

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 06/09/21

Subject: H&F Climate and Ecology Strategy

Report of: Councillor Wesley Harcourt, Cabinet Member for the Environment

Report author: Jim Cunningham, Climate Policy & Strategy Lead

Responsible Director: Sharon Lea, Strategic Director for the Environment

SUMMARY

This covering report seeks approval from Cabinet of the council's Climate and Ecology Strategy and action plan (appendices A-C). The strategy sets out the council's approach to delivering its target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the borough by 2030. It has been shaped by the work of the resident-led Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission, who worked closely with the council's Climate Unit throughout 2020, and was devised by ten cross-departmental officer working groups, led by the Climate Unit.

As well as responding to a global crisis, tackling the climate emergency in H&F will bring benefits for residents and the borough that deliver on the council's other values and objectives. These include a thriving green economy, with skills and jobs for the future; a clean public realm bringing improved health and wellbeing; a revival of biodiversity; and a locus for shared community involvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve the strategy and action plan.
 2. Note the significant investment required to achieve net zero, in excess of £2bn for the whole borough, and that delivery of the strategy is dependent on substantial external financing.
 3. Note the importance of a green economic recovery to support this transition.
 4. Note the complexity of delivering a major programme to decarbonise the council's buildings and other assets.
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Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	‘The green economy’ forms one of the strategy’s enabling workstreams. Its focus is on how H&F’s residents can both support net zero and benefit from the growing sustainability sector, including through skills programmes and partnerships.
Creating a compassionate council	Inclusion, equity, and positive outcomes for all residents, are at the heart of the strategy. The strategy’s vision targets the ‘best possible health, wellbeing, and quality of life for all our residents’. One of its five principles is ‘just transition’, ensuring that the benefits and costs of climate action are spread fairly. One of our six principles for engagement (Appendix C) is to ‘champion under-represented voices’.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The strategy has been guided by the priorities and recommendations of the resident-led commission. Engagement and coproduction were central themes for the resident-led commission, and these run throughout the strategy and action plan. Our engagement approach is included as Appendix C.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Achieving net zero for the organisation and borough by 2030 will demand significant private, public, and council investment. The ‘Finance and decision-making’ workstream of the strategy focuses on approaches to efficient financing mechanisms and maximising external funding. In many areas action on the climate offers energy efficiency and maintenance cost savings, and these benefits will be maximised. Actions also offer co-benefits with the potential for system-wide cost savings, including in waste prevention, preventative health, and fuel poverty.
Taking pride in H&F	The strategy aims to deliver deeper community engagement and environmental improvements to public space, particularly through its Ecology and Transport workstreams.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The strategy is the council’s comprehensive plan to deliver against this value.

Financial Impact

The programme of actions set out in the strategy are expected to have a financial cost which may be significant and funding these may present a significant challenge for the council.

Further decisions will be required for any capital or revenue budget allocation through the council's capital programme and medium-term financial planning process and individual projects approvals following the completion of further detailed work. Detailed financial impacts, including the costs and funding, affordability, and any financial opportunities and risks specific to each decision, will be set out at that time. Wherever possible the council will need to secure grant funding and contributions from third parties to ensure that the cost to residents, and in the case of the council's social housing, tenants and leaseholders, is minimised.

Legal Implications

There is no statutory requirement for Local Authorities to produce a Climate Strategy or an Action Plan under the Climate Change Act 2008. Local Authorities are, however, obliged to be in keeping with the objectives of policies implemented by the Greater London Authority and National Government through obligations set out in grant funding agreements, under regulatory arrangements such as through air quality reviews and monitoring under the Environment Act 1995 and national planning law including the Planning Act 2008 and in development of local plans under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, where the local planning authority must have regard to national policies. H&F council's 2030 target and planned actions are intended to be consistent with, and exceed, the ambitions set out in the Mayor of London's 1.5 degree compatible action plan, and the Climate Change Act 2008, which presently sets a target for the UK to be net-zero by 2050. In order to carry out the investments and actions required of this report the Council must follow, where appropriate, the Council's contract standing orders and at present include the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 in relation to entering into public contracts.

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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report (*ALL PUBLISHED*)

1. Report of the H&F Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission
 2. Results of the Commonplace resident consultation, Summer 2020
 3. H&F's carbon audit
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DETAILED ANALYSIS

1. Background

In late 2018 the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessed that the world has until 2030 to take radical action to keep global temperatures within 1.5°C of pre-industrial levels, beyond which catastrophic change is expected. In recognition of this, Hammersmith & Fulham (H&F) council unanimously declared a climate and ecological emergency in July 2019, setting an ambitious target of 2030 for the borough to achieve net zero carbon. This strategy sets out the council's intended route to deliver on this target.

2. The borough's baseline 'production-based'¹ emissions are 648,752 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e). This is mostly from heating and powering homes and buildings, and from road transport. Although these borough-wide emissions have fallen by around 38% since 2005 due to improvements in energy efficiency, the greatest challenges such as decarbonising heat in homes are yet to be addressed.
3. In addition, the borough influences further emissions, known as 'consumption-based' emissions, in the goods and services purchased by residents. This broader footprint is estimated to be 2.5 times larger than the production-based footprint above.
4. The council's organisational footprint from its own operations and assets, including its housing, accounts for 9.6% of the borough's emissions, at 62,546 tonnes of CO₂e. The emissions from heating and powering council homes account for 83% of this footprint, with the remaining 17% comprised of heating, cooling and powering its corporate buildings and schools; the vehicles it uses; and street lighting. The council has indirect influence over another 65,360 tonnes CO₂e again through the goods and services it procures.
5. As well as responding to a global crisis, tackling the climate emergency in H&F will bring benefits for residents and the borough that deliver on the council's other values and objectives. These include a thriving green economy, with skills and jobs for the future; a clean public realm bringing improved health and wellbeing; a revival of biodiversity; and a locus for shared community

¹ These include 'scope 1' emissions from the direct use of fossil fuels (such as oil and gas) within the borough boundary, 'scope 2' emissions from the production of electricity consumed within the borough boundary, and emissions from waste.

involvement.

6. H&F's climate action to date

7. The council has moved quickly since its climate emergency declaration, including:
- Buying 100% renewable electricity for our buildings, and helping residents to do the same;
 - Supporting schemes to install local renewable energy;
 - Initiating a programme of energy efficiency retrofitting for our council homes, schools and premises;
 - Delivering schemes to support fuel-poor residents in the private sector to improve their homes;
 - Expanding our electric vehicle charging network to be one of the largest in the UK, aiming to have 1,000 installed by the end of 2021;
 - Replacing our fleet with electric vehicles, aiming to be fully electric by 2022;
 - Rolling out a zero-emissions delivery service, delivering food packages during the Covid-19 pandemic, and a shared e-vans scheme for businesses;
 - Launching our pilot food waste recycling scheme;
 - Launching a trailblazing global UN-backed climate education programme with our teachers.
8. These are some of the first steps towards ten years of climate action, set out in the strategy, that will grow a thriving local green economy and bring the community together to deliver a socially just, environmentally safe society.

Development of the climate and ecology strategy

9. H&F's resident-led Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission worked closely with the council's Climate Unit throughout 2020, and their emerging findings, regular discussion with officers throughout 2020, and final recommendations report have helped inform the council's strategy.
10. The commission held a public engagement event at the Lyric Theatre in February 2020 and worked with the council on a virtual consultation on residents' priorities for climate action during summer 2020. This received 387 responses and was viewed by another 600 people.
11. Environmental consultants were appointed in April 2020 to undertake an independent baseline of H&F Council's greenhouse gas emissions, and to give high-level recommendations and cost estimates for the council to achieve net zero within its own assets and operations.
12. H&F's Climate Unit has been working with officers from all council departments in cross-cutting working groups to develop the strategy. The working groups examined the evidence base, drew on their sectoral knowledge, and consulted with partners and external experts across the workstreams.

Summary of the strategy

13. Together, the strategy and action plan are a comprehensive, high-level plan for the council and borough to transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions.
14. The strategy (Appendix A) sets out a vision for a net-zero borough, and identifies what is needed for the council and borough to achieve the net zero target, based on the evidence. Achieving net zero across the borough depends on action from the council, local organisations and residents, regional and national government, and the wider economy.
15. The action plan (Appendix B) sets out the areas in which the council can deliver on this strategy, recognising that only a small proportion of the borough's emissions are within the council's direct control. For the wider borough's emissions, the action plan focuses on opportunities for the council to actively enable and incentivise sustainable choices for residents, businesses and organisations.
16. The strategy tackles five climate challenges:
 - i. **Homes, buildings and energy:** how we construct, heat and power our built environment.
 - ii. **Travel:** how we move around.
 - iii. **Things we use:** what we buy, use and dispose of.
 - iv. **Ecology:** how we make space for nature and recover biodiversity.
 - v. **Adapting to climate change:** how we make ourselves resilient to the changes happening.
17. Three enabling workstreams create the conditions needed for this change, and cut across the five challenges:
 - vi. **Engagement and influence**
 - vii. **Finance and decision-making**
 - viii. **The green economy**
18. The strategy (Appendix A) sets out our organisational and borough baseline footprint in greater detail, and gives further proposed definition to the scope of the net zero target adopted by Full Council. It outlines the vision and principles for climate action, as well as the requirements for financing, delivering, and monitoring the programme, including a dependency on substantial external funding. It then summarises the objectives for each of the five climate challenges, and three enabling workstreams.
19. The action plan (Appendix B) sets out the council's high-level actions against each workstream.
20. Over ninety percent of the borough's emissions are outside of the council's direct control. The Green Economy workstream sets out how we will work with schools, academia, businesses, community groups and many others to deliver a thriving low-carbon economy with strong employment prospects for residents. The engagement and influence plan (Appendix C) sets out our approach to

bringing all our residents with us to tackle the climate emergency, and responds to the resident-led commission's emphasis on engagement.

Engagement on the strategy

21. Resident involvement to date

The strategy and action plan are the result of in-depth resident engagement, led by a commission of twelve local resident volunteers that took place over a year, as well as an open engagement event, a virtual consultation on resident priorities, and various discussions with resident groups, local businesses, institutions and organisations.

22. The resident-led Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission was launched in January 2020, to make recommendations to the council on the action needed to achieve net zero by 2030. The commission constructed detailed recommendations within eight key workstreams, which have informed the council's strategy:

- i. Built infrastructure
- ii. Transport
- iii. Ecology
- iv. Energy
- v. Waste and the circular economy
- vi. Finance
- vii. Food
- viii. Health

23. In developing its recommendations, the commission held a public engagement event at the Lyric Theatre in February 2020, at which residents proposed a wide range of actions for the borough in themed breakout groups.

24. During Summer 2020 the commission worked with the council on a virtual consultation on residents' priorities for climate action. This received 387 responses and was viewed by another 600 people. Questions were asked against a range of themes, with key findings from respondents including that:

- i. The issues of most concern to residents were:
 1. Waste and recycling facilities
 2. Air pollution
 3. Loss of nature and wildlife
 4. Traffic on our streets
- ii. Priorities for transport and travel were improved cycle routes and less air pollution.
- iii. Affordability of and support for energy efficiency measures was of importance to 91% of respondents.
- iv. Within food, respondents were most concerned about where their food comes from.
- v. Most respondents identified flexible volunteering opportunities as key to enabling more involvement in community life.
- vi. Half of business respondents felt being seen as 'green' was crucial, and a low-emissions delivery network was seen as being the most important factor in helping them to decarbonise.

25. The commission worked with members of the Youth Council in developing its recommendations. H&F has also been engaging its young people through the UN-backed EduCCate Global programme, accrediting teachers to bring the climate emergency to the classroom.
26. In May 2021 the commission presented its findings to Cabinet, summarising four core proposals, for the council to:
 - i. Establish a vision to encourage a move to a zero-carbon society;
 - ii. Communicate and engage with residents;
 - iii. Build and share local sources of knowledge;
 - iv. Create an effective plan to achieve net zero.
27. In presenting a public-facing evidence base, vision and route to net zero, this strategy and action plan represent a vital step to meeting these proposals.

Future engagement

28. Achieving net zero and delivering on the strategy's objectives will require substantial changes across the public and private realms. It relies on the engagement, understanding and buy-in of our residents. H&F will continue to engage key local groups following the strategy's adoption. This may include virtual Q&As, and, depending on national restrictions and council policy on face-to-face engagement, in-person events and pop-up stalls. These could take place socially distanced in parks, for instance, to minimise risk.
29. We will explore further opportunities for coproducing delivery of the action plan, such as through resident implementation working groups for the different climate challenges.
30. As well as being guided by the council value of doing things with residents, not to them, two of our principles for climate engagement (see Appendix C) are to 'build collective knowledge' and 'champion under-represented voices'. We will pursue the former through breadth of engagement, ensuring that as wide a base of residents and groups as possible are supported to be involved. We will use existing touchpoints the council has with the community, including community groups, residents' associations, faith groups, businesses, schools and young people's groups (through the Youth Council and the Inclusive Youth Voice Network), local institutions such as Imperial College, and third sector organisations.
31. To ensure we champion under-represented voices we will involve groups from whom we achieved lower response rates during our consultation in Summer 2020, including social housing tenants. We'll also seek effective contact channels to reach out to groups whose voices are frequently under-represented in climate discussions, as well as those who are vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change. This includes Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, disabled residents, older adults, looked after children, and lower income households. Working with colleagues and partners such as the Co-production Implementation Group, H&F Faith Forum, Prevent Community Advisory Group, and local charities and community organisations, we will seek

to involve a truly diverse cross section of our community.

Delivering the strategy and monitoring progress

32. This first action plan is focused on the actions the council can take to move the borough towards net zero. The council will develop its work with local communities and partnerships to implement the strategy, and to reflect the actions and pledges taken by others in future updates to the strategy.
33. Delivering the strategy will be a significant programme with considerable logistical challenges; decarbonising the council's assets alone will require a plan for over 17,000 homes, schools and corporate buildings. New governance will be put in place to aid the strategy's implementation, with arrangements for programme delivery, political oversight, and resident involvement and review. A carbon management plan will be developed internally for the council to plan and monitor its route to net zero carbon across its own organisational assets and operations.
34. The challenge ahead involves a step change, demanding bold new thinking and experimentation. Not every action will be successful from the outset, and these will continue to be shaped and refined in the open, in collaboration with our local residents and organisations. The strategy will be an evolving document, with annual updates to report on progress against the actions, and reflect changes as more detailed feasibility is understood, and new policy contexts and technologies emerge. A full review will be undertaken in 2026.
35. The council will continue to measure and report the borough and organisation's carbon footprints annually.

Costs and funding

36. Delivery of this strategy is dependent on the availability of funding and affordability. These actions will require unprecedented levels of investment in an already financially challenging environment, and the sources for this remain uncertain.
37. High-level cost modelling undertaken by the council's independent environmental consultants estimated a net cost to the council to decarbonise the organisation at £248m. This is primarily a capital programme, with £213m of this estimated for the council's housing. Further cost modelling will be undertaken as part of a detailed retrofit strategy, to be undertaken over the next year. An initial HRA capital funding requirement of £106m will be included in the 12-year Asset Management Capital Strategy proposals, to be decided on by Cabinet in September 2021, and assumes significant grant funding will be available to meet these costs. The council will continue to seek external funding to match this investment, with a number of successful funding applications already achieved to date for energy efficiency works to council and private homes, and corporate buildings.
38. Some investment will result in operational savings: more energy efficient buildings and lower running costs of electric vehicles offer an estimated £11.2m

operational savings to the council by 2030. Climate action also offers system-wide savings through demand management, such as through reduced levels of waste, and reduced pressure on the health system from illnesses related to air quality and cold homes. We will quantify and communicate these benefits wherever possible to build strong business cases for investment.

39. The strategy and action plan include high-level estimated costs for decarbonising the council's assets. Costs of actions will be dependent in many cases on the extent of the activity undertaken, and detailed cost and benefit analysis will be needed at project planning stages. The cost of decarbonising the borough is highly uncertain and subject to changing costs, including from adoption of new technology and changing national policy. It is likely to require in excess of £2 billion, for which investment will be needed from government, businesses and residents.
40. The costs of action must also be compared to the counterfactual, the 'cost of doing nothing'. The risks of climate change increase with higher cumulative emissions, so early investment will save significant costs in the future. The Global Commission on Adaptation in 2019 estimated that a USD 1.8 trillion investment in adaptation measures would bring a return of USD 7.1 trillion in avoided costs and other benefits.
41. Innovative financing and purchasing models will be pursued to help deliver these actions and drive down the cost. Opportunities to achieve an income from carbon reduction will be sought to sow back into climate action. The council will continue to explore ways to subsidise these investments, including applying for grants from government and other sources, and lobbying for further support alongside its partners.
42. Further detail on our approach and actions around this are in the 'Finance and decision-making' section of the action plan.

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

43. 1. Do nothing

This is not recommended. The council has adopted an ambitious and challenging target of net zero for the borough by 2030, which will not be met without a clear strategy and action plan.

44. 2. Adopt the Climate and Ecology Strategy and Action Plan

This option is recommended. The strategy and action plan are the result of extensive internal and external consultation described above, and form a complete response to the council's net zero target for the borough based on the evidence around emissions and possible actions.

45. 3. Delay adoption of the strategy to allow for further development

This option is not recommended. The field of climate action is continually evolving, with developing technologies, approaches, and changes in costs expected to be a feature of the coming decade. The high-level actions needed

are well understood, and this strategy has the flexibility to accommodate a growing and changing evidence base as this develops. The breadth of the strategy is such that detailed costs will need to be modelled for programmes and individual projects such as building retrofit as they are developed. A high number of councils have a published plan, and delays to publication hinder certainty on the council's intentions for its own departments and external stakeholders, which delays action. The publication of a strategy provides the council with a stronger justification for bids to grant funding and for climate action it undertakes in the borough.

Equality Implications

46. Climate change is expected to have unequal impacts on different communities, with more vulnerable groups often exposed to the highest climate risks. The climate and ecology strategy explicitly seeks to redress this through action to both prevent further climate change, and to adapt to changes already in train.
47. Tackling the climate emergency will help us address local public health inequalities. In H&F 32% of the reduced life expectancy for the most deprived people is attributable to circulatory and respiratory reasons, which are exacerbated by polluted air, cold homes and extreme heat. Those who live in low-income areas are often the most affected by air pollution and yet also often those least responsible for producing it; in the UK 40,000 people die annually from air pollution-related diseases. In H&F 12,183 households were estimated to be in fuel poverty in 2019; cold homes cost the NHS £1.4bn a year.
48. The transition to a net zero economy will bring opportunities for many, but also risks and changes to existing fossil fuel-aligned areas of employment, such as gas technicians and self-employed drivers. One of the five principles of the strategy is to ensure a 'just transition', meaning that strong regard is given to the equality impacts of both action and inaction, that the costs and benefits of the climate programme are distributed justly, and those affected by the transition are supported to thrive in the new economy.
49. The strategy and action plan are at a high level. A meaningful equality impact assessment is not possible at this level, but there are likely to be implications when individual actions are progressed into policy and projects, and individual equality assessments will be undertaken against these at this point.

Risk Management Implications

50. The World Economic Forum recently highlighted the most likely threats in their Global Risk Report 2021. Four of the seven highest ranked risk areas, other than Infectious diseases and Digital Inequality and concentration, contained in their assessment were;
 - i. the threat of extreme weather events;
 - ii. Climate action failure;
 - iii. Human environmental damage;
 - iv. Biodiversity loss.Similarly, four of the seven highest ranked risk areas by impact were;
 - i. Climate action failure;

- ii. Biodiversity loss;
- iii. Natural resource crisis;
- iv. Human environmental damage.

The National Risk Register, produced by HM Government also recognises the challenges posed by environmental risk having also referenced the UK's Climate Change Assessment last published in 2017 and highlighted that more intense rainfall, more extreme weather and wetter winters are projected to increase the threat of damage and disruption as a result of all types of flooding. The government assesses the risk from four main types of severe weather:

- storms and gales with damaging wind speeds and possible lightning;
- low (sub-zero) temperatures and heavy snow for prolonged periods;
- heatwaves with high temperatures lasting several weeks, harming peoples' health;
- drought as a result of a lack of rainfall over several years, leading to water shortages.

Other risk factors determined in the National Risk Register include Air quality, specifically air pollution remains a high environmental risk to UK public health, and shortens lifespans.

It is clear also that there is no vaccine for environmental damage and as with COVID-19, climate change impacts are likely to play out disproportionately across countries, exacerbated by long-existing inequalities. There is only a short window of opportunity to redress these disparities. A shift towards greener production and consumption cannot be delayed until economies are revived. The Council has recognised the need to catalyse a transformation that amalgamates investment in green and inclusive economic recovery, and is progressing this work through the three enabling workstreams and the Strategy, Action and Engagement Plan.

To support and deliver on the Council's commitment it is important that robust internal governance and programme management arrangements are put in place to monitor and oversee the delivery of the action plans and the achievement of milestones/targets they contain.

Implications verified by: David Hughes, Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance, 07817 507 695

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

51. The adoption of a climate strategy and action plan are critical to progressing and communicating the council's programme for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions. This strategy provides clarity on the council's intentions, supports the council to engage with residents and partners on action needed within the wider borough, and provides an evidenced basis for climate action, investment, and applications for external support and funding.

Implications verified by: Jim Cunningham (Policy & Strategy Lead – 07468 365829)

Consultation

52. The resident-led commission held a public event at the Lyric Theatre with 100 residents prior to COVID-19 and undertook a digital public consultation exercise with the Council to engage a larger, more diverse cross-section of H&F including businesses, community groups and households. The results and analysis (Appendix D) have fed into the commission's findings and the council's strategy. In addition the strategy was developed collaboratively across the organisation, with around seventy officers representing all departments involved in working groups.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: H&F Climate and Ecology Strategy

Appendix B: H&F Climate and Ecology Action Plan

Appendix C: H&F Climate and Ecology Engagement Plan

Appendix D: Commonplace consultation report

Appendix E: H&F's carbon audit

Appendix F: H&F's greenhouse gas emissions