medium and long term, the position is more uncertain:

- Lessened use of public transport might make service levels unsustainable, leading to more people using cars and putting further public transport investment in danger – compounding the impact of pollution from private vehicles.

- More worryingly, councils' overall plans on climate change – written in the pre-COVID world and underpinned by assumptions about economic growth and personal behaviour – could now become undeliverable unless they are substantially redrafted.
- Finally, councils' financial situation focuses attention on immediate, in-year life and limb issues. Even before COVID, money to take action on long term issues was tight – the situation is now critical.

Both COVID-19 and the continuing threat of climate change demonstrate the needs for places and communities to become more resilient. Central to this is effective partnership working. Councils have a uniquely important role in using their buying power and resources to push forward action on climate change. They also have convening power in the local area – the ability to bring together a range of individuals and organisations and to work with them to develop a coherent and consistent approach to the issue. An approach to climate change which limits councils to thinking and acting only on their conventional duties and responsibilities will not take advantage of these opportunities – and is likely to be ineffective.

Scrutiny has a critical role to play in these cross-cutting issues. Councils' scrutiny functions can:

- Play an active role in stress-testing and querying assumptions in the development of climate action plans, particularly in light of the pandemic;
- Secure wider political buy-in for long-term action, in the context of significant financial pressures which make such buy-in critical;
- Play a formal accountability role as councils come to make public commitments on climate action – in particular, the declaration of climate emergencies;
- Support local people to engage with the council on these complex and long-term issues;
- Support the council to engage with partners and others in the locality, to better understand and align priorities.

This document sets out ten key questions – with follow ups – that scrutineers can use to better understand and seek oversight on climate action in their localities. It starts with a summary of the key issues and the questions which we think ought to be asked, before going on to delve into those issues in more detail.

These questions relate to issues on which task and finish working can be built; some of them are exploratory, and may be deployed by scrutineers as they decide which matters to put on a work programme. More detail on ways of working that scrutiny can adopt in carrying out its work can be found in "The good scrutiny guide" (CfPS, 2019), available at https://www.cfps.org.uk/?publication=the-good-scrutiny-guide

Key terms

“Zero carbon” or “carbon neutral”?

Some organisations assert that they are aiming for a “zero carbon” future; others plan to be “carbon neutral”. The phrases do not mean the same thing.

A “zero carbon” approach is one that aims to remove the use of carbon, and associated emissions, from the business entirely. A “carbon neutral” approach describes the acceptance that aspects of your work will still involve some emissions being produced, but that you are offsetting those emissions through some other means. “Net zero” is a term which is usually taken as meaning “carbon neutral”, the use of the word “net” implying the presence of offsetting arrangements accounting for an overall zero figure.

In the short term, “carbon neutral” is an easier task than “zero carbon”, and is likely to act as a staging post on the road to that endpoint.

“Climate emergency”

The rising environmental urgency and public profile of climate change has pushed it up local agendas.

Since Bristol City Council became the first to declare a ‘climate emergency’ in November 2018, the LGA and 65% of all councils across the UK have also declared climate emergencies, pledging to reduce their carbon emissions. These motions generally depend on cross-party support and set a precedent for local action.

A full list of councils that have declared a climate emergency, and their action plans, can be found here - https://www.climateemergency.uk/

Where and how to ask the questions

Our ten questions are not just ones that you will want to ask in a formal committee environment. By and large they are designed to be asked as you prepare to carry out work – either preparing for a set-piece session in committee where you might want to hold the relevant cabinet member, or the Leader, to account, or in preparation for the scoping of a more in-depth piece of scrutiny work, for example a task and finish group.

The questions are therefore largely exploratory in nature. They are designed to invite further supplementary questions which will depend on local circumstances. This means, as ever, that members and the officers supporting them will have to deploy "active listening" skills to pick up on and explore matters revealed by these questions. The sections below set out how some of this exploration might be carried out.

The questions will be particularly useful for:

- Scoping reviews to ensure focus in the context of a subject of significant potential breadth and depth. Preparation for reviews may involve the questions being asked to explore where scrutiny could add most value;
- Planning the involvement of the local community, including local activist groups. Where addressed to officers in the council, answers to the questions can give scrutiny a clearer sense of how it can best engage the public to understand their likely aspirations;
- Planning the involvement of local businesses, partners and employers to understand the local growth context (by, similarly to the above, posing questions to council officers that allow for such engagement to be more focused);
- Tackling political and personal disagreement over the scale and nature of the crisis, and of the scale and nature of the mitigations and adaptations necessary. The science on climate change is settled – however, there may be disagreement over the scale of the challenge and the nature of the response that councils need to make. Having answers to some of the central questions means that such debate and discussion at scrutiny (and elsewhere) can happen in a way that is couched on a common understanding of the evidence, and the nature of ongoing local activity;
- Developing realistic, meaningful recommendations that engage both with the global challenge and the need for local action. The answers to the questions will provide a basis on which to construct evidence-based recommendations that accurately reflect current plans, good practice and activity.

Most importantly, the questions will help you to maintain general oversight on the issue – even if you do not carry out formal work, informal questioning may help to reassure you that action is being undertaken. This can be used to support your scrutiny work programming processes and can help you to build an understanding of climate change and its impacts into your wider work.

Developing an understanding of local action is best supported by having a sense of what others are doing on the same issue. Professionals working on climate change will have carried out their own reviews of notable practice from elsewhere, and it makes sense that scrutiny practitioners should also be aware of these examples to be able to add most value. The LGA has produced a case study hub for action on climate change which you can access at https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change/climate-change-case-studies

The 10 questions

If you are reading this document electronically, you can click on the hyperlinks in each of the questions below and be taken to the relevant point in the text.

1. How well does the council understand the need to take action locally?

- Has the council carried out research to understand what it can do, and what it needs to do?
- Has the council declared a climate emergency?
- How does the council propose to act immediately on the declaration of a climate emergency (if relevant)?
- What commitments is the council making by such a declaration?
- How, if at all, have these commitments been recast as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Does the council have a carbon neutral or zero carbon target?
- Does a carbon neutral or zero carbon target cover council activities only or is it broader?
- Has there been a climate risk assessment in the local area?
- What is the council's structure for gathering and analysing the existing research and expertise?
- How can the council establish a benchmark for this data so evaluation of the effectiveness of climate action is possible?
- How will information gathered (including public views and partners' opinions and priorities) pre-COVID be subjected to analysis to ensure its continued relevance?

2. How does the council's leadership champion and direct action on climate change?

- Does the council understand the shift in mindset and culture involved in acting on climate change?
- Is there an outline for how cross-party working will be organised and how it will feed into the process, in order to make action on climate long term and be sustainable?
- Does the council have a Cabinet Lead or committed governance process driving your authority's response to climate change? How else will responsibility and accountability for action be managed?
- Is there a clear plan on how staff from all departments are involved in helping the council reach its climate action goals?
- Does the scrutiny function consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing council policies and strategies?

3. How is the council adopting a clear and detailed strategic plan, and how is it mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation?

- How is the council ensuring that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to carbon neutral/zero carbon?
- How will the council look to incorporate its climate change ambitions into existing policy?
- Do all council reports (especially those supporting executive decisions) include a section about how a project or decision will help the council reach its climate action goals?
- How is the council embedding climate action goals into staff and councillor training?
- What is the strategy for developing detailed and technical plans for each department?
- What is the system for monitoring and evaluating progress? Are all stakeholders bought into this?
- Who "owns" action in key areas? How is ownership spread between other partners in the area?
- What information will help better decision-making, or to communicate the case more effectively to potential funders?
- Are there regular updates on climate action progress to full Council and/or Cabinet?
- How are external stakeholders involved in developing departmental plans?

4. Has the council reviewed its investment strategy, supply chains and procurement models to give due consideration to climate change impacts?

- How does the council financially invest in initiatives that reduce net emissions?
- Does the council report on the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry that the pensions plan and other investments have?
- What freedom to act does the council have on, for example, divesting from investment in fossil fuels?
- Does each procurement consider the impact on the environment?

5. How is the council integrating sustainability and resilience into its transport and energy plans?

- Which modes of transport do people use to get to work, school and to the shops, and how far do people travel? How has the COVID-19 pandemic changed this? How will this change in the next few decades?
- Is there a choice of different modes of transport, or does everyone depend on access to a private car? Have changes to travel patterns during the pandemic become embedded or have behaviours returned to how they were previously?
- Is there a plan to implement more walking and cycling in your local area (recognising that the focus of those plans is likely to have shifted significantly as a response to COVID-19)? How do plans link into school/education transport policies?
- How is the council rethinking its overall energy use (both corporately, and in property managed by others – such as housing, schools and leisure facilities in light of its objectives)?
- Is the council taking action on a commercial, retail energy proposition? How might such a proposition link into climate objectives?
- How does the council manage its property portfolio so as to deliver its climate and carbon targets?
- How does the council act as a responsible custodian of the natural environment that it both owns, and has an influence over – trees, parks, open spaces and larger tracts of land? How does it work with its partners to promote climate action in these areas?

6. How is the council planning to understand and act on the need to adapt existing properties and estates to address the impacts of climate change – and to plan for new housing stock which is resilient to these impacts?

- How is the council building an understanding of the need for adaptation into housing and planning policy?

- How well does the council understand the opportunities to retrofit your existing property and housing stock?
- How has the council reviewed, or how does it plan to review, the Local Plan (and other Local Development Framework documents) in light of climate change?
- How will new development and regeneration present a challenge/provide an opportunity for sustainable development?
- How has the council set out policies encouraging high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in new buildings? If these policies exist, are they sufficiently ambitious, and how do they tie into national incentives where relevant?

7. How is the council promoting climate education, diversifying the labour market and focusing on sectors that are sustainable?

- Does the council understand where the greatest economic risks around climate change lie for the council, as an institution and as a place?
- How is the council developing local industrial strategies (and economic recovery plans, post-COVID) to be in line with carbon targets?
- How will the council work with Local Enterprise Partnerships to revise and implement local industrial strategies?
- How is the council supporting local businesses and employers to understand some of the adaptive activities in which they might need to engage to be sustainable?
- What are the skills implications of a decarbonising economy at a local level?
- What is the council doing to engage with local residents surrounding climate awareness?
- How can the council work with schools to enhance the quality of climate education?

8. What measures are being taken to ensure that health and social care systems will be resilient with the extra pressures they will come under due to climate change?

- Are there short-term public health measures (around, for example, air pollution) that the council can take?
- How will the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the resilience of local care systems be taken into account in climate change planning?
- How will demographic change impact on the sustainability of your existing health and social care activity, in the light of climate change?

- How will changes to local housing, transport and infrastructure arrangements impact on the health service?
- How will the council measure the impact of improvements in health and social care on climate change efforts?

9. How does the council identify those who are most at risk from the impacts of climate change, and what is being done to assist the most vulnerable?

- To what extent has the council subjected council plans on climate change to an equalities impact assessment or assessments?
- How might such assessments now need to be rethought or carried out again, in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Which groups or individuals are likely to be most heavily impacted? What mitigation and adaptation will the council carry out? What lessons about engaging with vulnerable people can be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How will climate impacts be incorporated within the council's general approach to equalities in the future?
- How will the council develop conversations to make informed decisions about climate change, whilst both addressing the needs of the most vulnerable individuals and groups at the same time as delivering climate change objectives?

10. How is the council supporting and working with all relevant private and civic actors in the area towards climate change mitigation and adaptation?

- What lessons around partnership working has the council learned from the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which might now be deployed to combat the climate emergency?
- What partners has the council identified who might be able to assist in tackling the climate action agenda? Where are the gaps in existing networks?
- What constraints are placed on the council by national policy, and how can the council work constructively with national actors to address these constraints?
- How is the council working with neighbouring authorities (including combined authorities, where relevant) to implement joint decarbonisation and leverage additional funding?
- How can the council work with its partners to promote public awareness? Is this adequately resourced?

The overall need for local climate action

1. How well does the council understand the need to take action locally?

Further questions to ask:

- Has the council carried out research to understand what it can do, and what it needs to do?
- Has the council declared a climate emergency?
- How does the council propose to act immediately on the declaration of a climate emergency (if relevant)?
- What commitments is the council making by such a declaration?
- How, if at all, have these commitments been recast as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Does the council have a carbon neutral or zero carbon target?
- Does a carbon neutral or zero carbon target cover council activities only or is it broader?
- Has there been a climate risk assessment in the local area?
- What is the council's structure for gathering and analysing the existing research and expertise?
- How can the council establish a benchmark for this data so evaluation of the effectiveness of climate action is possible?
- How will information gathered (including public views and partners' opinions and priorities) pre-COVID be subjected to analysis to ensure its continued relevance?

The two main components of action on climate change are adaptation and mitigation. Asking these questions will give you the general picture of the council's activities which will help you to focus your approach on more detailed issues.

Mitigation

A great deal of global and national action is focused on mitigation – trying to limit temperature rise.

Alongside the preparation of a climate change strategy, your council will have developed, or be developing, a thorough understanding of the key sources of carbon emissions in your

local area, and to determine where and how to best reduce these levels. Emissions data at local authority level is published annually by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy[1]. This shows you at a high level where the majority of emissions in your area are coming from. Different local areas will have different carbon emission profiles. A forthcoming LGA tool will also support councils to measure their own carbon emissions.

Councils can draw on a wide range of tools to help identify climate risks and ways to build local resilience – mentioned at the end of this guide – and can bring these elements together with desk research and stakeholder engagement, or develop your own assessment using available data.

Whilst local authorities don't have a statutory duty to reduce emissions in line with the national Climate Change Act, they do need to produce plans that have significant impact on reducing emissions (e.g. transport, local plans, minerals plans, procurement).

It's important to recognise that mitigation – and action on climate change more generally – is not entirely about changing the personal behaviours and choices of local people. Changing behaviours of individuals will have some effect – but the actions of big institutions are likely to deliver bigger changes. This is something we explore in more detail in the questions throughout.

Adaptation

The impact of climate change will vary from place to place, and different local authorities will be more or less resilient (or vulnerable) to these different impacts. Demographic factors may influence this. Some areas may have an ageing population, vulnerable to extremes of temperature for example. In other places, geography will be a factor – the presence of areas particularly prone to flooding, for example.

As such, the way that proposed actions impact on statutory responsibilities will differ from council to council. Understanding how local needs and obligations will change and influence the development of strategies and planning is vital to this effort.

A response to the climate emergency necessitates a consideration of the likely impacts of climate change in your local area. Across mitigation and adaptation, an evidence-based approach will identify risks and challenges, establish opportunities and solutions, and give an overview of your local needs.

Climate change is connected to almost every area of life, so it can be difficult for councils to know where to start and where the most impact can be made. Once early wins are achieved then residents and all involved parties will be more readily convinced that an emergency response on climate action is feasible.

[1] National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, https://naei.beis.gov.uk/laco2app/

Governance and leadership

2. How does the council's leadership champion and direct action on climate change?

Further questions to ask:

- Does the council understand the shift in mindset and culture involved in acting on climate change?
- Is there an outline for how cross-party working will be organised and how it will feed into the process, in order to make action on climate long term and be sustainable?
- Does the council have a Cabinet Lead or committed governance process driving your authority's response to climate change? How else will responsibility and accountability for action be managed?
- Is there a clear plan on how staff from all departments are involved in helping the council reach its climate action goals?
- Does the scrutiny function consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing council policies and strategies?

Climate action cuts across all council departments and functions, but for an effective response there has to be visible leadership and ownership – a proper understanding of the challenge and a visible and sustained pressure exercised by those in leadership positions.

There are a number of "assessment frameworks" in existence which can help councils to establish a baseline understanding of the challenge, around which political consensus and leadership can be built – one such example is "mini-Stern reviews", mirroring the approach carried out in 2006 at a national level.

mini-Stern reviews can assess the cost and carbon effectiveness of a wide range of low carbon options that could be applied at the local level in households, industry, commerce and transport. It explores the scope for their deployment, the associated investment needs, financial returns and carbon savings, and the implications for the economy and employment.

Bristol City Council, 2015 [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cabot/media/documents/bristol-low-carbon-cities-report.pdf]

Leeds City Region, 2017 [https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/6660%20Leeds%20mini-stern%20exec%20summary_v3.pdf]

Every council's approach to this challenge will be different, but there are likely to be some common themes underpinning good governance, leadership, and political direction. These will include:

- A lead member acting as a "champion" for this work, and as a focus for accountability and responsibility. This may be the council Leader;
- A lead officer to perform a similar role;
- A group of key individuals, at senior level, to take forward a strategy and drive it forward across the authority. This may involve people from different professional disciplines;
- A similar range of people across the councils' partners, and other organisations in the area.

Leadership is collective – as well as key individuals at the top of the organisation, you can expect to see others in the organisation exercising their own leadership and initiative on these matters, often through ownership of particular elements of an overarching plan or strategy. Collective ownership is about ensuring that climate change action is not seen as sitting within one particular professional specialism or department of the council.

Action on climate change is long term. It will need to be consistent across successive council leaderships, involving changes in political control. Scrutiny can be seen as having a role in developing cross-party consensus over time – making climate change policy more resilient to changes in political leadership, and changes in the priorities and objectives of partners in the wider area.

Scrutiny can delve into the financial commitments being made to action on climate change. Understanding how value judgements informed by the impacts of climate change can feed into clear priorities for action, which are themselves supported by resources, is an important part of the equation. Part of this involves developing more formal partnership arrangements with partners to share and allocate resources, like in Manchester - see below.

Manchester City Council

The Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Agency
http://www.manchesterclimate.com/

This partnership and agency owns a plan which brings together a range of partners city-wide to assign responsibility for overseeing and championing climate change action in the city. The Partnership was established in February 2018 and set targets based on analysis and recommendations from expert partners in independent advisory groups. Partnership members represent key organisations and sectors from across the city and there is a growing list of organisations that have signed their 'Commitment to Act' to support Manchester in achieving its targets.

Strategic planning, monitoring and reporting

3. How is the council adopting a clear and detailed strategic plan, and how is it mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation?

Further questions to ask:

- How is the council ensuring that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to carbon neutral/zero carbon?
- How will the council look to incorporate its climate change ambitions into existing policy?
- Do all council reports (especially those supporting executive decisions) include a section about how a project or decision will help the council reach its climate action goals?
- How is the council embedding climate action goals into staff and councillor training?
- What is the strategy for developing detailed and technical plans for each department?
- What is the system for monitoring and evaluating progress? Are all stakeholders bought into this?
- Who "owns" action in key areas? How is ownership spread between other partners in the area?
- What information will help better decision-making, or to communicate the case more effectively to potential funders?
- Are there regular updates on climate action progress to full Council and/or Cabinet?
- How are external stakeholders involved in developing departmental plans?

After primary focus areas for climate change mitigation and adaptation have been identified, you can expect that understanding to be translated into a plan of action.

Any climate action plan should be set up to accurately reflect which levers are within the council's control and where they sit with partners. An important additional consideration for any strategy is the question – is this a strategy for the council, as an institution, or a strategy that the council is setting for climate action across the area?

"Mainstreaming" action on climate change is an important aspect of this. Mainstreaming as a policy means bringing an understanding of it into everything the council does. Doing this with climate change means considering how other aspects of councils' (and their partners') activities impact on climate change, and vice versa. For example, what will a changing

climate demand of us in policy on housing – and on social care for vulnerable people? Scrutiny might want to consider whether a section on "climate implications" in standard committee reports might help to tie this together at a corporate level – although there is a risk that this can become a tick box exercise. To avoid this becoming a tick box exercise, scrutiny can challenge or probe when a report states "there are no implications for climate". For example, they may wish to ask the report author what work has been undertaken to reach that view.

This also involves thinking about the wider relationships the council has with others in the local area, and aligning with objectives held by national bodies. The "sustainable development goals"[2] can be a good anchor for this work. Several councils have published a specific SDG agenda, such as the 'Bristol One City' plan.

Bristol City Council

The Bristol One City plan [https://www.bristolonecity.com/] sets out Bristol's key challenges up to 2050 and brings the city together around the shared vision of delivering the SDGs locally: to make Bristol a fair, healthy and sustainable city. The plan brings together a wide range of public, private, and third sector partners within Bristol.

A clear understanding of risk underpins all council strategies. Climate change is no different, and strategies here will recognise the complex and multifaceted issues in play. Questions that officers and lead members will need to grapple with – and on which scrutiny might assist, include:

- What are the biggest corporate and departmental risks around the climate agenda?
- Might you need to carry out more meaningful climate assessments on decisions the council makes, alongside an equalities assessment, to mitigate these risks?
- How will you manage these risks in the context of a subject which may not easily lend itself to traditional performance indicators and measures of success?

The answers you get to these kinds of questions should at least give you reassurance that these complex issues are recognised and understood. They can act as a foundation for the more detailed kinds of questions raised in the subsequent sections of this guide.

Action planning can be complex[3], and requires a form of scrutiny that recognises this complexity. Where members are beginning to investigate plans, and their robustness, they may want to consider the following:

- The process will need to begin with the building of relationships with a range of partners – a climate change strategy "owned" exclusively by the council is likely to be less effective;

[2] UN, 2015, Sustainable Development Goals https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300

[3] See Climate Change Action Planning Process - https://www.climatejust.org.uk/what-can-be-done, and Climate action planning and implementation https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/ARUP-Climate-Emergency-What-Next.pdf

- Action must be evidence and data-led – the challenge may be global, but every area will have its own challenges and plans will need to be context specific. Certain parts of the local economy may have their own roles to play; the area's demographics will have a significant impact on what actions look like;
- Prioritisation is a key part of mainstreaming action on climate change. This is a significant policy agenda and councils and their partners will have limited capacity to deliver; partners will have different views on what the most important issues are;
- Understanding costs, budget and value is crucial, because concerted action on climate change can require investment. Scrutiny can help to understand how business cases have been used, and how long-term costs have been balanced against the costs of climate change itself, to put together a better long-term sense of value;
- Monitoring progress and performance. Scrutiny might have a formal role in performance review – its contribution might be explicitly built into a climate change strategy – or more traditional approaches can be used. Whatever approach is adopted scrutiny members will need to understand who is monitoring what, and when, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Investment and finances

4. Has the council reviewed its investment strategy, supply chains and procurement models to give due consideration to climate change impacts?

Further questions to ask:

- How does the council financially invest in initiatives that reduce net emissions?
- Does the council report on the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry that the pensions plan and other investments have?
- What freedom to act does the council have on, for example, divesting from investment in fossil fuels?
- Does each procurement consider the impact on the environment?

Local authorities are central to reducing the impacts of climate change through better decisions in investment, procurement and service delivery. By understanding their responsibilities and commitments on climate change and setting their investment and commercial strategy accordingly, councils can play a powerful role.

Councils across the country are moving money out of coal, oil and gas companies whose

actions are fuelling climate change. This kind of divestment is often attractive in theory – but in practice councils will be thinking carefully about how to manage it. LGPS (Local Government Pension Scheme) investments, in particular, present a big challenge when it comes to divestment. Starting with an understanding of the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry, in pension plans or otherwise, and reviewing the climate impacts of the investment portfolio will help to understand the drivers for a refocused approach to investment.

Where councils are engaged in wider commercial activity, the strategies underpinning this activity may need to be reconsidered to ensure that they align with the authority's priorities on climate change. This is particularly the case for trading companies and joint ventures, which will as separate entities need to have their own conversations about their responses and duties on climate and associated issues. It is also the case for procurement more generally. Councillors may wish to consider how an understanding of climate impacts will influence the council's procurement strategy – including, for example, the length of contracts and the assumptions used to inform requirements set out in invitations to tender.

Councils will not be able to make the assumption that companies and other vehicles in which they hold a stake, and partners with whom they contract, will necessarily automatically fall behind their proposed actions on climate.

Not all actions will require council funding, and it is important to leverage private capital investment rather than rely solely on local government funds.

Infrastructure and the built environment (housing, energy and transportation)

5. How is the council integrating sustainability and resilience into its transport and energy plans?

Further questions to ask:

- Which modes of transport do people use to get to work, school and to the shops, and how far do people travel? How has the COVID-19 pandemic changed this? How will this change in the next few decades?
- Is there a choice of different modes of transport, or does everyone depend on access to a private car? Have changes to travel patterns during the pandemic become embedded or have behaviours returned to how they were previously?
- Is there a plan to implement more walking and cycling in your local area (recognising that the focus of those plans is likely to have shifted significantly as a response to COVID-19)? How do plans link into school/education transport policies?

- How is the council rethinking its overall energy use (both corporately, and in property managed by others – such as housing, schools and leisure facilities in light of its objectives)?
- Is the council taking action on a commercial, retail energy proposition? How might such a proposition link into climate objectives?
- How does the council manage its property portfolio so as to deliver its climate and carbon targets?
- How does the council act as a responsible custodian of the natural environment that it both owns, and has an influence over – trees, parks, open spaces and larger tracts of land? How does it work with its partners to promote climate action in these areas?

Transport

The transport sector is the UK's single biggest source of carbon emissions, and one where quick wins can be made (CCC, 2019). Re-shaping your local transport system to reduce reliance on cars and shift towards low-carbon public transport, cycling and walking can have positive benefits including improved public health, better air quality, more hospitable public spaces and reduced economic losses from less congestion.

These kinds of measures are often as much about increasing air quality now as mitigating the impacts of climate change in the future. Scrutiny can play a role in identifying where this public pushback might exist, and in considering how changes can be communicated to local people – as well as ensuring that those changes might themselves need to be adapted based on community feedback.

The partnership context for climate action suggests the need for councils to work with other bodies – regional and sub regional transport bodies which form part of Mayoral combined authorities, bus and train operators are obvious candidates, and scrutineers might seek to understand how their councils are engaging with these bodies in meeting their climate objectives.

London Borough of Lewisham

The Healthy Neighbourhoods Scheme [https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/roads-and-transport/our-traffic-reduction-programme-healthy-neighbourhoods] is a programme that aims to change local streets to encourage people to walk and cycle rather than drive. Subject to funding and public consultation, the programme is likely to include traffic management measures, road closures outside schools, contra-flow cycling, improved pedestrian crossings, street trees, benches and cycle parking. The Scheme is being rolled out following the introduction of "mini-Hollands" in other boroughs; in particular, Waltham Forest and Kingston upon Thames.

Climate change adaptation needs to be built into decisions around the location, planning, design and maintenance of infrastructure. On the railways and the roads, the major risks to infrastructure include flooding, landslides and high winds. Consideration needs to be given to the way that infrastructure is considered as part of master planning exercises for regeneration. Scrutiny should query where major redevelopment is planned around private car use, including “big box” retail and business parks. Inevitably, this will involve working with partners such as Highways England and Network Rail (in its capacity as a railway infrastructure planner).

Energy

Energy is an area where councils have long taken action. Reduction in energy use has had a strong economic imperative despite its importance on climate action. Increasing the efficiency of corporate energy use, conversion of vehicle fleets and renewal of district heating schemes all have the potential to provide significant assistance to councils on their journey to carbon neutrality, and zero carbon.

As part of a commitment to tackling carbon emissions, the council fleet is a good starting point. Councils can also explore the transition of commissioned transport fleets to electric vehicles or electric cargo bikes and require all taxis to be electric vehicles through licensing. Updating performance requirements for public transport, waste management and other services can also result in longer-term cost savings.

Investment in LED street lighting that is better designed and better directed can significantly reduce the council’s energy usage. Through developing policy guidance and active encouragement, business and commercial organisations can also improve energy efficiency and install new renewable energy generation on their own buildings. Other benefits tied to sustainable energy production and consumption include lower risk of fuel poverty and its associated health impact.

Solihull Council plans to replace all its 24,000 streetlights by 2024 cutting its total energy costs in half to just £612,000 and reducing its own emissions by 43%.

https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/InfoandIntelligence/Carbon-Report-2018-19-Street-Lighting.pdf

The natural environment

Councils are often custodians of large amounts of land. Councils may own:

- Road verges and central reservations, proper management of which could make a huge contribution to the creation of new habitats for life;
- Street trees, where the council may have a programme in place for planting or better management, both to improve the urban environment and contributing to emissions offsetting;
- Parks and open spaces, acting as green lungs for towns and cities and which could

be managed in such a way to enhance their ability to act as carbon sinks, while also enhancing biodiversity;

- Larger tracts of public space – woodlands, brownfield sites which may be subject to regeneration plans over which the council can place conditions around biodiversity and climate action, and even council-owned farms.

Some councils own property companies which manage these assets on their behalf. The focus and objectives of these companies may need to be looked at to understand how they align with the need to promote carbon neutral, and zero carbon policies – particularly insofar as they relate to regeneration and redevelopment.

There may be public and private landholders with whom the council can work on these issues. The Forestry Commission and National Trust and Natural England will be the most obvious partners; the Environment Agency will also have a part to play.

Planning and housing

6. How is the council planning to understand and act on the need to adapt existing properties and estates to address the impacts of climate change – and to plan for new housing stock which is resilient to these impacts?

Further questions to ask:

- How is the council building an understanding of the need for adaptation into housing and planning policy?
- How well does the council understand the opportunities to retrofit its own existing property and housing stock?
- How has the council reviewed, or how does it plan to review, the Local Plan (and other Local Development Framework documents) in light of climate change?
- How will new development and regeneration present a challenge/provide an opportunity for sustainable development?
- How has the council set out policies encouraging high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in new buildings? If these policies exist, are they sufficiently ambitious, and how do they tie into national incentives where relevant?

Existing homes

A number of councils remain stockholders of social housing; many others transferred stock

to housing associations or ALMOs (arm's length management organisations) some years ago. Some councils, in two tier areas, may never have had direct responsibility for housing provision, but will find that requirements for changes to housing stock necessitated by climate change will be influenced by policy on social care, for example.

This is an area where there is significant work to be done, but where the nature of tenure and stockholding can make concerted action challenging.

Stock is likely to vary significantly – from very modern stock built at a small scale in recent years (sometimes as "infill" in existing estates) through to large-scale post-war and inter-war estates (some involving high-density blocks) to individual homes dispersed around the area purchased on an ad hoc basis over a number of decades to meet local need.

Councils which are stockholders, or who work closely alongside housing associations or ALMOs, are likely to have existing estate renewal and stock renewal plans. Common measures may include:

- Introduction of district heating schemes;
- Introduction of other heating solutions;
- Moves to on-site power generation;
- Introduction of energy efficiency measures such as double glazing, insulation and draughtproofing.

Areas will have a mix of social, private rented and private owned housing. There may be steps that councils and their partners can take to promoting better energy use in existing private stock (private housing owners will face many of the same challenges as we have identified for social housing above), but the limits to council action will be especially keenly felt in this area.

In most respects, influence on private sector housing is likely to be limited to new builds, and overall planning policy. Even here, as the next section makes clear, councils are constrained in their action by national planning policy.

Future homes: planning policy generally

The role of the Local Plan in every local authority area will be vital in achieving both "carbon neutral" and "zero carbon" objectives. Currently, national legislation imposes a duty on councils to ensure that local planning policies align with emission reduction targets. There are also forthcoming Government proposals that will impact on standards such as the recent proposals for Future Homes Standards (MHCLG, 2020). Whilst standards will set a basic measure, the LGA has suggested in its response to Government's proposals that local authorities might be encouraged to set higher energy efficiency and fabric standards for new homes to secure a greater reduction in energy demand and prevent costly retrofitting in the future (LGA, 2020).

Councils' capacity for plan-making is limited. Planning authorities can, however, include

a requirement that new builds meet an improvement on the current national standards, like the Greater Cambridge Housing Delivery Agency, and that they contribute to a smarter energy system. For example, Stroud Council are setting an example by ensuring that all new housing built on council-owned land and council housing is built to a standard that ensures zero net carbon emissions. Not all councils may find themselves able to take action like this immediately (because not all councils may find themselves as owners of land that developers find attractive); it may be that the masterplanning that surrounds large-scale regeneration provides an opportunity to influence and work with developers.

Councils can particularly work with developers on their obligations to support climate mitigation and adaptation.

Cambridge City Council / Greater Cambridge Housing Delivery Agency

The Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide [https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/1503/cambridgeshire-sustainable-housing-design-guide.pdf] uses standards which exceed national policy guidelines, and homes delivered by/for the Greater Cambridge Housing Delivery Agency will incorporate a number of sustainable design features including: green roofs on the apartment blocks, sustainable urban drainage incorporated into landscaping, denser insulation to minimise heat loss and reduce residents' energy bills, photovoltaic panels on roofs of houses and apartments.

Stroud District Council

[https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news-archive/here-is-how-stroud-district-council-is-working-towards-a-carbon-neutral-district-by-2030]

The council became the first local council in Europe to obtain carbon neutral status in 2015 and is continuing to retrofit homes with greener energy options, provide up-to-date energy standards and work on low carbon heating to achieve a carbon neutral status through the whole district.

Planning policy and flooding

When making decisions on land use and development, councils can follow Defra's guidance to reflect the level of current and future flood risk, promote greater use of natural flood management solutions and include flood risk as a feature of adaptation reporting from infrastructure (Defra, 2018). Councils already have a keen understanding of flood risk in their area in light of obligations and thinking on planning policy which have developed since the 2008 Pitt Review[4]. Scrutiny holds a statutory responsibility around flood risk management[5], which can be used to further explore risk and mitigation in this area.

[4] https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100702215619/http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pittreview/thepittreview/final_report.html

[5] Regulations are no longer in force but the basic powers in primary legislation remain active: https://www.cfps.org.uk/flooding-scrutiny-regulations-no-longer-in-force/

Energy use in housing

Local councils have the potential to increase energy efficiency and reduce reliance on carbon-based energy sources. For many councils, energy saving is now a core focus and there has been a recognition that developing renewable energy projects can also provide vital revenue. Recent examples include councils forming their own energy companies in Islington and Hackney, as well as providing funding for community energy schemes and developing district heating systems. Scrutiny can seek to better understand how the objectives of these companies might align with wider council strategy on climate change.

Improving the energy performance of council buildings, social housing, schools or leisure centres can reduce the council's energy bill. This can include basic energy efficiency measures of the type taken in domestic homes to more complex retrofits to larger buildings and facilities, and combined heat and power schemes. The Local Partnerships "Re:fit" programme provides more information, support and advice to councils planning this activity[6]. The reduction in the generation of waste and a dramatic increase in low carbon means of dealing with waste is also an area of focus where councils can make significant carbon savings.

Education, skills and economic development

7. How is the council promoting climate education, diversifying the labour market and focusing on sectors that are sustainable?

Further questions to ask:

- Does the council understand where the greatest economic risks around climate change lie for the council, as an institution and as a place?
- How is the council developing local industrial strategies (and economic recovery plans, post-COVID) to be in line with carbon targets?
- How will the council work with LEPs to revise and implement local industrial strategies?
- How is the council supporting local businesses and employers to understand some of the adaptive activities in which they might need to engage to be sustainable?
- What are the skills implications of a decarbonising economy at a local level?
- What is the council doing to engage with local residents surrounding climate awareness?
- How can the council work with schools to enhance the quality of climate education?

[6] Local Partnerships, 2019, https://localpartnerships.org.uk/our-expertise/re-fit/

Climate change presents an opportunity to rethink the perceived model of local growth by moving towards a cleaner, low-carbon economy. Efforts in this respect will have to be twofold: with local authorities both managing a transition and enabling green growth. Scrutiny can help to think about these shifts in expectations on growth – member buy-in to what are likely to be decisions with substantial long-term impact will be crucial, and scrutiny provides an opportunity to tease this out with a wider range of councillors, in addition to those who sit on cabinet.

Long-term planning on this matter is made much more complex because of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of writing (June 2020) it remains unclear how the country will recovery economically from this, and what this recovery will look like area by area. What seems certain is that local authorities and LEPs will have to work together to fundamentally reappraise their expectations of their collective role in economic development – and what sustainable economic development practically looks like for the area. Councils will have a task in ensuring that the economic recovery is "climate smart" – and that in doing so it does not leave people behind.

For this transformation to occur, councils can identify incentives and encourage low-carbon technologies and green industries to locate locally. At the same time, there needs to be a concerted effort to support existing local businesses in becoming more environmentally and socially responsible (e.g. green awards, climate change ambassador programme).

Furthermore, there will need to be anticipation of future skills. Forecasting occupational change and framing education and training responses is not a clear-cut exercise. Scrutiny can help to review the existing economic profile of the area – understanding where sectors of the economy might be at particular risk, and where there might be opportunities for emerging areas. This aspect of "transition" to a low carbon economy might cause economic shocks and other impacts on the local labour market – scrutiny can engage with local business, and representative bodies, to try to understand awareness of the impacts and to build insights and concerns into the way that the council is planning for the future. This may also involve the council working with further education and higher education providers in the area to understand how they are offering courses of study which engage with the emergence of these opportunities.

Local residents need and deserve to know why they might have to take different decisions or call on different or additional resources in conducting their livelihoods and planning their futures. Thus, awareness can be raised among a number of different local stakeholders, such as households, local organisations, opinion leaders and educators – scrutiny can be a part of this strategy. Knowledge and understanding are fundamental to behaviour change, and key life stages, such as childhood and young adulthood, can present ideal opportunities for influencing long-term attitudes.

Climate action education is being developed with councils across the country.

Nottingham City Council has provided environmental education resources and programmes in schools consisting of energy efficiency surveys, waste reduction, action plans and assemblies focused around climate action.

https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/Data/Schools%20Forum/20130926/Agenda/ResourceEfficiencyFinalSlides%20-%2058300.pdf

Reading Borough Council has also established green teams, pressure groups, eco-school groups or the equivalent, where students encourage their peers and staff to change their behaviour.

https://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1232/Climate-Change-Strategy/pdf/Climate-Change-Strategy.pdf

Health and social care

8. What measures are being taken to ensure that health and social care systems will be resilient with the extra pressures they will come under due to climate change?

Further questions to ask:

- Are there short-term public health measures (around, for example, air pollution) that the council can take?
- How will the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the resilience of local care systems be taken into account in climate change planning?
- How will demographic change impact on the sustainability of your existing health and social care activity, in the light of climate change?
- How will changes to local housing, transport and infrastructure arrangements impact on the health service?
- How will the council measure the impact of improvements in health and social care on climate change efforts?

Climate change is likely to have a significant impact on vulnerable people. Demographic shifts – with more older people in particular – may have an impact on the capacity of the sector to provide care in "normal" conditions. Extremes of weather will affect people's health and will affect the resilience of services designed to provide care for people in their own homes. Climate, social and economic changes (for example, shifts in ownership and availability of private transport) may make it more difficult to maintain a model where the aim is to care for people in their own homes where possible. The business model of voluntary action organisations – providing respite and day care, or wraparound services which complement more formal social care arrangements – may be vulnerable to similar

economic, social and climate changes. The council will already have had to act on the significant impact on the health and care sector of the COVID-19 crisis; climate change presents additional, related challenges to resilience.

Mitigation actions may need to focus on providing support to people so that their conditions do not develop to require high-level care, or do not develop as quickly. Where active modes of travel, along with regular exercise, are promoted to younger people, the likelihood of future care needs may be lessened; the same applies for things such as smoking cessation and healthy eating/ obesity support services. But many health conditions and disabilities are not lifestyle related, and there are naturally limits to this kind of mitigation as people age. Furthermore, pressures on finances mean that early interventions, and other preventative activity, is more difficult to fund as councils focus on critical, acute need.

In terms of supporting people's health while promoting a more sustainable approach to food and lifestyle overall, local councils might develop a sustainable food policy to be delivered through schools, hospitals, nurseries, care homes and prisons. Public menus should be aligned with healthy and sustainable choices, and councils may wish to consider active promotion of plant-based diets and ensuring that meat is from non-intensive farming systems.

Durham County Council

The council's Sustainable and Healthy Food Policy works across all the staff, clients, and the communities they serve to "support and promote higher quality, higher welfare meat, whilst seeking to encourage reductions in overall meat consumption"

https://www.durham.gov.uk/media/23965/Healthy-and-Sustainable-Food-Policy/pdf/HealthyAndSustainableFoodPolicy.pdf

For scrutiny, understanding the way that an awareness and understanding of climate change is built into both plans around integrated care systems (ICS) and the joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) will be important. Scrutiny can seek to understand how the significant changes currently planned in the health and social care sector can be planned with the awareness of climate change and its impacts.

Scrutiny has unique powers and rights around changes to health services (in particular, powers relating to consultation on substantial variations to local health services) and can use these to challenge on climate mitigation and adaptation by health partners when substantial variation is proposed. How might such variations be implemented to make the local health services more resilient in context of the climate emergency – what might this mean for changes to local community and acute services?

Equitable communities

9. How does the council identify those who are most at risk from the impacts of climate change, and what is being done to assist the most vulnerable?

Further questions to ask:

- To what extent has the council subjected council plans on climate change to an equalities impact assessment or assessments?
- How might such assessments now need to be rethought or carried out again, in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Which groups or individuals are likely to be most heavily impacted? What mitigation and adaptation will the council carry out? What lessons about engaging with vulnerable people can be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How will climate impacts be incorporated within the council's general approach to equalities in the future?
- How will the council develop conversations to make informed decisions about climate change, whilst both addressing the needs of the most vulnerable individuals and groups at the same time as delivering climate change objectives?

Though climate change inevitably affects everyone, there is a widespread awareness that the impacts and effects of climate change are not distributed equally – combined with pre-existing socioeconomic challenges the consequences are likely to be far worse for those most disadvantaged and vulnerable. The concept of equity in climate change relates not just to impacts and vulnerabilities, but also uneven involvement in adaptation planning.

It is important to consider the issues of social justice that will be a certain result of climate change in local areas. The primary concern should involve equal and fair access to rights, resources and opportunities that reduce people's vulnerability – in part by increasing their capacity to adapt – to the consequences of climate change. There ought to be a focus on what can be done about the unequal consequences, guided by values that prioritise the experience of affected groups and those most at risk, as well as the inclusion of diverse voices and communities in the policy process.

Vulnerability to climate change is defined as the susceptibility of a given population, system, or place to harm from exposure to climate-related shocks and stresses[7]. Social factors that have been found to contribute to resilience include economic vitality and diversity; quality of housing and infrastructure; institutional and civic capacities; presence of strong social networks; and healthy lifestyle choices. Environmental factors include the presence of

[7] IPCC, 2012, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/SREX_Full_Report-1.pdf

natural flood buffers, availability of locally sourced food supplies, adequacy of local water supplies, and protection from toxic and hazardous pollution sources. These are all factors that local councils can help encourage and ensure access to. So, there must be a process in place to identify communities that are at highest risk to the consequences of climate change and facilitate partnerships to carry out actions to support the most vulnerable in developing resilience.

Council planning is likely to provide a local area vulnerability profile that considers climate change impacts by including factors such as exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity into account. In many cases this takes the form of climate risk vulnerability mapping and assessments. Where climate change strategy is in the planning stages, scrutiny can feed into the development of this vulnerability planning – taking advantage of the nuanced insights members are likely to have into the communities they serve.

Hampshire County Council initiated an assessment that aimed to gain an understanding of the relationship between social vulnerability and climate change related weather events, particularly heatwaves and flooding so they could improve the resilience of all core services and particularly in, but not limited to, Adult Services.

https://www.climatejust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Social%20Vulnerability%20%28Hampshire%29.pdf

Implementing strategies and interventions that will improve the capacity and resilience of vulnerable people and communities, and your local area overall is vital – especially where these groups may incorporate those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

In doing this, residents are likely to expect to be involved in the policy process throughout. Community engagement will facilitate a greater understanding and ownership of actions on climate change. As noted above, the unique credibility and legitimacy of elected members may mean that they are well placed to help the council to understand complex local need.

Engagement can take many forms; councils can empower and support local groups to develop community-scale climate change projects, and can partner with the community through coproduction in adaptation and resilience planning. By incorporating community expertise at the design stage, it will address the unique ways that different communities are vulnerable and will increase the capacity of planning processes to be more adaptive to local conditions and vulnerabilities.

How you decide to engage with your local community on climate action will depend on your aims, resources and commitment to outcomes. Councils need to be inclusive and avoid conflict with community interests. The council will need to take steps to proactively include diverse voices, especially the young and marginalised in your community, so that they can have a say in shaping future outcomes. However the council proceeds, the need to represent the local area as a whole must be consolidated by paying increased attention to the need for greater inclusion of affected and marginalised groups in the process.

Working in partnership

10. How is the council supporting and working with all relevant private and civic actors in the area towards climate change mitigation and adaptation?

Further questions to ask:

- What lessons around partnership working has the council learned from the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which might now be deployed to combat the climate emergency?
- What partners have the council identified who might be able to assist in tackling the climate action agenda? Where are the gaps in existing networks?
- What constraints are placed on the council by national policy, and how can you work constructively with national actors to address these constraints?
- How is the council working with neighbouring authorities (including combined authorities, where relevant) to implement joint decarbonisation and leverage additional funding?
- How can the council work with its partners to promote public awareness? Is this adequately resourced?

Not all councils have the power to directly deliver on all necessary actions, but all councils can exercise their 'convening power' and promote change through influence and encouragement. For the council to make significant progress in climate action there must be a clear strategy to work with a range of organisations. A purposeful effort with effective communication and excellent networking mechanisms is required from diverse stakeholders with a shared purpose. This can create opportunities and the potential to realise significant economic, social and environmental benefits as well as minimising future risks.

Your council should be working with other councils in the same area (if in a shire county area), neighbouring councils, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), developers, innovators, funders, service providers, local businesses, national agencies, and the community.

In order to work in effective partnership, and develop a strong sense of shared purpose, it will probably be necessary to establish some form of local-focused, purpose-driven governance body, and to organise initial workshops to mobilise and involve stakeholders. You can get a general sense of what might work best through review of your existing arrangements with reference to the LGA guidance on engagement, "New Conversations 2.0" (2019).

Rutland County Council

Rutland council set up a county-wide Climate Change Partnership Group involving Councillors, residents, young people, community groups, schools, parish councils, allotment holders, farmers, landowners, businesses and climate science experts. Through consultations the aim has been to inform how land and open spaces can be used to meet their net-zero carbon footprint, and how to stimulate investment and funding into the county to put in place actions.

https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/council-news/council-sets-out-targets-to-help-fight-climate-change/

One common theme of councils' climate emergency declarations thus far is the need for public engagement, but there is a lack of clarity on how this is to be achieved. Efforts to involve communities in climate adaptation decision-making processes include surveys, public consultations and meetings, citizen advisory panels and citizen assemblies. An increasing number of councils are establishing citizens' assemblies, alongside other deliberative methods, to gather ideas and develop policy on issues such as climate change, air quality, traffic congestion and town planning. As with all community engagement, it needs to be informed by what individual councils can achieve within their specific local contexts and constraints.

Your council might have plans to support and encourage residents and partners in changing behaviours that could mitigate climate change. A key part of this will lie in managing local expectations – as part of this participation making a clear commitment with local people that what is agreed will be acted on. This may be challenging, where local appetite for significant changes may be more vocal from one subset of the population, with others more resistant.

Other partners include LEPs. These bodies are responsible for the majority of transport spending in local areas, and two-thirds of their spending is on road projects. Hence, councils need to actively influence the development of LEP strategies to ensure they are geared towards carbon emission reduction. The role of the council in working with LEPs is vital to make progress in energy, housing and transport. The Leeds LEP commissioned a report from the Carbon Trust on how to support decarbonisation across the local economy[8].

[8] Carbon Trust, 2019, https://www.carbontrust.com/our-projects/leeds-city-region-setting-science-based-targets-sbts-for-a-combined-authority-region

Concluding remarks

The ten scrutinising questions hopefully provide a foundation for which climate change programmes in councils can be assessed. We hope that you find them useful to improve and support local government plans to combat climate change.

The LGA is fully committed to enabling councils and residents to reach their local carbon reduction targets to adapt, prevent the onset, and mitigate the effects, of climate change. For more information and resources, please visit https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change

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Useful links

Tools

https://www.climatejust.org.uk/
The Climate Just webtool maps the relationship between social exclusion and the impacts of climate change. It offers the opportunity to identify who is likely to be most vulnerable to climate change, so equitable actions can be developed to address these needs.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-a-tool-to-estimate-healthcare-costs
This tool developed by Imperial Business School and Public Health England allows local authorities to quantify the potential costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution and can be used to estimate the health cost savings of low carbon transport projects.

https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/areas-of-focus/community-resilience/health-and-wellbeing-board-toolkit.aspx
The Sustainable Development Unit supports the NHS, public health and social care to embed and promote sustainable development. The Health and Well-being Toolkit focuses on embedding sustainable development approaches into local public health action and engaging Health and Wellbeing Boards in sustainability, resilience and climate change.

Guides & further information

https://www.adeptnet.org.uk/system/files/documents/Good%20Practice%20Guide%20ADEPT%202019f.pdf
Adept – 2019, 'Good Practice Guidance for Local Government'

https://www.ashden.org/downloads/files/CAC-Chapters-all-FINAL.pdf
Ashden – 2019, 'A Toolkit for City Regions and Local Authorities: climate action co-benefits'

https://takeclimateaction.uk/sites/files/climate/documents/2020-02/A4_ClimateActionPlan_Jan_2020_update.pdf
Friends of the Earth – 2020, 'Climate Action Plan for Councils'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727252/national-adaptation-programme-2018.pdf
Defra – 2018, 'National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/218798/adapt-localcouncilguide.pdf
Defra – 2010, 'Adapting to Climate Change: A guide for local councils'

https://www.green-alliance.org.uk/resources/Is%20localism%20delivering%20for%20climate%20change.pdf
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https://www.involve.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Involve_Climate-Change-and-Open-Local-Government.pdf
Involve – 2014, 'Can you hear me? Citizens, Climate Change &Open Local Government'

https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/84146112.pdf
Joseph Rowntree Foundation – 2015, 'Community Resilience to Climate Change: an evidence review'

https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/environment-and-waste/climate-local
Local Government Association's Climate Local initiative - 2014, which it launched in conjunction with the Environment Agency Climate Ready service.

https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/2852781/TCPA%20RTPI%20planning%20for%20climate%20change%20guide_final.pdf
TCPI & RTPI - 2018, 'Planning for Climate Change A Guide for Local Authorities'

http://www.uk100.org
UK100 is a network of local government leaders focused on climate and clean energy policy, to support decision-makers in UK towns, cities and rural areas in their transition to 100% clean energy by 2050.

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Appendix 2

Introduction

The Climate Emergency is recognised by the constituent Council's and local action has been undertaken by each in recent years. A summary of these actions by local authority area is provided below (with weblinks provided to access the full versions of documents referenced). These actions form a basis from which the current Framework has been developed.

Corby (CBC)

- Declared a Climate Emergency at Council in August 2019[1].
- Published a revised "Environmental Sustainability Strategy – Action on Climate Change" covering the period 2020-25[2].
- Has established a Council webpage on Climate Change [3]
- For brevity, notable objectives and actions undertaken by the Council is provided overleaf. Further details can be found by accessing the Action Plan direct.

[1] Available online at: https://www.climateemergency.uk/blog/corby/
[2] The *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* is available online at: https://www.corby.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Corby%20Borough%20Council%20Environmental%20Sustainability%20Strategy%20%27Action%20on%20Climate%20Change%27%202020-2025.pdf
[3] Available online at: https://www.corby.gov.uk/home/green-corby/environmental-policy-and-climate-local

Corby Borough Council: Climate Actions

Objective	Progress (at February 2021)
Review actions in our Carbon Management Plan and explore invest to save financing opportunities such as lighting replacements, heating systems, and insulation	Completed and ongoing. In 2020 the Council has decreased its greenhouse gas emissions in total by 53% (total emissions of 3,879 CO2e tonnes) since recording emissions in 2008/9. High Energy Users Group of service heads critique NI185. Installed 35kw solar PV on the Depot, LED replacement programme on core office buildings, boiler upgrades, window replacement programme, moving to electric fleet.
Explore the feasibility of town centre heat network.	Completed and ongoing. Heat network and masterplanning study completed. The Council are members of the BEIS Heat Network and Delivery Unit scheme. In progress – exploration of a town centre-based heat network.
Move to a low carbon vehicle fleet and increase the uptake of low carbon transport such as exploring salary sacrifice scheme to include plug in electric vehicles	Completed and ongoing. OLEV readiness and ULEV funding received & Go OLEV Ultra Low award retained. 23% of fleet are plug in; 22 fully electric and 1 hybrid.
Increase staff and member awareness of climate change and maintain environmental scheme	CBC has Green Wizards for every department. All new staff recruited receive an environmental and climate action induction training.
Encourage lower carbon transport alternatives and increase the proportion of low-carbon fuelled vehicles	Established infrastructure, ongoing support with BP Chargemaster. Average of 450 charges per month at the Council hosted charge points at the Cube town centre car park, railway station and enterprise centre, athough dip in use during three lockdowns. Since 2012 CBC have supported the installation of 13 slow, 5 medium, 19 fast, and 3 rapid chargers across the borough.
Continue to work with taxi companies and licence holders to take up low carbon vehicles	8 registered electric taxi licensees to date.
Actively manage and maintain our ancient woodlands, introduce right tree right place strategy across the borough	Ongoing. Currently 5 active Friends of Groups supporting the stewardship of Corby's major parks and woodland. There are further active groups in each of the parishes that support community recreational and pocket park areas. Retain Green Flag award for major parks and woodlands. Street trees reintroduced to north wards in Corby.
To increase the percentage of Corby's household waste recycled and composted and support County target of 56% by 2025	Ongoing. The service has now been taken in house with Kettering Borough Council as a shared service, since January 2019. April 2020 50.78% was recycled and composted.

Objective	**Progress (at February 2021)**
Promote engagement with the Electric Corby CleanTech programme in the commercial and logistics sector in Corby and seek to encourage advocates and stewardship within the industrial sector	Ongoing Corby's carbon emissions have reduced by half from the industry sector from 463 to 237KTCOe from 2005.
Support renewable energy projects in order to reduce fuel bills for tenants and residents	Ongoing. Supported Electric Corby launch of positive energy 'Etopia' Priors Hall development.
Work with relevant partners to target the most vulnerable households in our community helping alleviate fuel poverty and build resilience in extreme weather events (hot and cold)	Launched LEAP Home Energy Project, lead ECO flex help to heat for the County. Corby has reduced its fuel poverty to 9% of households (England average is 10%).
Work with the Northants Warm Homes Partnership. Promote the take up of 'ECO Help to Heat' measures to improve home insulation and heating systems. Support initiatives to improve the domestic energy performance of Corby's Homes. Support take up of retrofitted heat pumps.	Ongoing. Over half of Corby's homes are energy efficient (UK EPC register.gov.uk), with an average of 51% homes at EPC C. HECA to be published May 2021.

East Northants (ENC)

- Has not declared a Climate Emergency.
- Has undertaken some works within Council buildings to reduce energy consumption (and reduce emissions). This includes:

    - Provision of energy efficient computer screens throughout,
    - Installation of a new LED lighting system,
    - Installing a new Air Handling Unit system which uses Variable Refrigerant Flow heat-pump Technology to reduce the consumption of gas.
    - The Council is also looking to move to a green electric supply.

- The Council is developing its Part 2 Local Plan and is currently consulting on a Pre-Submission Draft of this (Regulation 19 consultation). This Plan introduces new planning policies for the local area which include elements of sustainability.

Kettering (KBC)

- Declared a Climate Emergency at Council in July 2019[4].
- Has established a Council webpage on Climate Change[5].
- Endorsed an Action Plan setting out a range of measures and activities the Council would undertake over its remaining life to combat Climate Change locally.
- For brevity, notable objectives and actions undertaken by the Council is provided below. Further details can be found by accessing the Action Plan direct.

[4] Further details available online at: https://www.climateemergency.uk/blog/kettering/
[5] Available online at: https://www.kettering.gov.uk/info/20009/environment/12381/climate_change & https://thisiskettering.com/climate/

Kettering Borough Council: Climate Actions

Objective	Progress (at February 2021)
Begin the roll out programme of installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points in car parks.	• x16 new charging bays installed within Kettering Town Centre Car Parks (all operational on 16/09/2020). • Further charging points planned at the Warren Hill site (Kettering). • x3 locations in Kettering confirmed for on-street charging points through the Virgin Media Park and Charge (VPACH) project. Installation anticipated to occur in Q1 or Q2 of 2021.
Ensure that any new fleet procured will be specified as low emission where an electric vehicle is not yet cost effective or available (e.g. refuse & recycling Trucks)	• x110 vans are in the process of being replaced up to April 2021. These will include fuel saving technologies such as auto stop-start systems, gear change indication to aid economical driving and selective management systems that uses AdBlue to convert certain emissions in the exhaust gas into nitrogen and water.
Install secure bike storage racks within Kettering town centre and in other locations to encourage more cycling.	• Community Development has undertaken consultation to identify where cycle routes should link to and from the Town Centre and where cycling facilities would best be located. 66% of respondents felt the town centre would benefit from better cycle storage and KGH, Kettering Train Station and KBC Car Parks were seen as the most favourable locations for this. Further investigation is now required on options before further consultation is undertaken. • A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is being prepared by KBC to identify cycling and walking facilities across the town. Once complete, this will enable the Council to bid for funding and resources to enhance local infrastructure. • Voi E-Scooter trial launched in Kettering December 2020 with aim of taking pressure off of local public transport and providing alternatives to the car to reduce congestion and pollution in the long term. This has since been augmented with the launch of an E-bike hire scheme (Voi) in the Town in January 2021.
Ensure that new Council housing developments include high levels of insulation and energy efficient heating with low running costs.	• This commitment is being delivered within Council new build projects although some delay has occurred on certain sites. Affordable housing schemes at Albert Street, Scott Road, Stamford Road and the Lawrence's site will incorporate high levels of insulation and energy efficient heating in order to minimise running costs.

Objective	Progress (at February 2021)
Where relevant, request that carbon reduction and climate change principles form part of the Council's procurement process. The supplier will be required to give consideration to climate change and how it impacts in delivering the contract.	• This commitment has been achieved. This has now been completed and has been incorporated into KBC's procurement process. Where relevant suppliers will need to give consideration to climate change and how this impacts their delivery of the contract and will be part of the assessment of award of contracts. Procurement tools, given the spending power of the Council, will be a significant way of influencing suppliers and partners in delivering greener services and projects for the Borough.
Promote and support energy schemes that include Wind, Solar and other renewable technologies and include proposals for reduced energy use in new housing and commercial developments.	• There is significant progress being made against this commitment. The Council's Planning Service takes a positive and proactive approach to seeking high standards of resource and energy efficiency reducing carbon emissions from buildings as required by Policy 9 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document. • Bunzl development (Segro Kettering Gateway Site) – first warehouse facility built at the site – incorporates first-rate sustainability credentials, including carbon neutral build options, rainwater harvesting, solar thermal heating and a minimum BREEAM `Very Good' rating. • Grafton Underwood Solar Farm – planning permission granted for construction of a Solar Park. The proposals include the installation of solar photovoltaic panels to generate approximately 38MW of electricity which would enable export of the electricity to the local electricity grid. This would generate enough low carbon electricity to power approximately 11,400 homes every year or 27% of all the dwellings within the Kettering Borough Council Area (Census 2011).

Objective	Progress (at February 2021)
Ensure that tree planting of British native species is included in new developments coming forward and fully implement Policy 21 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Rockingham Forest) which seeks to deliver 40ha a year of new tree planting.	• This commitment has seen significant progress. Since 2013 a minimum of 16ha of land has been planted with approximately 35,000 trees which have been a mix of native broadleaf trees including Oak, Beech and Hazel providing a range of environmental and landscape benefits. Much of this has been on the Boughton Estate in Kettering. The River Nene Regional Park, which operates this scheme, is now redoubling its efforts to work with landowners to provide grants to allow this planting to continue and at a more expansive pace. A new Project Officer has been appointed, with match funding provided through the Joint Planning Unit, to focus on bringing forward land parcels with landowners for planting. • Proposals to advance the strategic landscape planting for Hanwood Park would mean that significant numbers of trees (in the region of 25,000) will be planted and established on this development over the next 2 years. The immediate planting proposals around the linear park and Access E, Access F and the Central bowl were due for completion in Nov 2020 and this has resulted in over 5,000 trees being planted. This will augmented by the further planting of 461 ornamental trees, c.4,500 native woody shrubs, c. 3,750 native woodland trees, c. 3,120 native hedgerow shrubs and trees.
Review our options for increasing the amount of renewable energy sources within our existing energy contracts	• This commitment has been achieved. The Council's energy contracts have been reviewed and these have all now been changed to renewable tariffs which means the Council is powering all of its buildings and services on renewable energy.
Develop a dedicated web presence that will:- • Provide an advice and support package for "green" business. • Gives advice and support to local residents; and • Promote good practice across the borough • Incentivise business to improve practices by sponsoring an annual award for good practice in business.	• This commitment has been achieved. The Council has developed a dedicated web presence providing advice and information on what the Council and other stakeholders are doing in respect of climate change for residents and businesses. The link for this is: https://thisiskettering.com/climate

Objective	Progress (at February 2021)
COVID Pandemic - Impact on Climate Change and Air Quality	• The Council's Annual Status Report has been submitted to DEFRA and initial comments regarding the report are very positive. Overall nitrogen dioxide levels have reduced within the Borough and air quality specialist consultants have undertaken a review of the diffusion tube locations, including the list provided by members of the M&A committee, and are in the process of actioning the findings of that review. In terms of promoting improved air quality the Electric Vehicle charging points in London Road, School Lane and Commercial Road car parks, now fully operational, will assist. Sequencing of the London Road/Bowling Green Road traffic lights will also reduce standing traffic and will improve air quality at one of the worst spots in the Borough which is nearing the point where an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) may need to be declared if improvements are not seen.

Wellingborough (BCW)

- Adopted an *Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation SPD* in January 2021[6]. This document provides developers with clear information as to what is required and how planning applications will be evaluated in terms of air quality. It deals primarily with the air quality impacts from traffic emissions (the main contributor to ambient air pollutions). This guidance seeks to simplify assessment and mitigation procedures through a standardised development scheme classification, according to potential scheme impact, while recommending then types of appropriate and reasonable mitigation measures that should be designed into each scheme classification. This an indicative step by step approach to dealing with planning applications that have the potential to create relevant exposure to road transport emissions (nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and particulate matter ($PM_{10/2.5}$) for future occupants of a development, or where the proposed development scheme has the potential to increase concentrations of pollutants in the surrounding area arising from road transport emissions.

- Has developed a *Climate Change Action Plan* for 2020/21. This was considered by Council on December 8th 2020. For brevity, notable objectives and actions undertaken by the Council is provided below. Further details can be found by accessing the Action Plan direct[7].

- Has established a Council webpage on Climate Change[8].

[6] The *Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation SPD* is available online at: https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/download/3181/air_quality_and_emissions_mitigation_spd
[7] The *Climate Change Action Plan* is available online at: https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1189/council_-_to_be_held_virtually
[8] Available online at: https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/climatechange

Borough Council of Wellingborough: Climate Actions

Proposed Action	Progress (at December 2020)
Continue to raise awareness of climate change through the Link and social media	• A Community Health and Wellbeing Officer has been appointed who will assist with promoting a wider healthy environment message including that of climate change. Social media content and a section in the link will be agreed with the Communications Officer shortly.
Continue to provide information on the website about home energy efficiency and signpost to the Northamptonshire Energy Savings Service (NESS)	• Ongoing • Greatwell Homes work with Energy Angels who provide energy advice to people who live in their homes.
Continue to work with private sector housing landlords and registered providers to encourage energy efficiency and ensure they meet the statutory duties including energy efficiency rating for properties.	• Ongoing • Planning Policy comments on planning applications include a requirement for resource efficiency, particularly in relation to water use, these are now standard planning conditions. • Energy efficiency measures are now being considered for civil sanctions against private landlords following review of the civil sanctions policy to include this issue. This will ensure properties cannot be let without appropriate measures in place. • Greatwell Homes are supporting, where possible BCWs climate action plan. • Analysis currently being undertaken on EPC ratings of stock which is expected to be completed shortly. Working towards EPC rating C by 2030 and zero carbon target in 2050. Will be bidding for the Green Homes Grant Fund for social housing.

Proposed Action	Progress (at December 2020)
Consider the role the council can play in implementing the Northamptonshire Ultra Low Emission Strategy including consideration of installing electric charging points in the Multi-Storey Car Park and other council properties including the Redwell and Waendel.	• A member training and information session took place on electric vehicles and charging points on 2 March 2020. • 4 fast charging points are being incorporated into the Multi-storey car park as part of the refurbishment. • Further consideration is being given to options at the Castle and the Redwell Leisure Centre. The options for Redwell Leisure Centre will be for the new unitary to consider. No options have currently been identified for the Waendel. • Greatwell Homes are increasing their electric vehicle fleet and have installed electric charging points at their Denning Road Offices
Investigate options for encouraging walking and cycling.	• An Ise Valley Access Working Group has been established as part of the Ise Valley Partnership to look at options for improving access for all along the valley corridor; this includes looking at the possibility of a cycle route between Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby. • A partnership has been established to consider options for extending the greenway from Rushden to Wellingborough to provide a high-quality cycle route along the Nene Valley. • As part of the Covid-19 pandemic recovery programme options are being considered for safer public spaces and active travel.
Work with partners to prepare a River Ise Strategic Plan. This will include habitat, access, recreation, climate action and resilience and water management.	• A River Ise Strategic Plan is being jointly funded by the borough council, Kettering Borough Council and the Environment Agency.

Proposed Action	Progress (at December 2020)
Investigate how/where BCW can facilitate the planting of more trees within the borough.	• Officers have met with the Woodland Trust to look at partnership opportunities. The extent to which community planting opportunities will be possible this planting season is uncertain as a result of Covid-19. Information on planting opportunities can be shared at the next Parishes Forum. • World Tree Planting Day will be promoted through social media. • An additional 800 trees are planned to be planted as part of the landscaping works at the crematorium. • A part time project officer has been agreed for 3 years for North Northamptonshire to help deliver the Forest for Life Project. This is aiming to increase tree planting as a method of carbon off-setting.

Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)

- Declared a Climate Emergency at Council in June 2019 and committed to a target of making Northamptonshire 'carbon neutral' by 2030[9].

- Through efforts to reduce energy usage in its assets, has reduced emissions by 72% since 2008/09. This was achieved through a combination of actions including:
    - appointing an officer responsible for energy and carbon management and securing reductions in energy use;
    - consolidating the number of office buildings and improving their efficiency;
    - making capital investments in NCC owned buildings to improve energy efficiency (and reduce carbon emissions, saving an estimated 76,000 tonnes of co2 emissions);
    - upgrading street lighting throughout the county to reduce energy consumption and Co2 emissions.

- The Northamptonshire Climate Change Strategy 2020-23 was published in 2020[10] (and is the fourth version of the strategy developed since 2010). This sets out a framework for tackling the causes and effects of climate change in the county and is developed collectively by the Northamptonshire Climate Change Officers Group (NCCOG) which comprises officers from all local authorities, other public and voluntary sector bodies and business sector partners.

- The Strategy has three key objectives:

    - Raising awareness of the issues of climate change and its impact on Northamptonshire;
    - Reducing emissions of greenhouse gases across the County; and
    - Planning for and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

- The Strategy is implemented via annual Action Plans which collate the individual and collective actions of all partners to address the causes and effects of climate change in the County in order to achieve these objectives. For brevity, notable objectives and actions undertaken in respect of the Action Plan is provided overleaf.

[9] Further details are available in the *Climate Change, Carbon Management and the Environment–Progress Update Report* taken to Council on September 17th 2020 (Agenda Item 9h). This is available online at: https://cmis.northamptonshire.gov.uk/cmis5live/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/3788/Committee/398/Default.aspx

[10] The *Northamptonshire Climate Change Strategy 2020-23* is available online at: https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/environment-and-planning/climate-change/Pages/climate-change-strategy.aspx

Northamptonshire County Council: Climate Actions

Action area	Progress (at September 2020)
Emissions reduction across Northamptonshire	• 36.4% reduction in per capita emissions between 2005 and 2017 • 27.9% reduction in total emissions over the same period
Tree Planting	• 253,000 trees planted across the county over the past 11 years. • Delivered by NCC in partnership with the Woodland Trust. • Achieved via the provision of tree and hedgerow packs to community groups, schools, parish councils and landowners.
Greener Transport	• Established website to raise awareness of low carbon modes of travel and provide more information on these (e.g. cycling and Low Emission Vehicles (LEV's)): https://www.smartmovenorthamptonshire.net/ • Supporting LEV's through the *Smart Commuter Initiative* including promoting the role of e-bikes and LEV charging and as part of an *INNOVATE UK* sponsored project (VPACH) which will see the installation of on-street LEV charging points.
Management of Energy usage	• NCC has been working in partnership with a variety of government and non-government agencies supporting vulnerable individuals, schools and communities throughout the county to better manage their energy usage. Projects include: ○ The 'Northamptonshire Energy Saving Service' (NESS) This is a 3 year project (2018 – 2021) helping address fuel poverty across Northamptonshire. Over £1.2 million of funding was secured by NCC from National Grid's Warm Homes Fund. NESS is being delivered by Community Law Service in partnership with Citizens Advice Services Corby and Kettering, Care and Repair Northamptonshire, South Northants Volunteer Bureau and Northamptonshire County Council through Public Health. It builds upon previous similar schemes which have operated in the County over the past ten years. ○ Supporting schools with both energy procurement and statutory energy measures including the successful 'ZECOS' EU funded project which targeted schools to reduce their energy consumption and installed a number of biomass boilers in schools across the county. ○ National Energy Action, a national fuel poverty charity, have worked with organisations and local authorities through the Northants Warm Homes Partnership to develop a Northants Community Directory which provides details of all agencies offering energy efficiency, fuel debt and other related support for vulnerable householders.

Action area	Progress (at September 2020)
Adaptation to Climate Change	• NCC along with its partners has undertaken a number of specified actions to help adapt to the impacts of climate change and seek to reduce the risk from these e.g. increased flood risk, reduced air quality, increased temperatures etc. These include: ○ Creation of a **Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan** to manage and co-ordinate the response to local flood risk from surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater. The strategy incorporates local objectives to tackle the impacts of climate change; ○ Adoption of the **Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage in Northamptonshire**, which includes a requirement for all new developments to design surface water attenuation on site to accommodate the +20% climate change allowance, and undertake analysis to understand the flooding implication of the +40% climate change allowance; ○ through a DEFRA/ EA funded Pathfinder project, working with over **90 Northamptonshire communities most at risk** from flooding enabling them to become more resilient by offering a number of tools and the provision of the award winning Floodtoolkit.com website; ○ **Strategic Flood Risk Assessments** have been undertaken for all local authorities in Northamptonshire to help with planning decisions on locations for development. SFRAs are required to include an assessment of climate change. ○ A number of **flood alleviation schemes** in Northamptonshire have been implemented**,** which are required to be designed to include climate change allowances up to 40%; and ○ **Climate Change Risk Assessments** have been undertaken for ALL local authorities in Northamptonshire. These identify the potential implications for council services from a changing climate and highlights possible adaptations to be considered in future council practices, policies and decision-making.

FUTURE NORTHANTS

North Northamptonshire Climate Change Task and Finish Group
Briefing Paper – Environment and Procurement

The Future Northants Procurement lead has identified a series of approaches for considering driving environmental measures in the supply chain;

1) Do Nothing

2) Mandate an "Environmental Benefits and Risks" section in all cabinet/committee papers.

3) Mandate in the Procurement Tender and Quotation documents the Environmental Strategies of the council.

4) Mandate a clear set of environmental standards that must be stated in procurement documents and subject to pass fail criteria.

5) Mandate Quantitative Criteria in Tenders.

6) Mandate Qualitative Criteria in Tenders.

7) Negotiate Changes with Existing Providers

7) Rather than purely environmental adopt a Social Value Approach to all of these recommendations.

8) Contract Managers Measuring these Initiatives Beyond the Procurement.

For all of these we need to be mindful of the cost implications. For example, outcomes concerning the recycling industry is incredibly complex and money raised from selling paper, plastic and other items may not even cover the costs incurred, as the price for recycled commodities fluctuates wildly. The UK is expected to recycle 50% of all household waste, but government statistics show that 45.7% of household waste was recycled in 2017, up from 45.2% a year earlier. About half of councils recycle food waste (compared with virtually 100% for plastic), but doing so requires an anaerobic digestion plant and larger, or extra, trucks for doorstep collections.

We must also be mindful of the UK laws that govern procurement for equal and fair treatment of bidders and relevance to the bidder's solution when considering evaluation.

Recommendations

1. **Do Nothing.**

   The consequence of this is that other council outcomes will be prioritised instead and procurement can focus entirely on technical and legal compliance in achieving best value for money with no emphasis on environment initiatives. With government agendas and legislation on environmental issues likely to increase, and many council's declaring a climate emergency, this would be seen as a missed opportunity.

   It is also likely that future government and legislative progression will mean the council will have to retrospectively address environmental initiatives to meet such new legal requirements as and when they happen. So there is a risk to cost avoidance to consider here. Many other councils are investing in green initiatives now and working now to 2050 carbon neutral targets so to do nothing would notably buck the trend of other authorities in England.

2. **Mandate an "Environmental Benefits and Risks" section in all cabinet/committee papers.**

   This means at the council's Key Decision threshold (to be agreed in constitution) any paper sought for approval mandate a section in the report template asking how it will meet with the council's specific green initiatives and identify any risks. This will ensure any decisions have a focus on environmental consequences.

   This could go further by having an Environmental Officer approve this section to ensure they are satisfied any paper has adequately helped the environment in a way that is aligned to the council's priorities.

   This is important for the procurement process for a number of reasons. It gives Members the opportunity to ensure it shapes this priority and it ensures environmental initiatives are thought through at design pre-procurement stage and not as an afterthought to the process. Note this section should be separate to any procurement approval section to cabinet/committee papers which should focus on the compliance and best value of any cabinet/committee paper.

3. **Mandate in the Procurement Tender and Quotation documents the Environmental Strategies of the council.**

   Is the Council looking to move to more clean air by 20XX? Or encourage electric cars? Or set up a climate committee to review all solutions proposed to the Council? Whatever the stance, this should be included in the procurement and tender documents so it is clear to the bidders the type of council we are and where our priorities are. This is the easiest recommendation

but we will need to be aware that this will be in place should we change direction, update or remove the policy as this will be something our marketplace will read. As per the laws of public procurement any position needs to be relevant to the procurement so we should not simply share our policy. Rather we should state a clear summary of our priorities so bidders understand us as their customer.

4. **Mandate a clear set of environmental standards that must be stated in procurement documents and subject to pass fail criteria.**

   The spend threshold for imposing these standards needs to be agreed and should be in line with our proposed Financial Regulations thresholds (note: these have not been seen by the author). Drawbacks are we have to be careful not to alienate the market. Small businesses and low spend and one-off transactions might be discriminated from a high environmental standard imposed on bidders. Good to pilot this at a high threshold then gradually reduce. There is some risk with this in that lifecycle costing is difficult to assess so might not work on everything. So while this is an option, Procurement would suggest an environmental team exploring a possible bar to ascertain if it can be applied in every procurement at a certain threshold.

5. **Mandate Quantitative Criteria in Tenders.**

   Compile a shopping list of relevant green initiatives for the council which can be submitted to all procurements of a certain threshold. The more requirements on the list the provider can meet the more points can be scored in a procurement process. It is recommended to pilot this at a high tender threshold then gradually reduce. This will ensure more success by casting a wider net to bidders contracting with us. A piece of work is needed first to draw up and get agreement on all the environmental initiatives and weight importance in terms of their benefits to the Council. We need to ensure we are not disadvantaging small and medium businesses (hence the need for a threshold). Data asked for must be economically acceptable/viable for bidders to be able to produce and will have to explain the calculation in detail so anyone can apply.

   Procurement recommend starting with a high threshold then reviewing this later. The threshold should link to Council's Financial Regulations and a mandated % given to this Quantitative criterion.

6. **Mandate Qualitative Criteria in Tenders**

   Mandate a minimum percentage on all tenders over a certain spend threshold to include criteria on the environment. The questions can be flexible to the requirement but the % mandatory and must deliver environmental improvements. It could be anything prescribed in the Quantative Criteria and Procurement recommend 5 or 10%. This will mean 5 or 10% taken

from price for quality evaluation but it will signify importance. Procurement recommend an environmental team to agree a suite of technical questions that Procurement can keep in a library for officers to utilise in this process. Questions could be on energy content, consumption related questions and whole lifecycle.

This could be piloted at a high threshold then gradually reduce. For example, if Bidder 1 wins a tender over Bidder 2 who was £x000 cheaper and they won by 2% to which 10% was down to high scoring in environmental criteria we must accept this outcome as a win. This allows more flexibility than recommendation 3 and the proposed questions should match what is explained in principle in the cabinet/committee paper of recommendation 2. If adopting recommendation 5 then the 10% should include the quantitative list.

7. **Negotiate Changes with Existing Providers**

   This option entails drafting contract variations and negotiations to existing contracts to introduce measures for environmental benefits. Where the council has devised a policy in-house, extend policy out to its key suppliers through these changes. This will be the most expensive recommendation and while some bidders might already have the standards we seek or might want to change for the same agenda as us, many will want to charge for change. Procurement recommend not exploring this option now but perhaps review whether they wish to at a later time given the cost and time spent asking each service area to identify then negotiate changes in terms and specifications for x number of suppliers.

8. **Rather than purely environmental adopt a Social Value Approach to all of these recommendations.**

   Social Value is as important as the environment. The Social Value Act includes environmental measures and would be a missed opportunity to exclude social value from this recommendation paper. The Qualitative Criteria recommendation could be increased to 15-20% mandated because of the wider scope of benefits. This would negate a separate interest in requesting a focus on social and community benefits in procurement. For example, 10% mandated to Social Value in addition to 10% environmental criteria questions. Many councils in England have adopted a single Social Value approach adopting 15-20% mandatory criteria on social value.

   Expanding the scope slightly wider than environmental justifies the larger % because it covers health and wellbeing as well as environment and full lifecycle. This allows for use of local and sustainable exploration, apprenticeships and other initiatives which can also help support environmental goals. Central government are pushing Social Value centrally for January 2021 so this would keep in line with that agenda. There are also many toolkits and portals for Social

Value that can aid with this. Procurement recommend making environmental priorities wider under the banner of social value as a double win for the council.

9. Contract Managers Measuring these Initiatives Beyond the Procurement.

Consideration needs to be given to what happens after the procurement. If promises have been made and included in the procurement and committed in a contract, it is important that contract managers in the service area ensure these outcomes and benefits promised are met during the lifetime of the contract.

Public Consultation Responses

Highlighted Recommendations have been adopted as part of the climate change framework

The Council does not have the power to implement these ideas.

These proposals are likely to be examined by the Council as part of its emerging strategic priorities or include ideas which are already proposed as part of national policy.

Leadership and Vision

No.	Recommendation
1.1	Most importantly, climate change needs to remain a top priority agenda item for North Northants Council year after year after year, whilst simultaneously involving members of the community in order to facilitate a cleaner and healthier tomorrow for both current and future generations.
1.2	The council's climate champion must ensure the local authority leads by example. All council departments should have an environmental policy which must be followed. Everything you want the public to do such as: getting your home insulated, reduce energy use, renewable energy, walk and cycle more, electric cars, eating less meat and dairy etc. you must practice. The council must show real leadership on this matter, we cannot expect the public to change if you're not setting the right example.
1.3	Having a team dedicated to tackling climate change in the authority will show leadership and will achieve tangible benefits to the community: cleaner air, more green spaces and overall wellbeing.
1.4	The council should lead and support local green initiatives, such as tree-planting, plastic reduction, litter-picking etc.
1.5	Create a framework for all Council decisions, that puts carbon positive targets at the heart of a broader wellbeing framework.
1.6	Immediately undertake an audit of council activity to reveal current destructive actions that need to be stopped, carbon positive and wellbeing focused activities that need to be prioritised / accelerated and allocate resources accordingly.
1.7	Educate all council staff on climate and related topics, and the holistic nature of what is needed going forward.
1.8	Training officers and councillors about climate change and making all of them ambassadors for change

FUTURE NORTHANTS NORTH

1.9	Carbon tax - create a carbon tax that businesses can get back as they comply with regulations - those companies that are already eco and sustainable will already check the boxes and will get their money back. While many businesses are on hold because of COVID-19, this might be a good time to introduce this since it will give businesses a chance to come back with the right things in place.
1.10	Use the UN Sustainable Development Goals framework to guide all decision-making.
1.11	Create transparency about the county's progress in terms of recycling: numbers, percentages, on a dashboard.
1.12	Foster a culture of learning within the new council and for key contracted partners to ensure they keep up to date with latest research and good practice. Lead by example and create a workplace sustainable travel plan for local authority staff and visitors.
1.13	The compulsory training for new councillors from May onwards should also include carbon literacy training and environmental awareness training. Every councillor should be an ambassador and understand the importance of combating the climate emergency
1.14	Ensure that Climate Change is engrained into all levels of operation of the Council

Procurement

No.	Recommendation
2.1	Engage only with companies, products and services that do not have a negative impact on the environment or which support/invest in environmentally damaging activities or policies. Form partnerships/collaborations with companies that, themselves, have climate positive policies. This would encourage any companies who wish to deal with the council to improve their own attitudes to climate change.
2.2	Support and promote local social enterprise; these not-for-profits often have innovative solutions for sustainability and climate issues.
2.3	No new expenditure should be authorised on anything that uses fossil fuels when there are green alternative
2.4	Buy green energy
2.5	Prioritise/favour sustainable goods and services when buying them

Management of the Council's resources, fleet, Property and housing estate

No.	Recommendation
3.1	The council must ensure that all of their buildings, investment decisions and practices are environmentally friendly from efficient buildings to more plant-based meals. Leadership is the key to support the climate emergency.

3.2	The council should campaign for and support action locally to improve the existing housing stock, in particular regarding energy use and insulation.
3.3	All new council vehicles should be either electric or hybrid
3.4	There should be a strictly enforced policy for all heating systems in council owned or leased buildings to be changed to either solar or heat source systems
3.5	Promote retrofitting energy saving solutions for existing properties
3.6	All council vehicles should be replaced, when appropriate, by green energy variants. Insulation and installation of electrical generation in and on all new Council properties should be mandatory.
3.7	Phase out gas boilers in Council housing – use air source and ground source heating
3.8	Commitment to ensure that any NNC new buildings, or adaptations of existing NNC buildings takes on board the highest levels of sustainability. A requirement to carbon offset new build with compensatory investment with tree planting, and environment enhancements that provide the greatest level of visible community and landscape benefit

Planning, Infrastructure, and the Built Environment

No.	Recommendation
4.1	Insulation grants and loans for solar and insulation. Especially for less fortunate citizens
4.2	More charge points for electric vehicles
4.3	Start to ban vehicle sales over X CO_2 emissions. Dropping it down annually
4.4	Local wind generation schemes. Perhaps long term investments for local people. Ramping up value of grant with private money
4.5	Local Tree Planting schemes including community involvement and community drive
4.6	Create carbon-sink woodlands
4.7	I support suggestions for a village length footpath (Dingley). Living in a household where there are 2 infants and where there is no footpath along our stretch of the A427 we have to throw ourselves into the hedge when there is 2 way traffic on the road. We therefore rarely go into the village without using our car, as it is unsafe to do so. A footpath would reduce our carbon footprint
4.8	A cycle route to Market Harborough would also encourage villagers to leave their cars at home.
4.9	A community owned and managed renewable-energy facility would be a huge benefit to everyone involved. We have space and sufficient wind speeds in our village for wind turbines which would reduce the need for fossil fuels. There is no mains gas in our village anyway and, with LPG and oil being so polluting and electricity being so expensive, many resort to wood and coal fires to heat their homes.

4.10	a sustained, joined-up approach involving key stakeholders and policymakers is essential in order for local plans to feed into the National Planning Policy Framework for the benefit of all in turn.
4.11	Solar farms or help with personal solar energy to home owners.
4.12	Better recycling facilities to encourage more people to do so. This could include a refund on returning bottles etc like there used to be.
4.13	Ensure all new developments have good transport links with town centres, especially public transport, cycling and walking routes, by making that an obligation on developers.
4.14	Multi-modal transport systems should be developed, linking different forms of sustainable transport, particularly ensuring that local bus services call at local railway stations.
4.15	Ensure that Climate Change, green and sustainability issues are front and central to developing policy within the review of the Joint Core Strategy, using good practice developed locally and in other authorities.
4.16	Strengthen green infrastructure plans to ensure that all residents of North Northamptonshire have access by foot to green open space and natural woodland, protecting it from development, where necessary rethinking earlier plans in the light of Covid and the Climate Emergency. The Covid crisis has underlined the need for access to open spaces for recreation [walking, cycling, running], the need to preserve the tranquillity of our countryside - and how essential this is to reduce mental health difficulties. The Climate Emergency has emphasised the importance of reducing our carbon footprint by protecting our existing woodland and planting more.
4.17	Ensure that all towns in North Northamptonshire have local access to a Country Park, with facilities for recreation and education. The existing Country Parks should be protected and new ones developed close to towns, like Kettering, that lack one.
4.18	Ensure that effective prevention measures are in place to protect towns and villages from flooding by surface water and river water, in the light of recent events and the knowledge that these are likely to become more regular. Develop proactive and coordinated flood partnerships linking local authorities, including town and parish councils, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency, landowners and local communities – with a clear local focus on regular hotspots. Develop practical plans in vulnerable areas and properties that are understood by residents who should be aware who to turn to in emergency.
4.19	Encourage cycling and walking by making roads more cycle and pedestrian friendly. There should also be electric charging points to encourage the uptake of EVs.
4.20	Implement Bokashi food waste system.

4.21	Ensure that building regulations on flood-protection are scientifically verified and fiercely enforced. No streets into streams by developers' cost-cutting pressure
4.22	refill centre would be fantastic so communities can re fill their plastic containers and drastically reduce single use plastic, bike routes and bike projects to make cycling safe and popular, local food projects and well-being gardens linked to social prescribing. Growing spaces in all schools with healthy eating and cooking attached, community orchards and regular planting teams and litter picking.
4.23	Specialist recycling for electronic items such as batteries during normal waste collection days
4.24	A Village Community owned energy scheme to avoid using oil and gas ie: wind/solar/district heating
4.25	Walking and cycling should be prioritised when new housing developments are approved. The council should also make sure there are safe easy cycling and walking routes from all local villages to the nearest town. AIm to have every house within a twenty minute walk to essential shops in order to reduce car use.
4.26	Perhaps local renewable energy projects such as wind farms could have a financial reward/incentive for the communities where they are based.
4.27	All planning applications should clearly state how a green policy will be implicated
4.28	Roll out a green/live walls project
4.29	implement clean air zones where cars idle for long periods enforcing fines for those who pollute and lower air quality. Especially outside schools.
4.30	Educate all council staff on climate and related topics, and the holistic nature of what is needed going forward.
4.31	Install a terra cycle point in the local area
4.32	We should use our existing verges and parks to create areas of invertebrate and wildflower rich habitat, to encourage pollinators and to support populations of insectivores.
4.33	ban the use of dog poo bags which are not biodegradable
4.34	The council must incentivise climate change activities in some way. Making it pay for people to be more green. E.g. vouchers for returning recyclable goods, penny payments for recycling bottles etc etc.
4.35	Invest in more environmentally-friendly transportation methods. For example, purchase EVs for council use, electric buses, establish a wider-reaching scooter loan system, new roads and improvements to existing roads to be designed with biker/scooter lanes, more EV charging points throughout the county (especially located within residential areas near flats and terraced houses where access to charging points may be limited). Invest in green energy providers – energy comes from renewable sources
4.36	Reduce rat-running through residential areas by putting in more street filters (which could also be mini community gardens).
4.37	Invest in segregated 'mobility lanes' for cycling and scooting for key arterial links into the towns
4.38	Reforestation and the protection of current forests and woods in North Northamptonshire
4.39	Plan pro forestation
4.40	Underground bins, particularly in villages, to avoid overflowing bins spilling litter in the countryside and to reduce the number of trips required to empty them.

4.41	Develop and publish an annual Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS).
4.42	Improve wildlife wetlands and local habitats – Develop a greater wildlife map to understand how species integrate with the built environment and educate builders to include shelters and nesting places within new construction.
4.43	Create a strategy to help fund the improvement of homes where air leakage is allowing heat to escape (detrimental to energy use, co2 emission and cost) Assistance for testing air leakage and funding improvements

Education, skills and Economic Development

No.	Recommendation
5.1	Localised Education on Green Issues
5.2	Sustained efforts to educate North Northants general public on, eg., exactly what climate change entails, why it is urgent/important and what each person can do to effect change would indeed be a good start.
5.3	Promotion of plant based diet including exhibitions and teaching sessions re creating a plant based meal.
5.4	Funding for community gardens / allotments.
5.5	Funding for social enterprises such as refill shops
5.6	Funding for Community Garden Sheds.
5.7	Climate outreach programmes to help educate North Northants on the Climate Emergency. For example: Climate Zines or after school clubs.
5.8	A go green grant for clubs and groups to bring on new ideas - especially schools.
5.9	The council should embark on an educational programme - not just in schools, but via posters and other media locally, emphasising positive gains, and the things people can do as individuals.
5.10	Promote jobs in renewable energy, and encourage local firms to reduce their environmental impact, mainly, using encouragement, but, if necessary, fines and other punitive measures.
5.11	All new taxi licences should be dependent on the vehicle being electric
5.12	All bus companies should be strongly encouraged to reduce the size of their vehicles and to actively pursue a policy of changing to green vehicles
5.13	Undertake a massive, ongoing programme of education across the council region, to give yourselves permission to act boldly and urgently. Engage with local media (radio, newspapers) and use every council owned billboard space to create a sense of urgency about climate action and develop the narrative that lets people know that you know climate and social justice are inextricably linked. Get people talking, thinking and engaging.
5.14	The council should encourage residents to use compost bins, water butts etc by having a noticeable discount. For instance Wellingborough does not collect food waste, but it is cheaper to buy Bokashi bins from Amazon than via the council link.

5.15	The council should be encouraging local businesses to move into empty shops in our town centres, with financial incentives for those which are zero waste, recycling and up-cycling, selling locally produced food with low food-miles etc. We see enterprising individuals trading at Farmers Markets, Vegan markets, online etc., and in the past these people would have been populating our High Streets and making them individual to their area.
5.16	Creating green jobs - we need more vertical farms in the area (start by supporting existing sites, and stipulate how they are to expand), clean energy and training fr clean energy jobs (make this accessible and exciting), biofuel and clean fuel development, solar farms, wind farms, administrative jobs such as those who need to create green specifications for building new houses & marketing execs solely focused on this as a campaign
5.17	Make climate change education jobs available whose responsibility it is to ensure that schools are delivering climate change education. Make schools more eco-friendly environments – schools and pupils can take ownership of this through projects like Green Schools Project and Eco-Schools. Make climate change education an essential part of the curriculum for all ages.
5.18	Support schools to promote and enable sustainable, active travel for their school community.
5.19	Employ someone to go into schools and run an environment club that gives children a space to learn roll out and motivate others in environment best practice. Create an award that encourages children to take on projects to save the world.. they could have different badges to achieve ie, clean community badge, water saving badge, encouraging others badge, eating sustainably badge etc and each badge they work towards by learning about it and taking on a mini project which will involve their families and parents and the community so teach them about it aswell. It could become as big as the d of E award and then once they have all the badges they can meet one of the royals that advocates to stop climate change.
5.20	Give schools volunteering opportunities for children, mass litter picks. Develop competition between schools or community groups who can collect the most litter in a time period from community sites. A litter league of sorts
5.21	attach climate/environmental targets to local businesses and if these targets are achieved, there is a financial reward. For example, if businesses commit to certain recycling practices and inspections or an emissions reduction plan, they can receive a rent reduction or something similar. This way, businesses may have more reason to take their recycling, emissions etc and it encourages a bit more ownership.

5.22	Sanction bad practise. Make this region a single-use-free region, under penalty, and use any penalties to help fund the campaign. Force supermarkets to join this. Give businesses a switchover deadline for renewable energy. Pressure the government to implement high tariffs on imports that do not meet adequate environmental standards. Penalise businesses that operate in environmentally damaging practices
5.23	Have a North Northamptonshire Eco Certification scheme
5.24	Engage young people in planting. In street art about the environment. In campaigns to raise awareness. Young people are desperate to play a role and to make a contribution in this respect.
5.25	Encourage refilling by facilitating one refilling shop in each town to allow economies of scale. It will make the products cheaper and make refilling more attractive.
5.26	Reinforce and develop countryside parks as centres of environmental learning
5.27	Run courses to teach the name of trees, birds, weeds, the difference between native and invasive species. The Council can sponsor climate emergency studies at the Bedford college group and engage the graduates to work with youth groups and schools.
5.28	NN Council should have a hotline for businesses and one for residents to answer questions about recycling or environmental issues. A dedicated officer should be full-time engaged in environmental campaigns and measuring the SMART goals.
5.29	Incentivise green industry, and disincentivise/punish dirty industry so that children and students look to jobs that are benefitting rather than exploiting the area.
5.30	Integrate leisure with green education programmes

Health, social care and vulnerable communities

No.	Recommendation
6.1	We can minimise the effects climate change will have on our social and health systems by spending money on initiatives to prevent people getting ill and maintain healthy and active lives. A way to achieve this is by funding G.Ps on to practice lifestyle medicine which focuses on things like: diet, exercise, alcohol/drugs, smoking, sleep, stress management and managing healthy relationships. Another measure is to ensure houses are resilient enough to cope with extreme cold weather in winter and heatwaves in summers.
6.2	Spending should be made on infra-structure such as cycle paths, which are known to provide a much better return on investment than roads. The return is not just straight forwardly financial, but also in improved health, lower pollution, and thus less pressure on health services.
6.3	Prioritise cycling & create cycling incentives with businesses in town (with council support for contacts and promotion, this could be community lead)

6.4	Vulnerability surveys should be conducted to determine where action needs to be focused
6.5	Clean air: Make sure air quality figures are properly monitored and readily available.
6.6	Clean water: water reduction initiatives
6.7	Develop scheme of healthy assistants who can help facilitate and encourage mental and physical wellbeing, particularly important for a number of elderly residents, or those who currently do not have the motivation to seek a healthier lifestyle. A health assistant network could be used to compliment the health care provision and rehabilitation essential for wellbeing.
6.8	Develop an air quality strategy that prevents homes from being placed in the most polluted corridors near major trunk roads, or within congested built up areas.

Partnership and actors

No.	Recommendation
7.1	Promote natural flood management through Parish/Town Councils, encourage recruitment of voluntary tree river and flood wardens.
7.2	North Northamptonshire should seek to work with the UK Green Building Council to explore ways in line with Government advice to set higher energy requirements than those laid down in Building Regulations: all newbuild properties should be subject to a sustainability assessment as a material planning consideration.
7.3	A green charter that organisations and individuals can sign up to or an app that we can use.
7.4	Connect with and support community groups that are already active in these areas. You can propagate positive action fast if resources flow to the right places.
7.5	Consider/Set up a citizen's assembly as a central part of council governance (not as an optional, advisory group)
7.6	Implement simple things such as Terracycle in schools - they earn money from the scheme and the council could create a competition for the most types of plastic recycled, the most weight recycled, the most participants involved etc. Gamify whatever we can! Make things fun! Eg. More school allotments.
7.7	Establish community events and hubs which focus on environmental issues. For example, council-led litter pick events, community educational events (such as a Climate Change Fair). Events similar to the type of events that Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth run but established by the council. I believe this will make people feel that their council cares about climate change and wants to take ownership of this issue rather than leaving it up to non-profit organisations and charities.
7.8	Build strong relationships with the police so climate and road death reduction can be addressed together enabling safer walking and cycling and reduced cycle theft.
7.9	Build strong, trusting relationships between council officers and local interest groups and recognise these partnerships are essential.

7.10	Community Composting Scheme
7.11	climate showcase in the town centre may be nice which would well sustainable goods, advertise environmentally friendly waste practices and vegan foods etc
7.12	Promote the fact that there is a climate emergency at the local level (not just on an intangible global level).
7.13	Work closely with probation services and adult services to create green hubs with team leadership that can provide places where the community can collectively enhance the environment and rural landscape.
7.14	Develop a greener schools commute strategy to deter car journeys by parents, and to encourage greener behaviour.
7.15	A community action plan developed in partnership with local enterprise and community groups. Award a community plaque, or excellence award to companies or groups that deliver projects that help to improve the quality of life in NNC.