

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet

DATE: 20th December 2021

SUBJECT: Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

CHIEF OFFICER: Richard West, ED Place and Community

CONTACT OFFICER: Charles Campbell, Principal Environment Officer

WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Sustainable Transport and The Environment

KEY DECISION: YES

EXEMPT: NO

DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL IN: YES

APPENDICES: 1: Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan Report
(see Appendix Pack) 2: Climate Change Action Plan Sheet

1 Summary and Recommendations

On 23/07/2019 Slough Borough Council declared a motion on Climate Change. In the motion the Council recognised the UK Government and Local Government Association's declaration of a national 'climate emergency' and committed to developing a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Following this on 21/06/2021 Slough Borough Council adopted the Climate Change Strategy Vision paper, which outlined a target of borough wide carbon neutrality by 2040, with a stretch target of 2030. The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, which sets out the challenge of how to meet these targets, has now been prepared and is being submitted to cabinet for adoption.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan be adopted.

Reason:

The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan provides a detailed analysis of how Slough will meet its commitments to becoming carbon neutral and to stop its contribution to climate change. The strategy and action plan also outlines how Slough will adapt to the risks posed by climate change.

2 Report

2.1 Introduction

It is now widely agreed that climate change poses an unprecedented threat, and that action is required across all aspects of society. Most recently, this has been communicated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report, which states that 1.5 °C of warming is now unavoidable, but that strong action can still limit climate change, and with radical action, temperatures could stabilise in 20-30 years. The recognition of urgency is no longer just a message from environmental groups, but is being reiterated by residents, governments and businesses.

In 2019, Slough Borough Council declared a motion on climate change, recognising the growing urgency for climate action across the borough. The Council has set an ambition for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2040, with a stretch target of 2030. The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan explores the actions the borough will need to consider to meet its net zero ambition. Adaptation to the impacts of climate change are also considered.

Delivering the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will enable Slough to achieve the following objectives:

1. Slough Borough Council's target of borough wide carbon neutrality by 2040, with a stretch target of 2030 set in the Climate Change Strategy Vision paper.
2. The 5 objectives set out in the motion on climate change including:
 - a. Reducing emissions from our estate and operations
 - b. Reducing energy consumption and emissions by promoting energy efficiency measures, sustainable construction, renewable energy sources, and behaviour change
 - c. Reducing emissions from transport by promoting sustainable transport, reducing car travel and traffic congestion, and encouraging behaviour change
 - d. Reducing consumption of resources, increasing recycling and reducing waste
 - e. Supporting council services, residents and businesses to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
3. To support Slough's 2040 Vision which outlines that Slough will be a carbon neutral and sustainable town.
4. To support delivery of the Climate Change Act 2008, which was updated to reach Net Zero by 2050, with an interim target of a 78% reduction by 2035.

2.2 Policy context

On 23/07/2019 Slough Borough Council declared a motion on Climate Change:

Climate Change¹

This Council notes the UK Government and Local Government Association's declaration of a national 'climate emergency', recognises that there is a growing

¹ SBC Climate Change Motion: [Minutes Template \(slough.gov.uk\)](https://www.slough.gov.uk/minutes-template)

urgency for national and international action to combat climate change, and commits to developing a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan that will address the causes and consequences of climate change in Slough by tackling 5 key objectives:

- *Reducing emissions from our estate and operations*
- *Reducing energy consumption and emissions by promoting energy efficiency measures, sustainable construction, renewable energy sources, and behaviour change*
- *Reducing emissions from transport by promoting sustainable transport, reducing car travel and traffic congestion, and encouraging behaviour change*
- *Reducing consumption of resources, increasing recycling and reducing waste*
- *Supporting council services, residents and businesses to adapt to the impacts of climate change.*

To date, Slough Borough Council have developed several responses to the motion on climate change:

Carbon Management Plan 2020-2030: The Carbon Management Plan introduces measures to reduce carbon emissions across the council's own operations to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Climate Change Strategy Vision: The Climate Change Strategy Vision was approved by cabinet on 21/06/2021 and sets the target of borough wide carbon neutrality by 2040, with a stretch target of 2030.

Slough 2040 Vision: The Slough 2040 Vision outlines the ambitions for the future of Slough. The vision outlines that Slough will be a carbon neutral and sustainable town and addresses the ambition for the borough to become more environmentally friendly, from tackling carbon emissions to improving biodiversity and renewable energy capacity.

The Slough 2040 Vision states that Slough will:

- Have attractive, green neighbourhoods, which bring people together
- Be a globally connected town, with a transport system which prioritises public and active transport
- Have a strong, globally renowned economy, which supports its people to prosper and live well
- Be a healthy town, where people are supported to live empowered lives

Other relevant policies produced by Slough Borough Council include:

Slough's Local Plan 2040: The new Local Development Plan for Slough sets out the long-term overall vision for how the borough should develop. The new Local Plan updates building design and construction policy to improve energy efficiency, minimise energy use and install low or zero carbon energy supply.

Five Year Plan 2025: Outcome two of the Five Year Plan 2025 prioritises the health and wellbeing needs of residents through increased activity, the

improvement of outdoor and indoor leisure facilities. Additionally, outcome five prioritises a modal shift to sustainable forms of transport across the borough.

Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy 2020-2025: Slough's Inclusive Growth Strategy focuses on quality employment and education augmented by a greater living and working environment. The Strategy also includes Slough's Climate Challenge, which provides a platform to showcase climate change progress by activating local innovators to tackle pressing issues and leveraging local entrepreneurs and established businesses.

Slough's Covid Recovery Strategy: In March 2021, Slough Borough Council outlined the Council's pathway for recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategy detailed the Council's plan for renewal, which will also contribute to Slough becoming a carbon-neutral and sustainable town.

Slough's Recovery and Renewal Plan

The Slough's Recovery and Renewal Plan aims to achieve financial sustainability in the council. The plan is structured around the eight themes of the 2040 Vision, which includes that Slough will be a carbon neutral and sustainable town.

National policy context – The Climate Change Act 2008

The Climate Change Act 2008 introduced a legally binding target for the UK to reduce GHG emissions by 80% by 2050. In June 2019, the target was updated to reach net zero by 2050. The Carbon Budget Order 2021 came into force on 24 June 2021 sets a target to cut GHG emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

International policy context – The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement set the international target to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C with the aim of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The IPCC's follow up report stated that this requires a global reduction in GHG emissions of 45% by 2030.

2.3 Developing the strategy

2.3.1 Governance

Progress of the strategy was overseen by the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan Delivery Group, chaired by the lead member for The Environment, Cllr Anderson. Progress in the development of the strategy was also reported to the Environmental Strategic Board.

2.3.2 External support

To support the delivery of the strategy the Council procured the sustainability consultancy Anthesis who demonstrated extensive experience in delivering similar strategies for other local authorities.

2.3.3 Engagement

As part of the strategy's development, the Council alongside Anthesis, carried out a series of online engagement workshops to gain stakeholder views on the actions proposed, as well as identify key barriers and enablers to climate change action. The workshops aimed at engaging the following key stakeholders:

- Council service teams including Housing, Planning, Transport and Waste Services
- Schools and Colleges across the borough

- Public services
- Residents and community organisations
- Private sector organisations including SMEs and larger corporations

Each two-hour workshop consisted of a brief introduction to Slough’s climate change commitments and the borough’s current emissions profile, followed by three breakout sessions where themes of action were discussed. The figure below shows the key stakeholders that were invited.

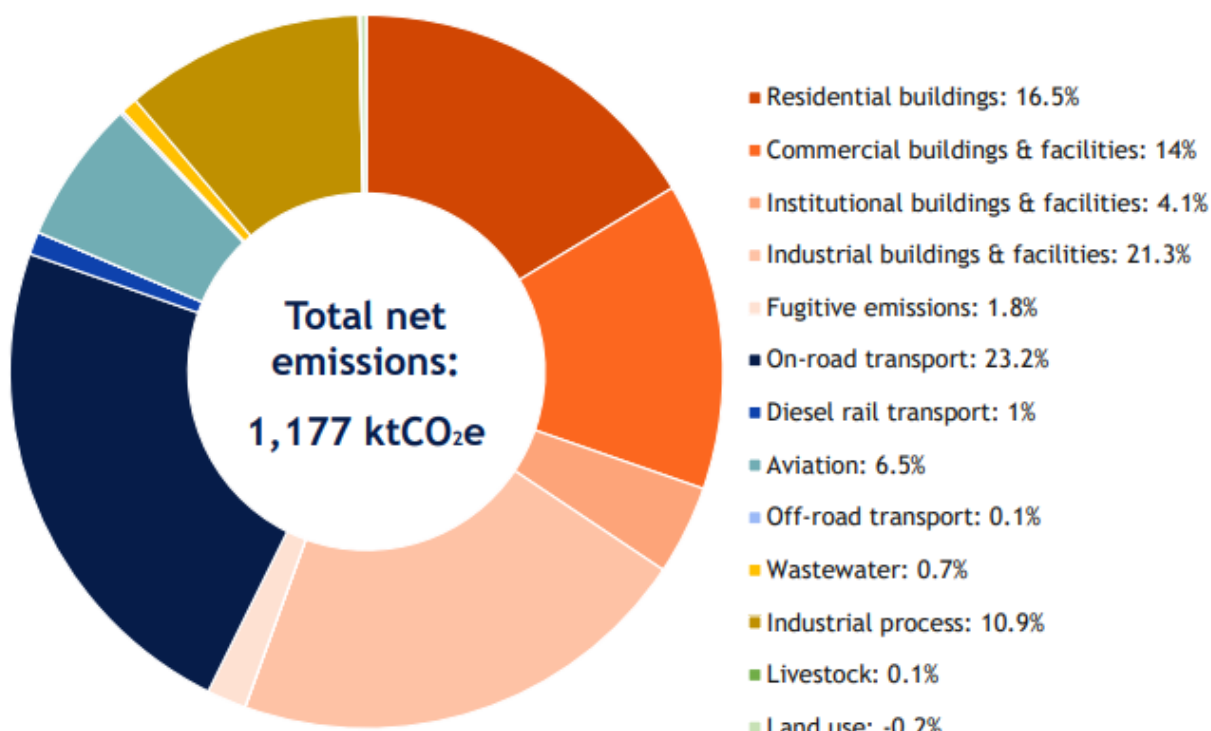
| Workshop Theme | Key Invitees |
|--|--|
| 1. Buildings, Planning & Energy Supply | The Council’s Planning and Asset Management Teams, Slough Urban Renewal, MUSE, James Elliman Homes, National Grid, SSE, Greater South East Energy Hub |
| 2. Transport | The Council’s Transport, Planning and Environment Teams, Highways England, National Rail, GWR, First Group, Thames Valley Buses, Redline Buses |
| 3. Waste & Circular Economy | The Council’s DSO, Planning and Environment Teams, SSE, Grundon’s, Viridor, Thames Water |
| 4. Natural Environments | The Council’s Asset Management Team (Parks & Environment) and Planning Teams, Berks Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust, Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, Canal & River Trust |
| 5. Residents, Community Groups and Youth Groups | A proportionate representation of Slough’s residents encompassing different backgrounds such as age and religion, Youth Parliament, Young Inspector, Climate Action Groups |
| 6. Public Services | NHS Trusts, Thames Valley Police, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue, Thames Water, Paradigm Housing, Sovereign Housing Association, Schools and Colleges |
| 7. Businesses & Private Services | Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, Slough Business Community Partnership, Slough BID, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, Berkshire Business Growth Hub and several other key private businesses. |

Following the completion of the draft strategy the same stakeholders were consulted for feedback on the strategy. This feedback process lasted over a month and extensive feedback was provided by: the public, staff, councillors, and the private sector including SEGRO and SSE.

Overall feedback was positive. Comments were provided relating to emphasizing certain actions such as investment in renewable energy technologies and tree planting. Concerns were also raised about the Councils ability to deliver the strategy with its current financial challenges as exemplified by the Section 114 notice. However, this strategy and action plan does not commit to additional expenditure as each action with a cost implication will require its own business case. In addition, feedback from the private sector raised concerns about specific actions relating to data centres and technical challenges relating to buildings. Also, the private sector wishes to work with the Council to achieve realistic solutions.

2.4 Slough's carbon emissions

In 2018 (data published June 2020), Slough's energy system was responsible for net emissions totalling 1,177 ktCO₂e. The majority resulted from buildings & facilities (57.7%) and transport (30.8%). These emissions will need to be reduced to net zero to achieve the Council's targets.



2.5 Slough's emission reduction pathways

The emissions modelling in this report has been achieved through the application of Anthesis' SCATTER Inventory and Pathways Tool. The SCATTER Tool is an information source designed to help local authorities understand their emissions profile and inform priorities for emissions reduction. It has been used by over 300 local authorities to date.

The graph below shows two possible future emissions pathways for Slough as modelled by the SCATTER Pathways Tool. This is compared against the reductions required by the Paris Agreement. Despite applying the most ambitious interventions in SCATTER for Slough, emissions remain in the energy system.

The blue line represents Business as usual (BAU), where only a 23% reduction in emissions is achieved by 2040. Slough's High Ambition Pathway (green line) indicates 441 ktCO₂e will remain in the energy system in 2030 and 245 ktCO₂e remain at 2040. Finally, to achieve a Paris Agreement aligned target (red line) the borough must achieve a reduction in emissions of 12.7% annually. This signals the need for radical action, focussing on the interventions outlined in SCATTER, but also going beyond. Carbon offsetting may also be explored.

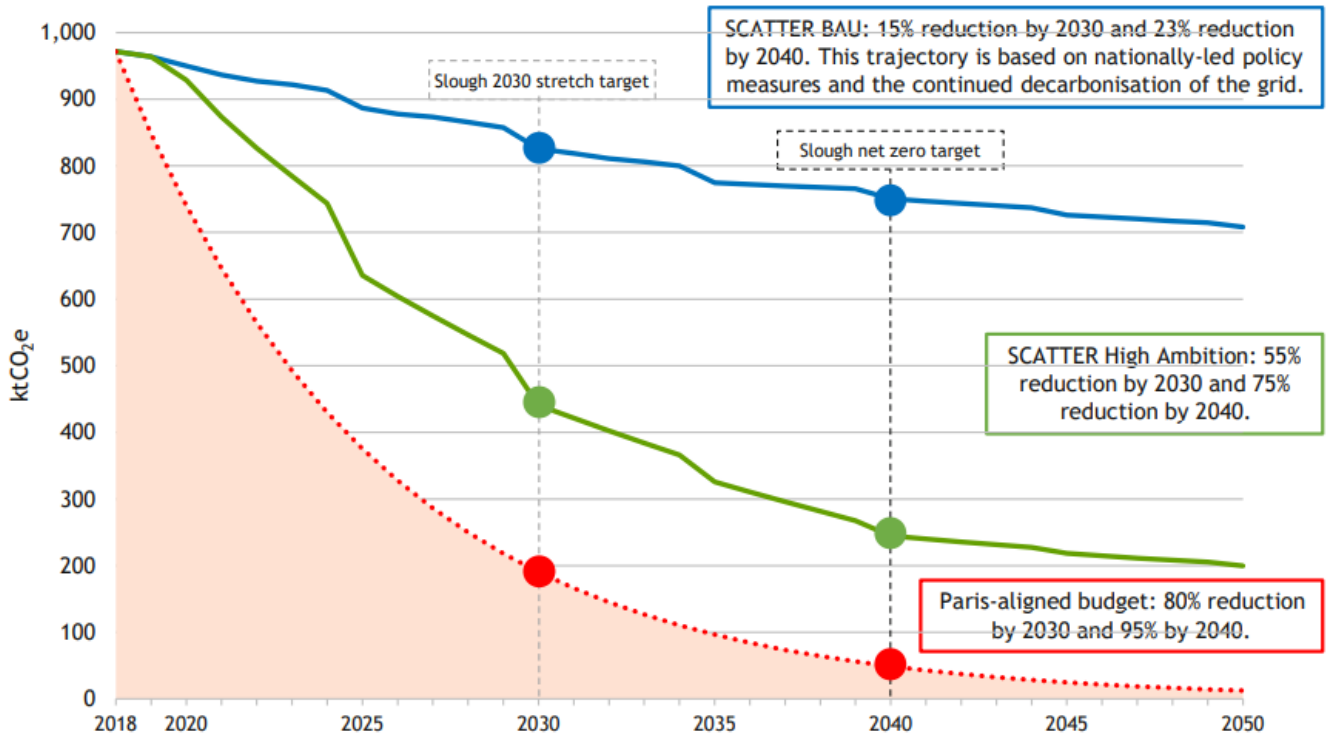


Figure 5.1: Future emissions pathway for Slough (2019 - 2050), with Slough's 2030 stretch target and 2040 target highlighted.

For reasons of reliability, cost, and impact, Slough will need to prioritise the actions detailed in this report, which are based on a calculated “High Ambition” pathway. Detailed below are some of the ways it may be possible to “close the gap” in emissions:

- Technological innovation and marginal improvements
- Accelerated and increased deployment
- Offsetting & Insetting

2.6 The Action Plan

The plan sets out recommendations for action across several areas highlighted below.



Buildings

- Improved energy efficiency
- Shifting off gas heating systems
- Low carbon and energy efficient cooking, lighting and appliances



Industry

- Innovative technologies
- Industry support



Transport

- Travelling shorter distances
- Driving less
- Switching to electric vehicles
- Improving freight emissions
- Reducing aviation emissions



Natural Environments

- Increased tree coverage & tree planting
- Land use management
- Sustainable consumption
- Offsetting strategy



Waste

- Reducing the quantity of waste
- Increasing the recycling rate



Energy Supply

- Increased wind capacity
- Increase solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity
- Increase the capacity of other renewable technologies



SBC's Wider Influence

- Council behaviour change and influencing suppliers
- Leading change in the borough
- Lobbying national government



Climate Adaptation

Improving resilience to:

- Flooding
- High Temperatures
- Water shortages

Each action will contribute to achieving the Council's objective of borough-wide carbon neutrality. For each action details are provided which include; the Council's role, the key stakeholders for the action, the impact of the action, the timescale to implement the action, and the actions complexity. Local and national case studies for actions are also provided.

Example actions from each category include:

- **Buildings:** Update policy to ensure any new properties built in the council's portfolio are built to the highest energy efficiency standards e.g. Passivhaus standard
- **Transport:** Implement planning policy and support developers to build developments that reduce the need for travel, making sure people can access amenities without a car e.g. walkable, or "15 minute" neighbourhoods
- **Waste:** Ensure emissions reduction and waste reduction is a key priority in the council's waste strategies, decisions and investments
- **Industry:** Work collaboratively with the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to deliver the industrial strategy, particularly focusing on the clean growth challenge
- **Energy:** Investigate suitable opportunities for installing solar panels on council-owned buildings or ground mounted on council owned land where feasible
- **Natural Environments & Offsetting:** Develop a long-term strategy to protect and manage existing urban trees and woodland in the borough, especially trees planted as part of the Urban Forest Project
- **The Council's Wider Influence:** Deliver Carbon Literacy Training, or a similar programme, to all Council staff & members and incorporate this training into the staff onboarding process

Each action may deliver co-benefits beyond reducing carbon emissions, which are also discussed. These co-benefits may be economic, social or environmental in nature.

Slough Borough Council cannot meet its target on its own and will need input from stakeholders across the borough. Actions in the plan are divided into those for which the council is solely responsible, and those where the council has a role in engaging and influencing others. Key stakeholders are also indicated.

The capital cost of achieving all the carbon mitigation actions outlined is estimated to be over £3 billion, but the actions could also result in operational expenditure savings in excess of £4 billion. This is a high-level cost estimate to decarbonise the whole borough and the adoption of this strategy is not committing to this expenditure.

The strategy also concludes that the Council will need 30 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) roles in place to deliver the action plan in its entirety. Decarbonising will also offer co-benefits across wider economic, social and environmental spheres. It is essential that these savings and co-benefits are considered in making the case for action.

2.7 Adaptation to climate change

In Slough Borough Council's 2019 motion on climate change, the council committed to developing the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Among the 5 key objectives of Slough's motion on climate change, the plan seeks to address the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change: "*Supporting council services, residents and businesses to adapt to the impacts of climate change.*"

To address this objective a risk assessment has been carried out, which is intended to give a high-level overview of areas of key climate risk in Slough, rather than a comprehensive view of all risks. In launching this work, the 2017 Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA 2017) was reviewed and noted six key areas of interrelated climate change risk.² Of these risks, three were most relevant to Slough:

- Flooding, and risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure
- High temperatures, and risks to health, wellbeing and productivity
- Risks from shortages in public water supply

The strategy proposes a series of actions for each risk which include:

- **Flooding:**
 - Building on the latest Slough Flood Risk Assessment, update the Surface Water Management Plan (2012) to set latest priority areas for flood action in Slough. This could form part of a dedicated Adaptation Strategy Report for Slough
 - Make more sustainable design a requirement for new developments in Slough, with contributions towards flood protection such as enhanced tree coverage and improved drainage.
- **High temperatures:**
 - When maintaining natural spaces (such as parks), consider the resilience of species to high temperature and promote planting of more heat-resilient species.
 - Undertake an assessment to identify at-risk community areas (e.g. more deprived neighbourhoods), and community groups (e.g. the elderly). Focus education and safety campaigns in these locations
- **Water shortages:**

² [UK Climate Change - Risk Assessment 2017 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

- Encourage households and businesses to use water saving devices such as low-flow taps, and cistern bags, to prevent unnecessary water usage.
- Design a future emergency plan for events of interruption in water supply

In addition to listing actions that the Council can take to address these risks, the report sets out the economic, social and environmental aspects of each of these risks. Local and national case studies are also provided.

2.8 Next Steps

2.8.1 Prioritisation

Should this strategy be adopted then it will move into the delivery phase. The first step will be to carry out a prioritisation exercise to establish which actions should be pursued first. Based on carbon savings potential, the priority areas for action are improving building efficiency, reducing emissions from road transport, and increasing renewable energy supply. It is imperative that the council acts as a leader in the borough to facilitate wider change. Adaptation to the impacts of climate change is also considered high priority. The council should now undertake a full action prioritisation exercise based on the metrics provided in the plan.

The action plan sets out the key stakeholders for each action so, subject to Cabinet agreeing to the strategy's adoption, actions will be distributed to the identified lead stakeholder which will oversee delivery. For example, the action; "Encourage newly built public sector developments to be to the highest energy efficiency standards e.g. Passivhaus standards" identifies the Planning Policy Team as the key stakeholder so delivery of this action will be the responsibility of this team.

2.8.2 Resources

The total capital expenditure required to achieve carbon emissions reductions on the scale required by the High Ambition pathway is in excess of £3.2bn. Operational costings analysis indicates that over £4.1bn worth of potential savings may also be realised, most significantly in the transport sector. The table below summarises the results of the costings analysis.

| Capex (k£) | Opex (k£) | Description of cost |
|------------------|-------------------|--|
| 490,250 | NE | Retrofitting existing households with wall insulation |
| 90,350 | -87,750 | Retrofitting household heating systems with electrified systems over gas boilers; opex represents fuel bills |
| 35,800 | NE | Constructing new-build homes to PassivHaus standard, rather than Part L |
| 188,250 | NE | <i>Retrofitting new-build homes to PassivHaus standard having constructed to Part L</i> |
| - | 3,950 | Additional fuel bills as a result of switching to electrified cooking systems in domestic households |
| 179,200 | -2,750 | Retrofitting non-domestic buildings with energy efficiency measures |
| 31,000 | 53,000 | Retrofitting non-domestic heating systems with electrified systems over gas boilers; opex represents maintenance but not fuel costs |
| 286,150 | - | New transport infrastructure for on-road vehicles and rail |
| - | -690,500 | Demand reduction and efficiency gains in the transport sector |
| 1,369,050 | -3,907,000 | New on-road vehicles and rail transport |
| 699,800 | 569,800 | Installation & maintenance of local renewable energy sources |
| - | -35,300 | Savings in gate fees as a result of increased recycling and reduced overall volume of waste |
| 250 | 150 | Planting & maintenance of additional new woodland |
| 9,050 | NE | Scaled portion of UK-wide action for decarbonising industry |
| 3,190,900 | -4,109,650 | Total estimated costs |

Meeting the demands of this significant investment in future years is not the sole responsibility of the council. Whilst a key actor in terms of leading progress and shaping the borough's emissions reductions, bearing the cost of that transition is the responsibility of the entire borough. Certain actions naturally lend themselves to public sector investment, such as public transport, whilst others are led by businesses and residents, such as renewable energy installations or purchasing electric vehicles.

Throughout the report, indications are given of the staff resource required- this totals over 30 FTE across the organisation, should all actions be undertaken. There are also opportunities to adapt current roles in line with the plan, and this should be considered.

Adaptation is treated separately and is not included in the above costings. However, the resource requirement for staff is laid out in the table below.

| Adaptation Action Area | Staff Costs |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Flooding | 0.65 FTE |
| High Temperatures | 1 FTE |
| Water Shortages | 0.6 FTE |

The Council's current financial situation restricts the Council's ability to finance new projects and staff through available resources and borrowing. Therefore, until the Council is able to finance additional expenditure, the council will be reliant on alternative sources of funding and resources. These include; grant funding sources such as Salix, funds acquired through development schemes such as Section 106, and existing resources.

There are no immediate financial implications if this strategy is adopted. Utilising the existing role of Principal Environment Officer will enable the distribution of actions and monitoring of the strategy's progress against its targets. However, each respective action in the action plan may have a resource implication that goes beyond existing resource availability. The outcome of actions may yield an income (such as renewable energy schemes), produce savings (such as energy efficiency measures) or be a direct cost (such as boiler replacement). Evaluating what those resource implications are beyond high level estimates is beyond the scope of this strategy, however as stated above if all actions were delivered it is estimated that greater savings would be achieved than the overall cost.

As the first step (subject to the strategy being adopted) will be to carry out a prioritisation exercise of which actions to pursue first, there is no assigned timeline for when actions listed in this plan are to be delivered. Therefore, resource availability will have to be a key consideration when carrying out this exercise. However, it is important to note that the SCATTER modelling demonstrates that even if all actions were pursued the target of borough-wide carbon neutrality would still not be accomplished by 2040 without radical action. The 2030 target for carbon neutrality would require even further radical action. Therefore, any delay on delivering the actions set out in this strategy will jeopardise the ability to deliver on this target. It is therefore recommended that the Council pursue all options available to ensure financial and staff resources are available to deliver the actions set out in the strategy.

It should of course be recognised that the cost of inaction on climate change is far greater than the cost of action.

2.8.3 Monitoring progress

The strategy document outlines a monitoring framework to track progress against the strategy's actions and objectives. The strategy outlines that progress against the plan should be monitored regularly, including tracking the progress of responsible stakeholders, and reviewing the impact of the actions taken using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from a variety of data sets. Progress against the plan should be publicly reported.

Progress should be monitored and overseen by the Environmental Strategic Board or an equivalent board or group. Delivery groups may be necessary for different categories of action such as Buildings or Transport.

2.9 Options considered

There are three options to be considered.

- 1) Adopt the strategy to achieve the Council's target of borough-wide carbon neutrality.
- 2) Revise the strategy to either expand or decrease its scope should any aspects of the strategy not be satisfactory.
- 3) Do not adopt the strategy.

Commissioners Comments

“It is entirely correct that Slough Borough Council articulates a strategy which can guide all residents, businesses, and organisations in their area so they can collaborate on addressing the challenges of climate change.

However, the Authority is now subject to Statutory Directions which mean that no new investment whether from within existing uncommitted budgets or new proposals can be contemplated until the Council has stabilised its financial position and established an organisational structure that is fit for purpose. At this stage it would be very unwise to specify a date when this can happen and until clarity and agreed delivery actions are finalised the Council will not be able to commit to an investment programme.”

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

3.1.1 In light of the current financial situation, the Council cannot commit to any new expenditure or capital projects. This strategy sets out the work needed not only by the Council itself but by its partners in the borough and residents to address the climate emergency.

Therefore, the Council, using this strategy, should act as an enabler to promote decarbonisation and apply wherever possible for grant funding from Government until the Council's financial position is clearer as the Recovery and Renewal plan progresses.

Where there is an immediate, unavoidable requirement to spend, such requests will need to be considered as part of the expenditure control panel approval process.

3.2 Legal implications

3.2.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (the Act) provides the legal framework for UK climate change policy. It established long-term statutory targets for the UK to decarbonise by reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. The objectives of the Act are to:

- make the UK's voluntary national targets for the reduction of GHG emissions legally binding.
- provide a long-term framework for climate change policy in the UK, which will give businesses and individuals the certainty they need to invest in energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies (such as wind and solar power, biofuels and carbon capture and storage).
- enable the UK to lead by example and drive international negotiations on climate change.

3.2.2 The Act also established the Climate Change Committee (the CCC) as an independent body to advise the Government on setting its targets, report on progress, and put in place the framework to promote adaptation action. On the recommendation of the CCC the UK has legislated to set a target of 78% reduction to GHG emissions by 2035. Through the Act, the UK has set a target to reduce emissions by 100% (or “net-zero”) by 2050.

3.2.3 Under s.36 of the CC Act 2008, the CCC is required to deliver annual progress reports to Parliament, setting out its views on progress made towards achieving the various carbon budgets and on the 2050 target.

3.2.4 The Environment Act 2021 requires, amongst other matters, the Secretary of State to set long-term legally-binding targets relating to, e.g. air quality and waste reduction.

3.3 Risk management implications

| Recommendation from section 1 above | Risks/Threats/Opportunities | Current Controls | Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk | Future Controls |
|--|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| The Cabinet is requested to recommend that the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is adopted by cabinet | a) Economical /Financial: | There is no direct financial implication, however proposed actions will need to be pursued to achieve objectives of strategy and these will have a financial implication. | 4 | SBC will pursue all relevant funding opportunities while minimising risk. |
| | b) Political | The Council's motion on climate change. | 3 | The strategy sets out how the objectives of the motion on climate change will be accomplished. |
| | c) Environment | Risk posed by climate change to Slough. | 4 | The strategy sets out how the borough can adapt to the risks of climate change. |
| | d) Legal /Regulatory | The UK Government's Net Zero target | 2 | The strategy sets out how the borough will achieve net zero. |

3.4 Environmental implications

There is no direct environmental impact through the adoption of this strategy. However, the purpose of the strategy is to achieve borough-wide carbon neutrality and the actions proposed will have an environmental implication. The principle implication will be a reduction in carbon emissions contributing to climate change. Other co-benefits are also considered such as improvements in biodiversity and reductions in air pollution.

Example projects that will have an environmental implication include:

- Plant trees, woodland or hedgerows on council-owned land (where appropriate) including strategic land and along grass verges or highways
- Ensure tree cover is considered for all new developments through the new Local Plan by mandating for a minimum level of tree coverage in new developments, and exploring incentives for developers to retain trees

3.5 Equality implications

An equality impact assessment has been carried out in relation to this strategy and action plan.

All equality groups will be impacted by inaction on climate change and some groups, especially those who are economically vulnerable, are likely to be disproportionately affected by inaction to limit climate change.

Many interventions require long –term behavioural change: this potentially may impact some equality groups negatively in the short term. The most vulnerable groups struggle to adapt behaviours, such as reduced use of private transport or insulating homes, as they have limited choices and resources available.

To ensure that equality groups are not disproportionately impacted by any actions undertaken that are set out in the action plan an equality assessment will be carried out for each relevant action undertaken, identifying appropriate mitigations and support.

3.6 Procurement implications

Not applicable

3.7 Workforce implications

There are no direct staffing implications with the adoption of this strategy. However, the strategy states that the Council will need 30 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) roles in place to deliver the action plan in its entirety. The allocation of new roles will depend on which actions in the action plan are enacted.

3.8 Property implications

There are no direct property implications with the adoption of this strategy. However, several of the actions in the action plan relate to the Council's assets. Should these

actions be delivered they will have a property implication. These should be treated separately from this strategy.

Potential actions that will have property implications include:

- Update policy to ensure any new properties built in the council's portfolio are built to the highest energy efficiency standards e.g. Passivhaus standard
- Develop a decarbonisation plan for all council owned buildings to identify the most viable solutions to achieving Slough Borough Council's own net zero 2030 target, tailor support to worst performing properties.

4. Background Papers

None.