



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 29 July 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 8
Subject	Climate Action for West Oxfordshire: Biannual Report
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change Email: david.harvey@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Ness Scott, Climate Change Manager Tel: 01993 861344; Email: vanessa.scott@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	<p>This paper presents to Full Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A biannual progress report on the Climate Action taken by West Oxfordshire District Council in response to the climate and ecological emergency. Reporting focuses on progress made during the first six months of a Climate Action work programme and framework, originally presented and agreed at Full Council on 22nd January 2020.• Further details of additional Climate Action being taken forward by the Council and already underway as part of an evolving work programme. Where these projects fall under the umbrella of the Council's forthcoming Carbon Action Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Biodiversity Plan, these interrelationships are described.• New Climate Action proposed for implementation in the short to medium-term, for approval.
Annex	Annex 1: West Oxfordshire's Climate Action Survey, June 2020 – What the numbers have told us.
Recommendation	<p>To note the contents of the biannual report on Climate Action for West Oxfordshire.</p> <p>To agree the recommendations for new Climate Action proposed in the short to medium-term.</p>
Corporate priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy2. Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents

	3. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Consultation has been carried out by the Climate Change Manager with key Officers and colleagues within West Oxfordshire District Council.

I. BACKGROUND

I.1. This paper presents to Full Council:

- A biannual progress report on the Climate Action taken by West Oxfordshire District Council in response to the climate and ecological emergency. Reporting focuses on progress made during the first six months of a Climate Action work programme and framework, originally presented and agreed at Full Council on 22nd January 2020.
- Further details of additional Climate Action being taken forward by the Council and already underway as part of an evolving work programme. Where these projects fall under the umbrella of the Council's forthcoming Carbon Action Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Biodiversity Plan, these interrelationships are described.
- New Climate Action proposed for implementation in the short to medium-term, for approval.

2. BIANNUAL REPORT ON COUNCIL MOTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CLIMATE ACTION.

Table 1: Biannual reporting on Council motions associated with climate action and pre-approved work programme.

Notice of Motion	Biannual Reporting Tracker
<p>2.1. Date of Full Council: 26th June 2019 NOTICE OF MOTION – CLIMATE CHANGE <i>“Climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges facing us today and the UK is taking a leading role in addressing this issue. Investing in green industries and decarbonising our economy we will leave the environment in a better state for the next generation. One of the ways in which this has been achieved is by phasing out coal power, leading to the longest time since the Industrial Revolution without using coal to generate electricity. This Council will recognise this achievement of a reduction in the use of fossil fuel, particularly in light of the Climate Emergency accepted by Parliament recently; commits to work towards the reduction of emissions for the benefit of both present and future generations thus fulfilling our Stewardship responsibility for the planet - handing it to subsequent generations in a better state than which it was left to us! To enable the Council to fulfil this aim, this Council adopts the following statements:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>West Oxfordshire District Council recognises the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change and therefore declares a</i> 	<p>A report setting out the framework for how the Council would consult on, plan and deliver a Climate Action work programme for West Oxfordshire was presented and agreed at Full Council on 22nd January 2020.</p> <p>All projects and actions that are not specifically referenced within the January 2020 report, but have evolved as projects being taken forward by the Council in response to the climate and ecological emergency, are introduced outside of this reporting tracker and discussed separately within Section 3.0 to ensure a full and complete commentary of the Council’s work in progress. Actions implemented in the first six months of the Council’s published work programme for Climate Action, are summarised here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Action web content was re-written as part of the Council’s launch of a new website: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/climate-action • Members of the cross-party Climate Action Working Group have participated in two meetings since January 2020: on 3rd March and 16th June. An interim report was also prepared for the Climate Action Working Group in place of a meeting that had been scheduled on 28th April, but was then cancelled. • Two further meetings have been confirmed. The first is scheduled for 11th August with agenda items to include an NEF presentation on the Cosy Homes Initiative: discussion on the Council’s Carbon Action Plan and the Garden Village Area Action Plan. A further meeting is scheduled for the 1st October with agenda items to include: a presentation from Melanie Dodd on the role of Natural Capital in our forthcoming Biodiversity Plan. • Councillor David Harvey and the Climate Change Manager have met with MP Robert Courts to discuss priorities for Climate Action in West Oxfordshire. MP Robert Courts asked to be kept informed of future visits to innovative net-zero carbon developments and wanted to be kept advised of progress being made. He also expressed the view that meetings between him, Cllr David Harvey and the Climate Change Manager should be held regularly.

Notice of Motion	Biannual Reporting Tracker
<p><i>climate and ecological emergency.</i></p> <p>2. <i>The Council is determined to be carbon neutral by 2030 and to encourage others in the District to follow its example.</i></p> <p>3. <i>The Council will form a panel of residents and create a cross party working group to report back to the Council by January 2020 to assist in the formulation of its Plans. In support of this, Council authorises the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, to take the necessary steps to implement the above.”</i></p>	<p>Single Use Plastics (SUPs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Statement of Principles declaring the Council’s commitment to reducing SUPs was published online in March 2020. A ‘12 Days, 12 Ways’ campaign followed during March to widely promote and communicate the different ways in which people living and working in West Oxfordshire can reduce their own use of SUPs. • The Council has taken action to reduce their own most prevalent source of SUPs and have switched their milk supply from plastic bottles to glass. Staff are also being consulted on whether they have an appetite to move to a more environmentally-sustainable, non-dairy milk alternative to cows’ milk. The internal communications on these changes are now live. <p>Carbon Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s carbon accounting methodology has been successfully peer-reviewed by an independent consultant, Aether Ltd. A report has been produced by Aether Ltd to inform the scope of Council emissions as the baseline for a Carbon Action Plan and strategy to achieve the Council’s target of carbon neutral by 2030. • The Council’s Carbon Account for 2019/2020, aligning with the recommendations of Aether’s peer review, was completed and then audited for quality assurance at the beginning of July. • One-to-one discussions have been carried out with Officers to inform the emerging Carbon Action Plan for the Council. This method of consultation replaced the Officer workshop originally planned for March which was cancelled as a result of Lockdown. • Timescales for delivering a Carbon Action Plan have been revised to take into account the impact of Covid-19 on the work programme. A Carbon Action Plan is now due to be presented at Full Council in October 2020. <p>Climate Change Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Climate Action Survey and Young Peoples’ Competition was launched in May and ran for a period of four weeks. • The results of the Council’s Climate Action Survey, and the data captured, are summarised in a leaflet, provided for reference here in Annex I. As supplement to this quantitative dataset, the Council has also captured, as part of the Survey, a wide range of

Notice of Motion	Biannual Reporting Tracker
	<p>ideas and priorities from the 446 people who took part. The results from this far-reaching consultation will now inform the Council's next steps and help to shape both Climate Change Strategy and Biodiversity Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written responses submitted as part of the Survey are currently being reviewed in more detail to inform Officer and Climate Action Working Group discussion. At this stage, there is clear support from the community for priorities aligning with themes on: energy & carbon reduction; biodiversity; green & active travel; water conservation; waste & recycling; development planning; communications and community engagement. • The Climate Action Survey has also provided a database of people who have registered their interest in Council events and news on Climate Action. This provides an opportunity to engage directly with a public-facing network in future and as the Council's strategy work unfolds. Our shift to more virtual means of communication is valid at present and quite possibly in the longer term. The breadth of our recent survey has demonstrated the effectiveness of these digital mechanisms. • Entries to the Council's Young People's Competition are currently being judged by members of the Climate Action Working Group. Our creative winners will be announced and publicised in due course. • A Climate Change Strategy is due to be presented at Full Council in January 2021.
<p>2.2. Date of Full Council: 22nd January 2020 NOTICE OF MOTION – TREE PLANTING RESOLVED: <i>That the Council agrees that inclusion of a request for additional tree planting be incorporated within a revitalised sustainability checklist.</i></p>	<p>Steps taken in development planning as a response to the climate and ecological emergency are discussed in Section 3.0.</p> <p>The work completed during the previous six months will go on to inform standards and key performance indicators as part of a revitalised Sustainability Checklist in Planning.</p> <p>This project is currently work in progress and will capture a requirement to increase tree planting. A longer-term objective would be for applicants to plan tree planting in new developments with reference to the results of an Oxfordshire Woodlands Mapping Project, discussed further in Section 2.4.</p>
<p>2.3. Date of Full Council: 22nd January 2020 NOTICE OF MOTION – LOCAL ELECTRICITY BILL RESOLVED: <i>That West Oxfordshire District</i></p>	<p>Following the notice of motion in January 2020, the Council's Climate Change Manager confirmed with Power for the People that the Council offered their support to the Local Electricity Bill. Councillor David Harvey met with MP Robert Courts to discuss the Bill and is awaiting correspondence from MP Robert Courts on how this is represented through the correct</p>

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<p><i>Council offers support to the Local Electricity Bill and writes to organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or info@powerforpeople.org.uk) expressing this support. In addition, in recognition of the fact that this bill failed in its passage through the last parliament, this Council agrees to write to our MP Robert Courts, in his capacity as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Environment, asking him to make every effort to revive this bill and bring it before the House of Commons during this parliamentary session.</i></p>	<p>Parliamentary Procedures. The Local Electricity Bill has been successfully introduced, following its presentation to government under the Ten Minute Rule yesterday (10 June). The Bill was originally supposed to go in front of Parliament in April, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was unopposed in Parliament, and introduced without a vote. Should it now pass into law, it will allow consumers to purchase energy from local groups, and not just nationally licensed utilities. As such, the new ‘Right to Local Supply’ for energy will allow communities to sell locally generated electricity directly to local households and businesses. The Bill was presented by its lead sponsor, Peter Aldous MP.</p>
<p>2.4. Date of Full Council: 22nd January 2020 NOTICE OF MOTION – CLIMATE ACTION BIODIVERSITY PLAN “The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors David Harvey and Norman MacRae, namely:- “This Council tasks the Climate Action Working Group to come forward with the Climate Action Biodiversity plan to be presented to full council in due course.” In proposing and seconding the motion, Councillors Harvey and MacRae both referred to the need for tree planting, but did not believe that a decision to aim to double the amount of coverage by 2045 would be the best way forward. Consideration by the Climate Change Working Group was considered to be</p>	<p>Since Full Council in January 2020, plans for a Council Biodiversity Plan have been added to the evolving Climate Action work programme. It is now proposed that a Biodiversity Plan is presented at Full Council in March 2021. Steps taken to progress biodiversity action have been taken forward in the meantime and as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The views and priorities of respondents to the Council’s aforementioned Climate Action Survey will be used to inform the Biodiversity Plan. <p>Actions taken as a Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wychwood Project’s community grant application to WODC was approved at Cabinet in March 2020 and approved core funding of £30k in 2020/2021 in support of their role in West Oxfordshire as a key delivery partner working closely with the Council to take forward biodiversity action in response to the climate and ecological emergency. £5k community revenue grant has also been approved as Council’s continued support in 2020/2021 to the Lower Windrush Valley Project; £2k awarded to Wild Oxfordshire; £10,300 to the Cotswolds AONB; and £4k to the Local Wildlife Sites Project. • The Council will build on its existing relationships with partners and other Councils from across the County to establish a Local Nature Partnership for Oxfordshire.

Notice of Motion	Biannual Reporting Tracker
<p><i>appropriate, as it was a forum which had the capacity to receive detailed advice and look into matters in depth.</i></p> <p><i>Councillor Coles was supportive of the motion, but was nonetheless disappointed because he had highlighted the need for an updated Biodiversity Plan some time previously, and the reaction to that had not been as quick as he felt it should have been.</i></p> <p><i>Councillor Graham proposed an amendment to replace “in due course” with “as a matter of urgency”, which was seconded by Councillor Chapple. Councillors Morris, Harvey and Mills spoke against the amendment prior to it being put to the vote, considering that it was clear to officers that this was regarded as important, and that its urgency was understood.</i></p> <p><i>On being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated.</i></p> <p><i>The motion was then put to the vote and was carried unanimously.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for biodiversity creation and ecologically-sensitive land management practices of Council-owned public open spaces and commons are being carefully reviewed to inform Council decision-making. • Phase I ecological surveys of these Council-owned sites are currently being carried out by the Wychwood project on behalf of the Council. • Land condition surveys are also being commissioned by the Council and due to begin imminently to confirm necessary works on any structures and hard landscaping. • Draft land management plans for Council-owned public open spaces and commons, incorporating all proposals for landscape and biodiversity enhancement, will be prepared for consideration towards the end of the current financial year. <p>As a District, Oxfordshire Woodlands Mapping Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2020, Cabinet confirmed the Council’s support as a funding partner in the Oxfordshire Woodlands Mapping Project, contributing to work being undertaken by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC). • The project was initially endorsed by Oxfordshire’s Lord Lieutenant Tim Stevenson. Whilst in its early stages, the project was driven by a desire to double tree cover across Oxfordshire, the partnership has evolved to include the support of the County, City and District Councils and will look at mapping woodland creation and tree-growing opportunities across the County as a first step. This mapping work will contribute to our local knowledge base and spatial data on woodlands and will be of value to not only tree-growing objectives within a development planning context but also action being taken by the Council to increase woodland under the umbrella of its own Biodiversity Plan.

3. CLIMATE ACTION UNDERWAY

Table 2: A summary of the climate action underway as part of an evolving work programme.

3.1 Planning All work being carried out to raise current standards in new development is a response to the climate and ecological emergency and contributes to a set of high-level objectives taking shape as part of the Council’s Climate Change Strategy.	
3.1.1.	The Council has a large influencing role in the development and implementation of strategic policy at County-level which will consider climate action as a central element of Oxfordshire’s plans for

	<p>growth.</p> <p>The Council is a partner of the OxLEP. Cllr James Mills is Chair of the Clean Growth sub-group which was formed to help delivery of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy and the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy: two documents that consider climate change, environment and sustainability as central to their strategic objectives.</p> <p>Cllr James Mills is also Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Sub-Group where priorities relating to climate change, sustainable transport, the natural environment, biodiversity, natural resource use and the circular economy, are all being discussed and considered within the context of the Plan.</p> <p>The need to review current design and sustainability standards within new developments of West Oxfordshire was identified early on as a priority by the Climate Action Working Group and has been a focus of climate action since.</p> <p>The following action has been taken by the Council in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbied Government to bring forward the implementation of a Future Homes Standard; • Assessed the viability of net-zero carbon as a standard for the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village; • Completed research into the viability of Underground Refuse Systems at the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village, a report consulted on with members of the Climate Action Working Group; • Applied the lessons learned from viability work on net-zero carbon to inform a Draft Affordable Housing SPD (Supplementary Planning Document); • Organised a Councillor site visit to Greencore Construction’s low-carbon development at Springfield Meadows, Southmoor; • Facilitated a Publica-wide presentation for planning officers on the Passiv-haus standard, provided by The Passivhaus Trust. <p>Next steps include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Completing a revised Sustainability Checklist for planning; and ii) Contributing to the Cotswold District Council-led developer toolkit which will guide applicants on how to achieve ultra-low energy, sustainable design.
<p>3.1.2 Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village, Area Action Plan (AAP)</p>	<p>Project LEO (Local Energy Oxfordshire) led the production of a draft Energy Plan for the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village and have facilitated a working group including Project</p>

	<p>LEO partners, the Council, local stakeholders and community interest groups. A standard of net-zero carbon development came through as a local ambition and vision from working group members: a standard the Council then went on to fully assess with the expertise of building energy modellers and deep-green engineering specialists.</p> <p>In February of 2020, the Council commissioned Elementa Consulting and consultant team to carry out a site-specific, viability assessment into net-zero carbon for the Garden Village. The lead consultant on this project for Elementa Consulting was Clara Bagenal George, a pioneer of LETI (London Energy Transformation Initiative) and contributor to their recently published, climate emergency design guidance. Elementa's zero-carbon viability assessment report is now included as an expert document informing climate action policies in the draft AAP: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/gardenvillage</p> <p>Climate Action is a leading and 'golden thread' within the draft AAP. Exemplary standards and key performance indicators requiring ultra-low energy building design and 100% on-site energy supply through renewables are included to ensure the highest standards are achieved.</p> <p>Biodiversity net gain, green infrastructure, water conservation, sustainable urban drainage, allotments and food growing, green and active travel, waste minimisation and circularity have all been given full consideration to ensure a new development is designed to be fit for the future, achieves exemplary design and is underpinned by high standards of environmental sustainability.</p>
<p>3.1.3 Draft Affordable Housing SPD (Supplementary Planning Document)</p>	<p>The Draft Affordable Housing SPD has been developed and will be published for consultation from 10th July to 21st August, 2020. It emphasises the importance of new, affordable housing developments in West Oxfordshire being designed to align with standards and key performance indicators of net-zero carbon.</p>
<p>3.2 Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure & Strategy All work being carried out to facilitate EV infrastructure and strategy across the District and County contributes to a set of high-level objectives taking shape as part of the Council's Climate Change Strategy.</p>	
<p>3.2.1 WODC direct procurement of Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) in Council-owned car parks</p>	<p>BP Chargemaster is working on behalf of the Council to develop a full costing for the installation of EVCP in, initially, two Council-owned car parks. Applications are currently in with the District Network Operator (DNO) to request costings associated with energy utility and infrastructure requirements for a power supply to the EVCP. With Covid-19 directly impacting the DNO response time to applications, only urgent applications are being prioritised. The application request to the DNO for Woolgate car park in Witney has been escalated to urgent in the first instance.</p>

<p>3.2.2 Innovate-UK funded, Oxfordshire Park and Charge Project</p>	<p>In April 2020, a report was prepared for Cabinet to set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership structure and project objectives for the Innovate-UK funded, Park and Charge Project which aims to increase EVCP capacity and infrastructure in Council-owned car parks across Oxfordshire; and • Proposals for a collaborative approach with partners of the Park and Charge Project as the route to delivering Phase 2 of this Council’s EVCP project. <p>The report was received positively and endorsed by Cabinet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council lead on the Park and Charge Project is the Climate Change Manager and represents the Council at Oxfordshire-wide, working group meetings. • A WODC Project Team of key Officers including Group Manager - Commissioning, Group Manager - Business Support Services, Climate Change Manager, Parking Strategy Manager and Legal Officer has been established to co-ordinate on the project internally. • The iHub Innovation Team at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is the strategic partner for the Park and Charge Project. To mark the Councils’ partnership agreement, WODC and OCC recently signed a Financial Agreement. • The iHub Innovation Team at OCC are now appointing an entirely Innovate-UK funded, Co-ordinator within their team centrally to co-ordinate the Park and Charge installation programme in West Oxfordshire. • A Park and Charge project communications group, has also been established to oversee and co-ordinate on joint communications for the project. WODC’s Communications Officer is participant in this group. <p>Next steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Park and Charge Co-ordinator, by OCC on behalf of WODC. • WODC Project Team meeting with SSE to discuss car park survey and viability assessments.
<p>3.2.3 Oxfordshire EV Infrastructure Strategy</p>	<p>An Oxfordshire-wide EV Strategy is being developed to set a consistent design and technical standard for EV infrastructure across the County. This strategy is being co-ordinated by the iHub Innovation Team at OCC, with partnership involvement and representation from all District Councils.</p> <p>Councillor David Harvey is lead for WODC on the Members Group; the Group Manager – Commissioning and/or the Climate Change Manager represents WODC on the Project Board,</p>

	and the Climate Change Manager/Planning Officers/Parking Strategy Manager represent WODC on the Working Group, dependent on agenda items.
3.3 Energy and Carbon Reduction All work being carried out to facilitate district-wide, energy-efficiency retrofit contributes to a set of high-level objectives taking shape as part of the Council's Climate Change Strategy.	
3.3.1 Better Housing Better Health (BHBH), delivered by the National Energy Foundation (NEF)	<p>The Nation Energy Foundation (NEF) continues to work on behalf of the Council to deliver the BHBH service and a renewal for 2020/2021 has been confirmed.</p> <p>A BHBH Annual Report produced by NEF for 2019/2020 has been received and circulated to members of the Climate Action Working Group. NEF have also recently secured two-year funding of £120k from the Redress Fund to further support their work across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, growing their capacity to deliver the BHBH in both counties and adding further value to recipients of NEF advice in West Oxfordshire.</p> <p>A further complementary project - focusing on energy-efficiency retrofit and tackling fuel poverty - is presented in Section 4.0.</p>
3.4 Covid-19 Recovery Climate Action is a theme within the Council's Recovery Plans. Projects taking shape as part of a Recovery Plan will complement and interlink with the Council Plan and Council's forthcoming Carbon Action Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Biodiversity Plan. It is anticipated that some projects falling under the scope of these strategies will be prioritised as part of the Council's recovery work.	
3.4.1.	<p>The national and local response to the Covid-19 crisis has emphasised the value that local communities place on our natural environment and on the issue of climate change.</p> <p>Natural green spaces and access to nature have provided many with a source of refuge and outdoor relaxation during lockdown, while improvements in local air quality as a result of a reduction in transport emissions have been welcomed not only for their immediate environmental benefit but as an important factor in people's longer-term health and wellbeing.</p> <p>For those able to work from home, there has been a national shift to home working and we have seen transport emissions drop dramatically as a result. Some experts have attributed clearer skies during lockdown to a reduction in air pollution, which then saw UK solar energy breaking the all-time peak generation record. National fossil-fuel consumption also fell during these months as a consequence of solar energy generation levels with news of Great Britain hitting coal-free electricity records making the headlines. The role of clean energy is now well documented as an industry key to our green recovery and economic growth moving forward.</p>

	<p>With lockdown easing, businesses are opening and people travelling to work once more. Many people are returning to their vehicles, some choosing this mode as a safer alternative to public transport. Emissions are on the rise.</p> <p>However the environmental knock-ons experienced as a result of lockdown are still at the forefront of our minds and underlines an opportunity to capture the positive lessons learned; recognise the value our communities place on the associated benefits; and embed environment as a foundation to our green recovery.</p> <p>The UK Government has committed to a recovery package that invests in measures for climate action. A Green Recovery Challenge Fund with £10 million as a Nature Recovery Fund and £30 million as Nature for Climate Funding has been publicised as part of the UK's green recovery.</p> <p>More recently, the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, announced as part of the summer budget on Wednesday 8th July, a £3b green investment recovery package to decarbonise public buildings and cut emissions from poorly insulated homes. The plan includes £1bn for public buildings and a £2bn scheme to retrofit people's homes.</p> <p>The Council will take steps to secure Government funding being made available to support a green recovery locally.</p>
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4. NEW CLIMATE ACTION PROPOSED

Planning a Green Recovery Following Covid-19

- 4.1. Climate Action is now being considered a part of the Council's Covid-19 Recovery Plan.
- 4.2. Proposals are put forward to prioritise and 'fast track' certain projects as part of the Council's green recovery, with a focus on Council-owned buildings. It is proposed that the Council agrees to implement research ensuring climate action and carbon-reduction targets are a key deliverable in the planning of future work space. To facilitate well-informed and sustainable decisions, the following assessments of Council-owned office spaces are proposed as part of an immediate work package: Building energy modelling, energy audits, research into low- and zero-carbon (LZC) energy solutions with M&E (mechanical and electrical) engineering advice. For a clean transition and ultimate step towards carbon neutrality, all Council-owned buildings must move away from fossil-fuels to electricity-based systems by installing LZC energy in-situ (or combination of solutions where appropriate). Energy performance for Council offices would need to be considered alongside other property management issues, such as building condition surveys. An assessment into water-efficiency measures, waste reduction and recycling, the provisions of safe, accessible and secure cycling storage, would all be reviewed as part of an assessment of office space, informing a set of recommendations being put forward to Council.
- 4.3. This work package is put forward for approval.

A Better Care Fund

- 4.4. A Better Care Fund of £20,000 is proposed as funding from the Council's Climate Change budget as a dedicated grant, supporting energy-efficiency measures and retrofit for those in fuel poverty.
- 4.5. National Energy Foundation (NEF) currently deliver the Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) service on behalf of the Council, a scheme aimed at keeping residents in West Oxfordshire warm and well. NEF manages a Capital Fund for six other Local Authorities across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. The BHBH Helpline is advertised as a first point of contact for residents who are struggling with the costs of keeping warm at home and especially for those who find themselves in cold-related crisis situations. Whilst the helpline enables access to multiple support schemes and funding sources, these often have their own application procedures eligibility, and measures available which can slow down and, in some circumstances, prevent residents receiving the help they require. There is also a gap in funding for simpler solutions and measures that can make tangible differences to the health and wellbeing of residents who are not currently funded, for example heating repairs and replacement windows and doors. A grant would be available to owner-occupier and privately-renting tenants only. NEF would utilise ECO Flexible Eligibility criteria: criteria which has been accepted by all Councils across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and aimed at residents defined to either be living on a low income in a high-cost property or those who have a low income coupled with a particular vulnerability to the cold.
- 4.6. A Better Care Fund would also deliver cross-benefits in terms of a providing winter pressure funding which supports the local health and care system to manage demand on the NHS with particular reference to seasonal winter pressures. A proposed

Better Care Fund is an example of how energy-efficiency measures would lead to outcomes for not only carbon-emissions reduction but also, improved overall health and wellbeing.

- 4.7. Members of the cross-party Climate Action Working Group have supported proposals for a Better Care Fund at a meeting on 16 June 2020 and so this is now put forward for approval.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The Council's budget proposals include a provision of £200,000 per year for the current 20/21 financial year and subsequent two financial years. As projects evolve, recommendations will be presented to inform the decision-making process on how funding will be allocated.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. There are no immediate risks considered to be arising from the contents of this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1. The design of projects as a response to the climate and ecological emergency will have an equal impact across Council functions, for all customers and staff.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The proposals within this report will have a direct, positive impact on the Council's operations with regard to energy and resource efficiency, water efficiency, waste reduction and recycling and associated carbon reduction. In addition, multiple cross-benefits towards climate change mitigation and adaptation are planned district-wide through work across functions and with partner organisations.

10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 10.1. One alternative option is to take no action at all.

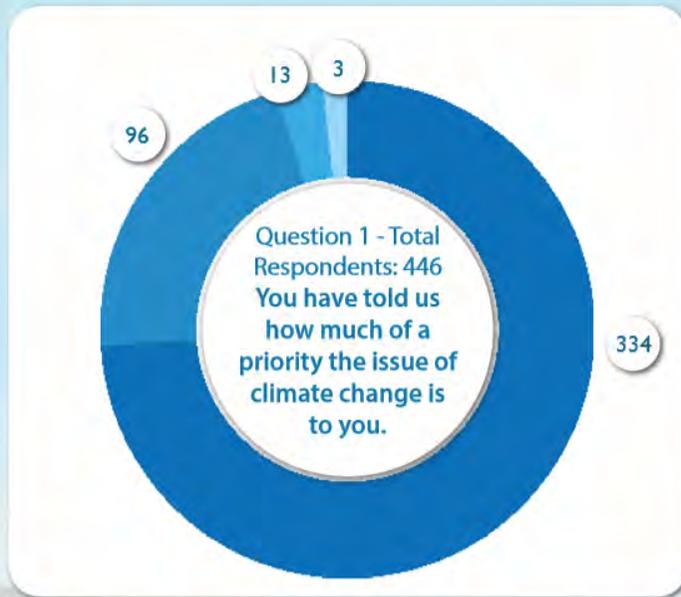
11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1. The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:
 - Meeting minutes and motion agreed at Full Council on 26th June 2019.
 - Meeting minutes and motions agreed at Full Council on 22nd January 2020.
- 11.2. These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Woodgreen during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.

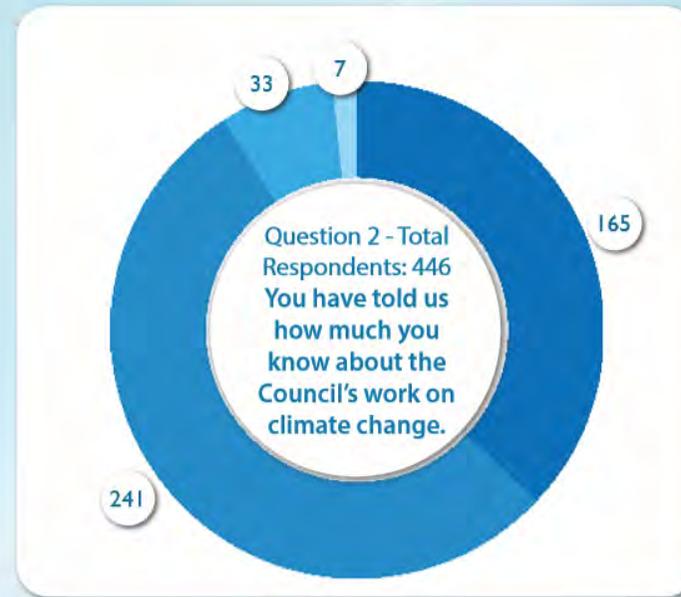
Annex I: West Oxfordshire's Climate Action Survey, June 2020 – What the numbers have told us.

Your Views Survey

West Oxfordshire District Council launched the Climate Action Survey to gather the views of people who live and work in the area. Your engagement was overwhelming. We received a response from an equivalent of 1 in every 250 residents in the District. This far-reaching survey will now inform the Council's next steps in addressing the climate and ecological emergency and go on to help shape the Council's Climate Change Strategy. Here are some of the insights we have taken from your views.



- High priority
- A priority
- Low priority
- Not a priority at all



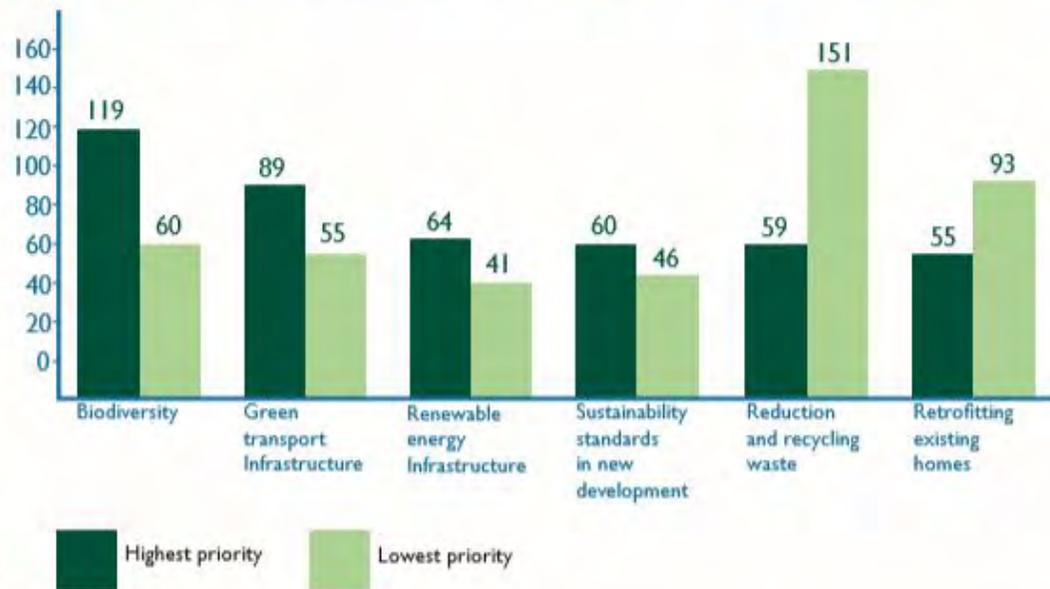
- No knowledge
- Some knowledge
- Good knowledge
- Excellent knowledge

Your Views Survey



Question 3 - Total Respondents: 446

Ranked by your highest and lowest priority, you have told us what areas you believe the Council should focus on. These are presented here in order of your highest ranking priority.

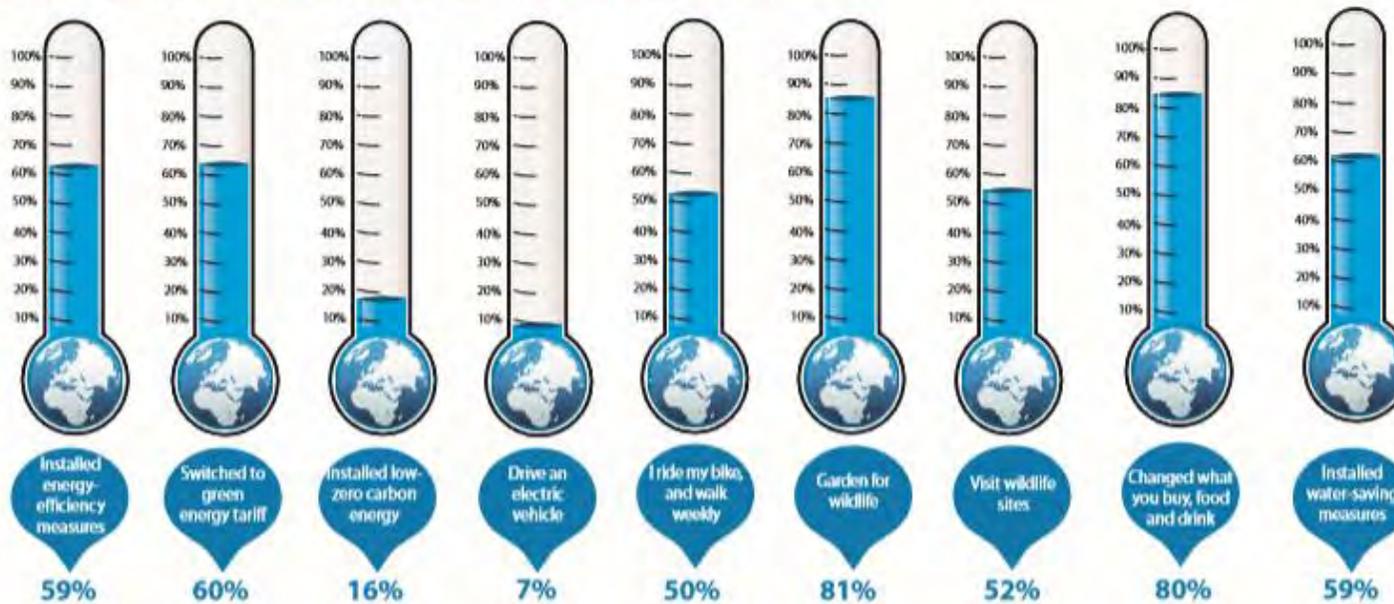


Your Views Survey



Question 5 - Total Respondents: 446

You have told us what action you have already taken to tackle climate change.



Local wildlife photographs courtesy of Lyn Dubs