



Committee Name: Scrutiny

Committee Date: 21/10/2021

Report Title: Review of the environmental strategy following Covid-19

Portfolio: Councillor Hampton, Cabinet member for climate change and digital inclusion

Report from: Executive director of community services

Wards: All Wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose

This report provides the Scrutiny Committee with a brief overview of the council's work to further develop its Environmental Strategy, to inform the committee's review of that strategy following Covid-19.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the committee notes the council's current plans and provides views and suggestions.

Policy Framework

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets the great neighbourhoods, housing and environment corporate priority.

This report addresses the following strategic actions in the Corporate Plan:

- Maintain a clean and sustainable city with a good local environment that people value
- Ensure our services mitigate against any adverse effects of climate change and are efficient to reduce carbon emissions
- Improve the quality and safety of private sector housing
- Continue sensitive regeneration of the city that retains its unique character and meets local needs

This report helps to meet the climate change and green economy objective of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.

The Environmental Strategy – work to date

1. The Environmental Strategy (2020-2025) was published in 2020 and sets out the council's approach to reducing its own carbon emissions; supporting residents, businesses and organisations in Norwich to reduce their emissions; and helping the city adapt to the predicted changes in climate by adaption or increasing resilience.
2. Since publication, the strategy and action plan, with input from stakeholders, has been reviewed to include reference to opportunities emerging from the Covid-19 crisis and articulate environmental objectives during the recovery phase. However, the environmental landscape continues to change at pace, along with the impacts of Covid-19. This, together with the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, the upcoming COP26, a new Norwich Climate Commission and the future Environment Act, requires us to regularly reflect and review our approach to tackling the climate and environmental emergency.

The Environmental Strategy – further work this year

3. Therefore, the council is undertaking a comprehensive assessment, across all service areas, of our response to the climate and environmental emergency and the wider sustainability agenda. The intention is to identify actions already taken, where further action is required, to consider the costs and benefits of new proposals, and develop a clear plan for future work across this agenda which sets out the council's climate change and sustainability commitment. As part of this work it will be necessary to review where the council's environmental resources are focused, including to ensure effective support for the Norwich Climate Commission.
4. This work is being undertaken in three stages:
 - Stage 1 - Identification of actions already taken - July to September 2021
 - Stage 2 – Identification of new opportunities, gaps and risks – to include a review of the Environmental Strategy Action Plan – September 2021 to February 2022
 - Stage 3 – Options assessment and development of a forward plan – January 2022 to March 2022 (final date to be confirmed depending on volume of options presented).
5. The first phase of work, identifying actions already taken, is complete, and detail on how we are creating low-carbon and climate-resilient communities, as well as facilitating and encouraging coordinated action on sustainability is included in the [Appendix A of the climate and environment update report to Cabinet](#), for the meeting of 13th October 2021.
6. Alongside the analysis described in paragraph 4, detailed work is ongoing on key priority areas, including updating our Carbon Management Plan, developing a biodiversity Strategy, developing Climate and environment update plans for improved energy efficiency and carbon reduction of our own council homes, and partnership working via the City Vision to deliver a Sustainable

City. More detailed reports on these will be presented to Cabinet over the coming months.

The input of the Scrutiny Committee

7. We expect recommendations from the work described in paragraph 4 to be made to Cabinet in spring 2022; Scrutiny Committee recommendations to Cabinet before then would enable them to be fully considered as the council takes this work forward.

Consultation

8. Not applicable.

Implications

Financial and Resources

9. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the Council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2019-22 and Budget.
10. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources. Resource implications of specific actions recommended through the analysis being described in paragraph 4, above, will be considered in decisions around those actions.

Legal

11. There are no legal implications.

Statutory Considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	This report looks at what has already happened and therefore does not have any direct equalities implications. However, any future work we carry out could have equalities implications and equality impact assessments will be carried out as and when proposed changes are considered.
Health, Social and Economic Impact	There are a number of positive health, social and economic impacts as detailed throughout the report and appendix linked at paragraph 5 Any future work we carry out is likely to have health, social and economic implications and relevant impact assessments will be carried out as and when proposed changes are considered.
Crime and Disorder	The report and appendix linked at paragraph 5 do not highlight any implications in regard to crime and disorder.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Children and Adults Safeguarding	The report and appendix linked at paragraph 5 do not highlight any implications in regard to children and safeguarding adults.
Environmental Impact	There are positive impacts associated with a number of projects as detailed throughout the report and appendix linked at paragraph 5.

Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Operational, financial, compliance, security, legal, political or reputational risks to the council	These risks are considered on a project specific basis.	
Environmental risk	In order to update the council's risk register in regard to environmental risk, an analysis has been completed which identifies the new predictions of climate and environmental impacts on the council and the city.	

Other Options Considered

12. Not applicable.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

13. To note and comment on the Council's plans in this area.

Background papers:

[Norwich Environmental Strategy](#)

[Climate and environment update report to Cabinet, 13th October 2021](#)

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