

## LEISURE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE - 7 OCTOBER 2020

### PART I - DELEGATED

#### 8. CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY DRAFT STRATEGY (CED)

##### 1 Summary

- 1.1 Three Rivers District Council heard the climate change motion on Tuesday 21 May 2019 at Council, which was put forward by Cllr Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Alex Michaels.
- 1.2 The motion asked for the details of the strategy and action plan to be brought for consideration by the Council. It requested the Council to work with partners in the public and private sectors and engage with residents and businesses to gain their input and support when developing the strategy.
- 1.3 The motion commits the Council to use all practical means to reduce the impact of council services on the environment and use planning regulations and the Local Plan to cut carbon emissions. It also calls for help from the Government to provide the support and resources needed to progress the action plan.
- 1.4 This report presents a new draft Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy, attached at Appendix A, including new organisational ambitions in relation to climate change, achievements so far, partnership working and how we can enable individuals and businesses to change behaviours that have a positive impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.5 This report also outlines the process for community engagement and consultation needed to take the Strategy forward.

##### 2 Details

- 2.1 Local Authorities play an important role in delivering national and international carbon targets and adaptations to meet such targets. They can drive and influence emissions reductions and improved resilience in their areas through the services they deliver, their role as community leaders and major employers and their regulatory and strategic functions. For districts councils this can include more energy efficient buildings and assets; changes to vehicle fleet and travel arrangements; changes to procurement and contract management; embracing reduce/reuse/recycling; improved flood protection; planning; regeneration; community development and educating and enabling our communities to be more aware.
- 2.2 Three Rivers District Council has been delivering a number of projects which contribute to tackling climate change. A review of our achievements were highlighted in the Council report February 2020, attached at Appendix B.
- 2.3 The new draft Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy, attached at Appendix A, has been produced following a review of the previous Strategy and takes account of the current climate emergency, why we need to act now, as well as links to a county wide work across Hertfordshire. Using this research and considering the achievements to date the scope of what could be included in the new strategy and options for Council to consider have been outlined below.

##### 3 Summary of new key themes

### 3.1 The new Strategy aims to:

- Define the action the Council can take to achieve net-zero carbon emissions for its own emissions by 2030 and for the entire district by no later than 2050.
- Define the actions and measures the Council can take to influence others both directly and indirectly to mitigate the negative impacts their activities have on climate change.
- Define the actions and measures the Council can take to offset emissions that are unavoidable.
- Define the actions and measures the Council can take to build climate resilience
- Define the actions and measures the Council can take to further incorporate the principles of sustainability and circular economy into its operations

### 3.2 Three Rivers District Council through this Strategy are committing to a step change in how we tackle climate change and sustainability with the following principles being embedded in the Strategy:

- Enabling and engaging the community
- Minimise carbon dioxide emissions
  - Alternative sources of energy
  - Sustainable design and construction
  - Reduce emissions from existing buildings
- Enhance and protect biodiversity
- Reduce water consumption and pollution
- Climate resilience and flooding
- Reduce waste and promote circular economy
- Increase sustainable travel and improve air quality

### 3.3 The Council is also a member of the new Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership which is working together to deliver joint initiatives across the county in line with local strategies and work towards becoming carbon neutral.

### 3.4 Carbon neutrality is a term used to describe the action organisations, businesses and individuals take to remove as much carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as each put in to it. The overall goal of carbon neutrality is to achieve a zero carbon footprint.

### 3.5 Three Rivers District's, the Council and the area, own emissions are currently being investigated through a technical assessment in order to create a baseline and set target milestones which will be included in the Action Plan to support the overarching Strategy. The Action Plan will be reviewed annually to reflect the advancement in technology and to keep them in line with the national targets and policies.

## 4 Consultation

### 4.1 Consultation on the Strategy/Action Plan will include discussion and workshops at local partnership meetings such as the Environmental Forum, the Local Strategic Partnership and the Youth Council. The Environmental Forum meets regularly to discuss local issues and champion new initiatives. This will also be an important group to utilise to support the development of a new Strategy and subsequent actions.

- 4.2 An online survey for local residents, partners and businesses promoted via the website, social media, schools, partnerships, email contacts and councillors will be used.
- 4.3 Community engagement and consultation with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors, will take place to gain their input, support and commitment to the developing Strategy.

## **5 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 At the time of declaring a Climate Emergency, the Council committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. This is clarified as being for its own emissions, which is a similar obligation made by neighbouring councils such as Dacorum, Watford and Welwyn/Hatfield. This Strategy and Action Plan will:
- Enable the Council to reduce its own operational emissions leading up to net-zero emissions by 2030 and assist the District to achieve net-zero by 2050, with key milestones along the way.
  - Enable the Council to offset its own operational emissions that are unavoidable.
  - Further the implementation of sustainability, moving from a take-make-waste economy to a circular one both in the operations of the Council and through encouragement across the district.
  - Enable the Council to influence the land use and operational impact of residents, businesses and organisations to reduce and offset their own emissions;
  - Help build resilience against impacts of climate change on the Council;
  - Promote zero carbon and sustainable development of the Council; and
  - Improve well-being and quality of life of the residents of the Three Rivers.
- 5.2 As a consequence of the Environmental Bill five environmental principles will be placed into law for the first time. The government is creating the Office for Environment Protection (OEP), which as well as assessing levels of environmental impact, will be able to hold the government to account on achieving targets set. Residents will be able to complain to the OEP if they think their council has broken environmental laws.
- 5.3 Central Government has committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions no later than 2050. A delay in acting on reducing emissions will require more radical interventions in the future, at a greater cost and with greater impacts on the residents of Three Rivers and society at large.
- 5.4 Public attitudes will have a huge impact in terms of the behaviour change required, and the need for significant lifestyle change. The Council can play a large role in enabling and facilitating this across the district through promotional campaigns and working with communities and businesses. It will be important that the community and partners are engaged in the process of developing the strategy to ensure we can jointly deliver its objectives and make lasting change.
- 5.5 So what are you recommending – i.e. that in support of the above and recognition of the evolving local and national political context then Members agree the draft Plan??

## **6 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

6.1 The new Corporate Framework 2020-2023 outlines “Sustainable Environment” as a key theme with the following priorities:

- We will produce and deliver a Climate Change Strategy and action plan
- We will continue to improve the energy efficiency of the Council’s buildings
- We will deliver and implement a Cycling and Walking Strategy
- We will seek to maintain our position as the highest recycling authority in Hertfordshire

6.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following current performance indicators, which are being reviewed in line with the new Corporate Framework.

|              |   |                                    |
|--------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>ESD10</b> | Home Energy Conservation Authority Report Actions   | Economic & Sustainable Development |
| <b>ESD11</b> | Greenhouse gas emissions reported as CO2 equivalent   | Economic & Sustainable Development |
| <b>EH01</b>  | Pollution Service Requests  | Environmental Health               |
| <b>EP01</b>  | Percentage household waste recycled   | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>EP03</b>  | The kg of household waste collected per head per annum  | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>EP04</b>  | The Percentage change in Kg per head from the previous year   | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>EP06</b>  | Tonnes of residual waste  | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>EP08</b>  | Cost of Waste collection per household  | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>EP09</b>  | Residual household waste per household  | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>EP10</b>  | Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting  | Environmental Protection           |
| <b>CP02</b>  | Satisfaction with parks and open spaces   | Community Partnerships             |
| <b>CP03</b>  | Satisfaction with refuse collection   | Community Partnerships             |
| <b>CP04</b>  | Satisfaction with doorstep recycling  | Community Partnerships             |
| <b>CP17</b>  | Reduce fly tipping across the District  | Community Partnerships             |
| <b>LL32</b>  | To manage TRDC woodland estate to an assured standard (Year 1 to achieve UKFS Management Plans for woodland estate) | Leisure and Landscape              |
| <b>LL34</b>  | To maintain accreditation for Green Flag (annual)   | Leisure and Landscape              |

|             |  |                       |
|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| <b>LL35</b> | To ensure all of our key open spaces have a current management plan in place | Leisure and Landscape |
|-------------|--|-----------------------|

6.3 The impact of the recommendations on this/these performance indicator(s) is:

Some performance indicators may change as a result of the new Strategy. We will also look at introducing new performance indicators to ensure the Strategy and Action Plan are monitored accordingly.

## **7 Community Safety Implications**

7.1 None specific.

## **8 Financial Implications**

8.1 The costs of delivering the revised Strategy and Action Plan will be calculated by the Climate Change Officer to feed into the considerations of the action plan. Any additional budget required to enable the Council to achieve the targets that it has committed to, will need to be approved in the usual way either through the Policy and Resources or through the Strategic, Service and Financial Planning process.

## **9 Legal Implications**

9.1 The Council is required to display the DEC (Display Energy Certificates) ratings of its building in a visible prominent place.

9.2 All elements of the Strategy will need to be considered alongside the Council's legal duties and powers.

## **10 Equal Opportunities Implications**

10.1 Relevance Test

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?<br>However an ERT was completed for the original sustainability strategy – and this will be reviewed as the new strategy is developed. | No |
| Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?  | No |

## **11 Staffing Implications**

11.1 None specific.

## **12 Environmental Implications**

12.1 The development of this Strategy sets out to improve the environment. This includes the Council's direct impact through our operations, indirect impact through our powers to influence local activity or by using our influence to encourage local residents and businesses to reduce their impact on the environment.

### 13 Public Health implications

- 13.1 The strategy considers priorities to promote improvements in Home Energy Efficiency and the Herts Warmer Homes project which promote positive health and wellbeing as well as energy reduction outcomes.

### 14 Customer Services Centre Implications

- 14.1 None specific.

### 15 Communications and Website Implications

- 15.1 The development of a new Strategy will involve promotion and consultation including use of the website as well as for individual projects in the future.

### 16 Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

- 16.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at Three Rivers District Council Risk Management Strategy. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

- 16.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Community Partnerships, Environmental Protection, Regulatory Services, Property Services, Economic and Sustainable Development, and Leisure service plans. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within these plans.

| <b>Nature of Risk</b>  | <b>Consequence</b>   | <b>Suggested Control Measures</b>                                     | <b>Response</b><br><i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i> | <b>Risk Rating</b><br><i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i> |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| The Council fails to develop and update its Strategy and Action Plan on climate change and sustainability. | The Council will fail to deliver improvements to address climate change within the District. | For the Committee to approve the strategy to go out for consultation. | Tolerate   | 4   |

- 16.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

|                   |            |             |                  |                  |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Likelihood</b> | <b>Low</b> | <b>High</b> | <b>Very High</b> | <b>Very High</b> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|

|  |                                   |               |               |                  |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
|  | <b>4</b>                          | <b>8</b>      | <b>12</b>     | <b>16</b>        |
|  | <b>Low</b>                        | <b>Medium</b> | <b>High</b>   | <b>Very High</b> |
|  | <b>3</b>                          | <b>6</b>      | <b>9</b>      | <b>12</b>        |
|  | <b>Low</b>                        | <b>Low</b>    | <b>Medium</b> | <b>High</b>      |
|  | <b>2</b>                          | <b>4</b>      | <b>6</b>      | <b>8</b>         |
|  | <b>Low</b>                        | <b>Low</b>    | <b>Low</b>    | <b>Low</b>       |
|  | <b>1</b>                          | <b>2</b>      | <b>3</b>      | <b>4</b>         |
|  | <b>Impact</b>                     |               |               |                  |
|  | <b>Low -----&gt; Unacceptable</b> |               |               |                  |

**Impact Score**

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

2 (Significant)

1 (Marginal)

**Likelihood Score**

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Remote (≤5%))

16.4 In the officers' opinion, the new risk above, were it to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and is therefore a strategic risk. The management of strategic risks are reviewed by the Policy and Resources Committee.

| Description of the risk   | Service Plan  |
|---|---|
| The Council fails to develop and update its Strategy and Action Plan on Climate Change and Sustainability | Community Partnerships,<br>Environmental Protection,<br>Regulatory Services,<br>Property Services,<br>Economic and Sustainable Development,<br>Leisure and Landscapes |

Progress against the treatment plans for strategic risks is reported to the Policy and Resources Committee quarterly. The effectiveness of all treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

**17 Recommendations**

17.1 For the Leisure, Environment and Community Committee to

- 17.2 i) approve the proposed draft strategy prior to consultation.
- 17.3 ii) To agree for officers to consult on the new draft Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy through local partnership meetings, forums and an online survey with full details to be delegated to the Chief Executive/Head of Service and agreed in consultation with the Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability.

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Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change Strategy Officer

### **Data Quality**

Data sources:

Service and Officer Updates

Strategies and action plans by other authorities.

Data checked by:

Data rating:

|          |                   |   |
|----------|-------------------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Poor</b>       |   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Sufficient</b> | ✓ |
| <b>3</b> | <b>High</b>       |   |

### **Background Papers**

[Three Rivers District Council Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy March 2015](#)

### **APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A Climate Change and Sustainability Draft Strategy 2020

Appendix B Sustainability and Climate Change Research Report January 2020