

Cabinet

6 October 2020

Dorset Council Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy Delivery Plan

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment

Local Councillor(s): County Wide

Executive Director: John Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet notes the scale of additional resource requirements to deliver the climate emergency strategy 2040 and 2050 targets, and that affordability should be considered as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process and MTFP.
2. Cabinet approves the Summary Climate Action Plan (Appendix A) for public consultation along with the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy

Reason for Recommendation:

1. Executive Summary

Dorset Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019 and established an Executive Advisory Panel to strategically guide the Council's response. A draft Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy was produced in July 2020 which presented 8 key areas for action to ensure that Dorset Council becomes Carbon Neutral by 2040 and the Dorset Council Area by 2050. The

draft Strategy was approved by the EAP, Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet 28th July 20.

The pathway to carbon neutrality is critical and is presented in the draft strategy as a carbon budget detailing the necessary reductions in carbon emissions against key target dates to meet the 2040 target. Cabinet asked for a costed delivery plan to be developed for consideration in October 2020. This was to set out detailed actions required to deliver against the strategy targets with associated costs and budget requirements for consideration within the short and medium-term financial planning processes.

This paper sets out the findings of this work and budget considerations, providing an indication of working costs to feed into the budget setting process. It is recommended to incorporate the delivery plan within the public consultation process for the draft strategy, to take place from the end of October 2020.

2. Financial Implications

Draft costs have been identified for all 187 actions within the delivery plan. Of these 100 have been identified as achievable through 'Business as Usual' (BAU) within existing budgets. However, alone these will not achieve the significant shift required to deliver on the strategy commitments and additional funding will be required. Overall this figure is estimated in the region of £127million.

The delivery plan highlights an additional revenue requirement in the region of £2.6 Million for 2021/22. These costs principally relate to strengthening BAU existing work areas, undertaking further detailed studies to develop targeted programmes of work, and additional resource to enable delivery of the strategy and wider engagement with public and communities.

Eight capital projects have also been identified to start in 2021/22 principally related to Dorset Council moving towards a carbon neutral estate, shifting to electric vehicles and generating renewable energy. Bids will need further consideration as part of 2021/22 capital programme. Many of the Capital actions will not only achieve carbon savings but have the potential to deliver significant revenue savings. Significant further work will be required to develop actions into detailed business cases and programmes of work.

The delivery of the strategy is a long-term commitment over a 20 to 30 year period and current costs assigned within the delivery plan are best estimates at this time. In many areas further detailed work is required to refine the figures.

In addition, there will be many other factors which will affect the final delivery costs over the coming years to include, Dorset Councils approach to its own assets; national policy, incentives and support; wider external funding

opportunities; and importantly technological advancement. However, tackling the climate emergency will require immediate action to keep within carbon budgets and achieve carbon neutrality.

The required resources to meet the 2040 target are additional to any exiting capital, revenue or external funding allocation. If the resource allocation is reduced at any stage, the target date for achieving carbon neutrality would also need to be pushed back, and the strategy amended accordingly.

3. Climate implications

The specific purpose of this report and delivery of the strategy is to present Dorset Councils overall approach to the climate and ecological emergency. The overall principle behind the strategy is to set out key areas where Dorset Council will need to take action to directly reduce carbon emissions from its own operations to become a carbon neutral Council by 2040 and by working in partnership to help Dorset residents and organisations achieve a wider carbon neutral Dorset County by 2050.

The costed delivery plan provides a more granular understanding of the detailed actions required to deliver the strategy and achieve carbon budget targets.

4. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this report, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Low

Due to the known high level of public interest in the Climate Change Agenda and the previous commitment to provide opportunity for the public to comment on the draft strategy to not undertake a public consultation presents a medium level of reputational risk.

5. Equalities Impact Assessment

'An EqIA is being developed for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy but requires input from the results of the public consultation and then screening against the final strategy document'

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Summary Climate Action Plan
Appendix B – Action Plan Buildings

7. Background Papers

Cabinet papers 28th July – Draft Climate and Ecological Emergency strategy

8. Action Plan background and key points

The Climate and Ecological Emergency strategy approved by Cabinet on 28th July set out 8 key areas for action to ensure that Dorset Council becomes Carbon Neutral by 2040 and supports the whole of Dorset Council Area becoming carbon neutral by 2050. Critically this also set a carbon budget detailing the necessary reductions in carbon emissions against key target dates to meet the 2040 target.

The areas for action have now been further researched and developed into a detailed costed plan which sets timescales for delivery of actions to meet the key carbon budget reduction targets.

Delivery Plan

The scope of the detailed actions reflects the whole Council approach and commitment as detailed in the Corporate Plan and includes elements of the 'call for ideas' initiative held in 2019. The draft action plan has been developed in consultation with relevant service leads.

Actions have been developed in detail against each of the 8 key areas for action as identified in the draft strategy. In total there are 187 actions, many of them capturing the 'low hanging fruit' through which carbon savings can be achieved by transformation of Business as usual activities (BAU). The actions are further divided by Direct Action (to become a carbon-neutral Council by 2040), Indirect Action (to deliver our services in a way that supports the journey towards a Carbon Neutral County and Influence/ Partnership – to with others to drive change across the County and put in place larger programmes and projects to support fundamental change required.

In total there 66 'Direct' actions and these account for approximately 90% of the budget costs. These include a number of large-scale projects.

The actions have been allocated to Immediate, Short, Middle and Long-term time spans; the wider Dorset target is also subject to a Final category. These allocations and timings are based on the carbon budgeting work in the strategy and are considered as being absolutely necessary to deliver the 2040 target.

Where additional resource is required actions have been allocated to Capital or Revenue classification within the timescales, where required (due to lack of BAU capacity to deliver additional work).

Each action is subject to key milestones which will allow the effective annual monitoring and reporting of progress against the strategy.

Whilst it is considered that all the actions are required to meet the target in the strategy a RAG rating has been applied to all actions detailing potential carbon saving, financial efficiency, urgency and ease of delivery. A summary of the delivery plan is attached at Appendix A.

The detailed delivery plan will be presented as a public facing overview which illustrates actions, timescale, cost and carbon savings and benefits. There will be a plan for each of the eight key areas of action in the strategy. The Buildings section is provided as an example at Appendix B. These will be available to the public as part of the strategy consultation process.