

## CABINET

<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Havering Climate Change Action Plan
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Damian White: Leader of the Council
<b>SLT Lead:</b>	Jane West: Chief Operating Officer Barry Francis: Director of Neighbourhoods
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<b>Policy context:</b>	Tackling climate change affects all Council policies
<b>Financial summary:</b>	Each element of the plan will be costed prior to implementation. Recommendations include the establishment of two permanent posts.
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	This is a key decision. Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more Significant effect on two or more Wards
<b>When should this matter be reviewed?</b>	Every six months
<b>Reviewing OSC:</b>	Environment

## The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	[X]
Places making Havering	[X]
Opportunities making Havering	[X]
Connections making Havering	[X]



## SUMMARY

Havering Council has resolved to review its policies to ensure that Havering leads the way on environmental protection and climate change.

Establishing the Havering Climate Change Action Plan signals a commitment by the Council to tackle climate change, influence decisions and bring together existing environmental policies. This plan will form part of the considerations when evaluating options for Council action and will establish the values of the Council and ensure that these values are considered when making policy decisions.

### Policy Statement

A policy statement provides a narrative on the importance of environmental considerations. It establishes the ambition of the Council to use its community influence in the field of tackling climate change and protecting the local environment for the benefit of all local residents. When coupled with a published Climate Change Action Plan it allows the Council to celebrate and record the investments made to protect the local environment and health priorities. Drawing upon previous Havering documents it is suggested that an overarching policy statement could read:

*The impacts and causes of climate change are recognised by the UK government and Havering Council has, over several years, developed strategies to identify and address these.*

*We believe we have a duty to act to reduce our carbon emissions in a way that has positive economic and welfare benefits for Havering residents, businesses and visitors and we are committed to continuing the initiatives we have already developed to protect Havering's green heritage and natural environment.*

*We are committed to the principles of sustainability and efficiency at the heart of our decision making and support residents and businesses across the borough to develop sustainable communities and services aligned to our Havering values.*

This statement could be considered and adjusted by Members with a wider policy consultation undertaken prior to its adoption. It would then replace previous statements.

### Values

The following values are suggested as a guide to the development of actions associated with the Havering Climate Change Action Plan:

- Taking pride in Havering
- Working with residents to make informed choices

- Being financially efficient and effective
- Building community wealth

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:-

1. Note the work already being undertaken to address Climate Change both within the Council and the local community
2. Approve the establishment of two permanent posts to support the ongoing work of the Climate Change Action Plan
3. Commit to Havering Council as an organisation becoming carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner
4. Agree that Cabinet receive a report every six months setting out the progress of the implementation and the impact of the Havering Climate Change Action Plan
5. Approve the themed action plans set out in Appendix A
6. Agree that officers publish emissions data for both the Council as an organisation and for the borough on an annual basis
7. Agree that officers design a carbon zero route map for the Council as an organisation
8. Agree that officers develop a branding for the Climate Change Action Plan and incorporate this in a Communications Plan for the wider community
9. Agree to adopt the principles of the Amazon Climate Pledge<sup>1</sup>. These are:
  - A. Regular reporting - Measure and report greenhouse gas emissions on a regular basis
  - B. Carbon elimination - Implement decarbonisation strategies in line with the Paris Agreement through real business changes and innovations, including efficiency improvements, renewable energy, materials reductions, and other carbon emission elimination strategies
  - C. Credible offsets - Neutralise any remaining emissions with additional, quantifiable, real, permanent, and socially-beneficial offsets to achieve net-zero annual carbon emissions by 2040

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainability.aboutamazon.com/about/the-climate-pledge#section-nav-id-1>

10. Recommend to Full Council that it endorses the content of the report and associated action plans

## REPORT DETAIL

### The National Picture

- 1.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 set a mandatory greenhouse gas reduction target for the UK of 80% by 2050, amended in 2019 to 100%. It also established the statutory Committee on Climate Change (CCC)<sup>2</sup> to monitor and advise on the UK's progress, measured against legally binding five-year 'carbon budgets', a maximum amount of emissions the UK should emit during these periods on its way to net zero<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.2 In December 2020 the National Audit Office (NAO) highlighted that local authorities will have a critical part to play in the Government's overall set-up for carbon net zero. Local authorities and combined authorities (as well as the Greater London Authority) provide a range of services to people which impact on net zero, such as transport, planning, social housing and recycling and waste services.
- 1.3 The NAO Report July 2021 found that the Government has not yet set out to local authorities how it will work with them to clarify responsibilities for net zero. Decisions about local authorities' role in delivering the national net zero target are incorporated in the government's overall strategy for net zero and the underpinning sector decarbonisation strategies.
- 1.4 The Government plans to publish a number of strategies, including a statement on its overall net zero strategy and the respective responsibilities at national, regional and local level before the next United Nations Climate Conference, COP26, in November 2021.

### The Regional Position: London Councils

- 2.1 At a London level, in November 2019, the London Environmental Directors Network (LEDnet) and the Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) issued a joint statement agreeing to:

*“act ambitiously to meet the climate challenge that the science sets out, and find political and practical solutions to delivering carbon reductions that also secure the wellbeing of Londoners,”*

and set out agreed principles for climate governance, citizen engagement and resourcing. The statement also committed to:

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<sup>2</sup> Reducing UK emissions: 2020 Progress Report to Parliament - Climate Change Committee (theccc.org.uk)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/carbon-budgets>

*“prioritise and support” the delivery of the seven major programmes, by “pooling our experience, expertise and resources and working together collaboratively.”*

- 2.2 The commitment statement and the seven major programmes being developed with Havering officers has been published by London Councils<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.3 The national and regional policies are interlinked within a number of disparate services, activities and existing plans which makes this a complex area to oversee. The Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set up dedicated organisations to support local authorities on energy decarbonisation and the Department for Transport (DfT) is setting up a similar body on active travel. However, not having a single point of national contact on climate change impacts and actions means that these initiatives are managed locally through the respective service Directorates. In developing the Climate Change Action Plan the aim was to simplify the complexity and develop an organisational culture which ensures the day to day activities and strategic policy making of the Council and its partners includes consideration of the climate priorities of the Council. In this way even small decisions contribute to the overall goal of reducing carbon emissions.
- 2.4 Havering Council works closely with the Mayor of London and London Councils on a number of environmental initiatives. In meeting the challenges of improving air quality, protecting the environment and addressing the causes of climate change, Havering has a range of statutory plans and local actions. These include the Local Implementation Plan for Transportation (LIP3), the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), and aligning local planning responsibilities with the London Plan.

## **The Havering Picture**

- 3.1 Environmental and sustainability initiatives have always been part of the policy approach in Havering. These initiatives and actions not only support the custodianship of the environment but also directly contribute to tackling climate change and improving the well-being of Havering residents.
- 3.2 It is recognised that service actions have not previously been recorded in a single place and have been treated as one-off actions. Not all of the positive work has been captured in a single overarching, coherent strategy but that does not mean that actions are not progressing. It does mean that, as work is being completed in isolation, greater benefits from joining up work could be missed. With the evolving climate action expected of Councils it is more important to share these initiatives and involve others throughout the community so that they can take their own steps to address the causes of climate change.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/36755>



## Methodology

- 4.1 In developing the revised Work Stream Action Plans (Appendix A) a series of themed workshops was held across all services. These enabled Directorates to identify and design service responses to tackle climate change. These actions and the overall approach have been further developed with the Cabinet and Directors to ensure that Council and community priorities are at the heart of the programme framework.
- 4.2 Service managers presented actions to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny which outlined what is planned or is currently being delivered to further the climate agenda. This collaborative approach allows all participants to develop their actions to compliment a corporate narrative and enable any gaps to be filled.
- 4.3 The Cabinet and Directors identified the need to have a programme branding. The rationale for the branding was threefold:
  1. To communicate the importance placed by the Council on tackling climate change.
  2. To allow the individual service actions taken over a number of years to be viewed as part of a strategic plan.
  3. To be transparent in the delivery and development of actions.
- 4.4 The Communications Service developed a Havering brand of the “Climate Challenge”. Having a clear corporate narrative is important in furthering the Council’s leadership role to enable residents and businesses to make informed, sustainable choices. This holistic approach will allow efficiencies to be realised and will give a clear focus for all Directorates to promote the continued protection of the environment and commitment to tackling climate change.

### What is climate change?

- 5.1 Evidence shows that our planet is getting hotter. The warmest 20 years on record have been in the last 22 years, with the warmest four between 2015 and 2018<sup>5</sup>. Global average temperatures are currently 1°C higher than in the pre-industrial era, with predictions of global temperatures increasing by as much as 3-5°C by 2100.
- 5.2 We are already feeling the effects of the erratic weather patterns associated with climate change, such as heatwaves, floods and severe storms, loss of polar ice and rising sea levels. These will only get worse as global warming intensifies.

### What is causing climate change?

- 6.1 It is widely recognised by scientists<sup>6</sup> and governments that climate change is triggered by increasing levels of “greenhouse gases” in the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases trap heat energy from the sun in order

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<sup>5</sup> World Meteorological Organisation

<sup>6</sup> AR5 Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis — IPCC



to regulate the Earth's temperature. This is called the "greenhouse effect". Without greenhouse gases, the average temperature of the earth would be -18°C. However, as the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere increases, so too does the temperature.

6.2 Four of the most important greenhouse gases and a few of their main sources are shown in Table 1 below.

Greenhouse Gas	Source
Carbon Dioxide CO <sub>2</sub>	Combustion of fossil fuels in heating, electricity generation, transport etc
Methane CH <sub>4</sub>	Waste fermentation; oil and gas; agriculture
Nitrous Oxide N <sub>2</sub> O	Agricultural soil management (fertiliser); chemical production; biomass burning
Fluorinated gases "F gases"	Refrigeration; propellants (aerosols and foams)

*Table 1 Greenhouse gases and their origins*

6.3 Reducing the amount of greenhouse gases will help to tackle climate change. This can be done in two ways:

- lowering the emissions we are sending into the atmosphere, from activities such as domestic heating, power generation, transport and intensive agriculture
- removing greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere, for example by capturing carbon created during industrial processes before it is released or by planting more trees to offset emissions.

### **What does it mean to be net zero?**

7.1 Net zero means achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere and those taken out. When what we add is no more than what we take away we reach net zero. This state is also referred to as carbon neutral.

7.2 Net zero looks at emissions overall, allowing for the removal of any unavoidable emissions, such as those from aviation or manufacturing. Removing greenhouse gases could be via nature, as trees take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, or through new technology or changing industrial processes.

## Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions

- 8.1 Emissions are broken down into three categories, or “scopes”, in order to better understand where they are coming from.<sup>7</sup>

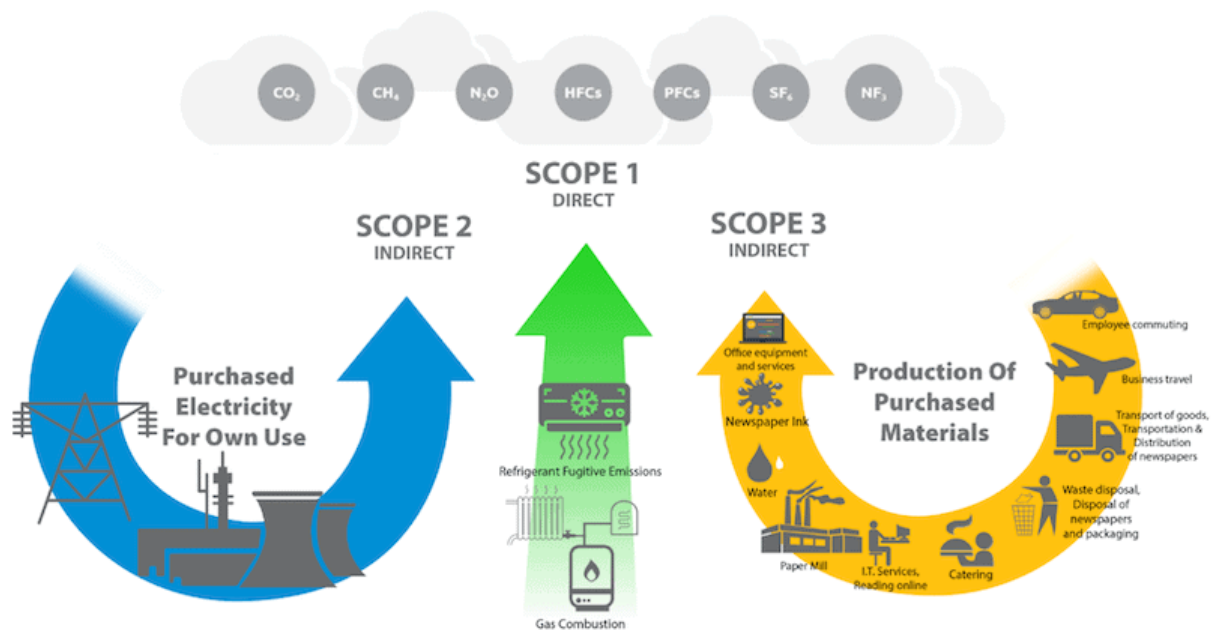


Figure 1 Greenhouse gas emissions by scope 1, 2 and 3

Scope 1 – All Direct Emissions from the activities of an organisation or under their control. This includes fuel combustion on site such as gas boilers, fleet vehicles and air-conditioning leaks.

Scope 2 – Indirect Emissions from electricity purchased and used by the organisation. Emissions are created during the production of the energy and eventually used by the organisation.

Scope 3 – All Other Indirect Emissions from activities of the organisation, occurring from sources that they do not own or control. These are usually the greatest share of the carbon footprint, covering emissions associated with business travel, procurement, waste and water.

## The Havering context - Local information sources

### ClimateView

- 9.1 ClimateView<sup>8</sup> is a climate-action technology company who use science, data and academic research to help cities and local authorities understand their local carbon emissions. By using ClimateView's interactive tool, officers have been familiarised with the sources of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions within the borough, and have gained a deeper understanding of the environmental impact of their actions and policy decisions. The ClimateView tool has supported officers in the development of their action plans and provides worked examples of areas where the Council can exert control over CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and where the Council can

<sup>7</sup> GHGprotocol.org

<sup>8</sup> ClimateView

influence behaviours to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The tool is based on five socio-economic sectors, which are Transport, Buildings, Industry, Energy and Waste.

## BEIS figures

- 10.1 The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) publishes carbon dioxide emissions for all UK local authorities and regions on an annual basis. The latest data available is from 2019.<sup>9</sup> These figures have been used to produce an interactive report which shows Havering's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions over the past 14 years in comparison to other London Boroughs. The report also analyses CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector (public sector, industry, commercial, domestic and transport) and shows how much each of these sectors contributes to the total annual emissions.

Emission Source by Year

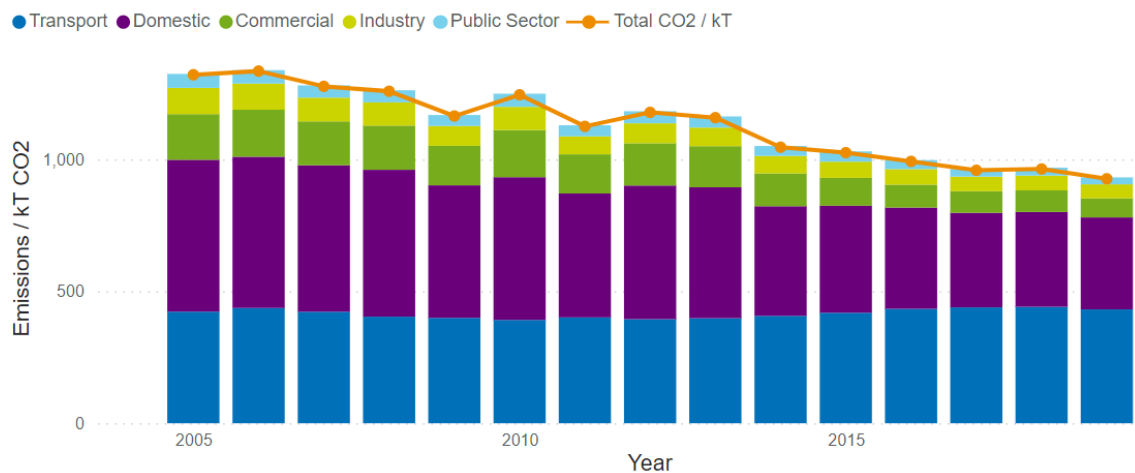


Chart 1 Havering's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector 2005 - 2019

- 10.2 The largest contributors to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Havering are the Domestic Sector and the Transport Sector, which together were responsible for over 80% of total emissions in 2019.
- 10.3 Domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Havering have decreased since 2005, and the same is true for all local authorities. Emissions in this sector are largely attributable to gas and electricity consumption for use in our homes. The main factors which have a big effect on reducing domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are using less coal for electricity generation and using less gas in our homes.
- 10.4 Transport is currently accountable for almost 50% of all CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Havering. This includes freight and passenger transport, both for private and business purposes. Because the estimates are based on the distribution of traffic, the emissions figures include through traffic, and parts of trips into or out of the area, by residents and non-residents. The main factors which can have a big effect on reducing transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are making fewer road journeys and reducing petrol and diesel

<sup>9</sup> UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019 - GOV.UK

consumption, by using more fuel-efficient vehicles, and switching to hybrid or electric vehicles.

- 10.5 There has been a reduction in emissions from all other sectors in Havering since 2005, including the public sector which has seen a 50% decrease in emissions between 2005 and 2019.

### **London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory (LEGGI)**

- 11.1 The London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory (LEGGI)<sup>10</sup> is an emission inventory which quantifies pollution releases to the environment. It also quantifies the pollutants removed through land use, land change and Forestry sector activities. It is produced on an annual basis to measure progress against the Mayor's CO<sub>2</sub>e (CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent) reduction targets for London. Since 2020 it has also been used to meet the reporting requirements for the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM)<sup>11</sup>.

### **University of Leeds Consumption based emissions accounts**

- 12.1 The University of Leeds has recently been commissioned by London Councils to produce consumption-based emissions accounts for boroughs for the period 2001 – 2018 (the most recent year data is available for), which will be based on the GLA-commissioned pan-London consumption-based emissions accounts<sup>12</sup>.

### **Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool**

- 13.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) has recently developed a free accounting tool for measuring emissions from council operations with Local Partnerships.<sup>13</sup> The tool measures heating, fugitive emissions (leaks and irregular releases), authority fleet, electricity, and electricity for electric cars and vans. It is straightforward to use and enables boroughs to align with a standardised methodology for local authorities in England and Wales to measure their emissions.

- 13.2 London Councils have recommended that:

- Boroughs should calculate their Scope 1, 2 and 3 council emissions using the Local Partnerships tool.
- Boroughs should use LEGGI for reporting Scope 1 and 2 borough-wide emissions. GLA and London Councils should collaborate in order to produce an annual report on the inventory.
- Boroughs should adopt the University of Leeds borough-level consumption-based emissions accounts for reporting on these emissions at the borough-wide level.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/leggi>

<sup>11</sup> London is taking action on climate change | Global Covenant of Mayors

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.emissions.leeds.ac.uk/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://localpartnerships.org.uk/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool/>

- London Councils, GLA and ReLondon should commit to commissioning an annual integrated report on pan-London and borough-level consumption emissions.
- Boroughs should share their emissions reporting outputs with London Councils, to enable borough-wide comparison and learning, including through the seven climate change programmes.

## **Air Quality Action Plan**

- 14.1 Havering's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2018 – 2023<sup>14</sup> provides an overview of the air quality across the borough and outlines the actions required to improve it. It focuses on the levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>x</sub>) in the air we breathe. The main sources of these harmful pollutants are road transport, heating systems and construction. Actions taken to reduce their levels should also have a positive impact on the emission of greenhouse gases, most notably CO<sub>2</sub>.

## **Corporate Estate**

- 15.1 The Council measures and reports the borough and organisation's carbon emissions on an annual basis, and we have reduced the carbon footprint of our Corporate Estate by 37% over the past 3 years. Improvements to street lighting (switching to LED bulbs) have reduced annual energy consumption by 69%, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 120% over the past 8 years.

## **The Programme Approach**

- 16.1 As can be seen from the science, tackling climate change and protecting Havering's environment affects all areas of the Council and each Directorate has a specialist contribution to make. These contributions tackle either the direct emissions caused and controlled by the organisation or, by the Council acting in a leadership capacity, influence and raise awareness amongst partners and the wider community.
- 16.2 Managing such a wide ranging set of activities lends itself to a programmed approach. This approach requires service matter experts to integrate climate change impacts into the services they are accountable for in order to deliver the Council's Climate Change Policy. The approach not only gives a corporate grip on actions but also enables the flexibility to adjust tactics to the changing science, funding and technological advances. It also allows the wider community to track progress and understand their role in delivering a low carbon and "green" Havering.
- 16.3 The Council has a number of statutory and organisational plans which already contribute to the overall climate agenda. To avoid duplication and confusion, these plans, which have established governance and targets, will not be replicated in the Climate Actions but will be referenced. The Climate Actions will be aligned to support and strengthen delivery against the Council's existing plans and strategies.

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<sup>14</sup> Havering Air Quality website

Each of these plans, through their review cycles, will set improvements for both health and climate actions. In doing so, the following themes, which are intrinsically linked to deliver good outcomes for Havering residents, should be considered:

- All actions should be taken in a Havering context
- There should be a focus on measurable actions
- Actions need to be designed in such a way as to communicate with and influence the wider community
- Plans should incorporate steps which will enhance environmental awareness, leading to a culture change within the organisation
- The environmental impacts of policy changes and decisions must be considered.

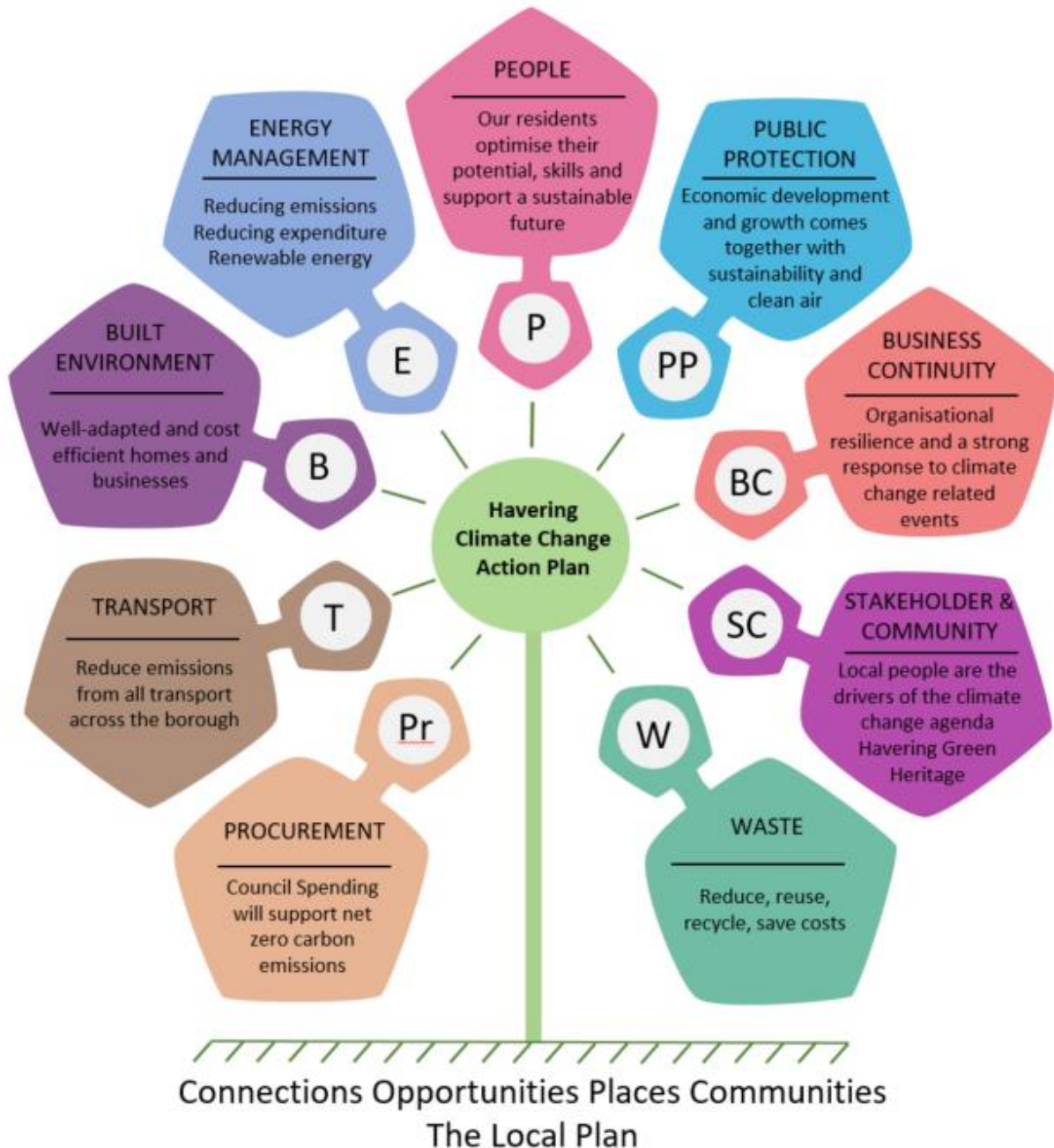


Figure 2 Climate Change Work Stream Diagram

## **Governance**

- 17.1 The proposed Climate Change Action Plan will remain a live document with annual updates to report on progress against actions, in order to allow for:
- Science and knowledge growing
  - Technological changes
  - Strategies developing
  - Feasibility to be considered and evaluated
  - Actions to be refreshed
- 17.2 The Action Plans set by respective Directorates are included as Appendix A. These plans will be reviewed annually and managed throughout the year at the Cleaner & Safer Steering Group, chaired by the Director of Neighbourhoods.
- 17.3 A key activity in continuing the Havering tradition to tackle carbon emissions is to consolidate an Action Plan which is focused on the actions the Council can take to move the borough towards net zero. 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.
- 17.4 The Council now has direct control over less than a twentieth of the borough's emissions however changes in behaviour and investment are needed from all our residents, businesses and partners to meet the national net zero target by 2050. The Council will develop its work with local communities and partnerships to deliver net zero, and future updates to the strategy will reflect the actions and pledges taken by others. The delivery of this goal and the construction of further actions will be subject to an annual review of outputs to give political oversight and resident review. Performance will be reported to Cabinet twice yearly and the programme of projects will be internally measured monthly by the Cleaner and Safer Steering Group.

## **Consultation, Engagement and Communication**

- 18.1 Throughout the development of this plan Members have identified consultation and engagement, in the widest possible sense, as important to delivering improvement. As the Climate Change Action Plan is complex, cross cutting and interdependent, the type and nature of the engagement will vary depending on the audience. The most effective means of communication will be assessed for audiences such as businesses, schools, the voluntary sector, residents, tenants, suppliers, other public sector bodies and others. To ensure that this ambition has a focus, a specific work stream on stakeholder engagement has been established which will build upon the existing Community Compact Forum.
- 18.2 Each service will build tackling climate change into their operational and routine consultation. In addition the annual Corporate Communications Plan will ensure that all routes of communication will raise awareness of the climate challenge. This will identify how all stakeholders can “do their



bit” to ensure Havering is at the forefront of excellent environmental custodianship.

- 18.3 This wider conversation is ongoing and will develop as the Council listens and receives feedback from all partners, residents and interested stakeholders.

## **Conclusion**

- 19.1 The Council has a range of disparate mainstream policies and strategies, all of which contribute to environmental improvement and tackling climate change. These policies or strategies are at different stages of review and implementation. To ensure that there is no duplication or confusion of focus it is proposed to implement a flexible, programmed approach to taking action.
- 19.2 A successful approach will involve a culture change in decision making which empowers service experts to take account of climate change activities and to actively look for ways to contribute to the Council’s ambitions.
- 19.3 The Leader of the Council and Cabinet have made the need to act to tackle climate change a priority. To ensure that all partners and officers understand the importance of this priority there is a need to refresh and restate the overarching policy to reduce carbon emissions.

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision**

The Climate Change Act 2008<sup>15</sup> is the basis for the UK’s approach to tackling and responding to climate change. The Climate Change Act commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. The 100% target was based on advice from the Climate Change Commission’s 2019 report, ‘Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming’<sup>16</sup>.

Actions in this strategy bring with them a host of benefits fundamental to the well-being and prosperity of our communities. Many of these offer significant positive feedback loops. Reducing air pollution, for instance, can improve life expectancy, allow people to be more active, reduce days missed from school and work through sickness, and relieve pressure on the NHS, freeing up budgets to be refocused on other needs. Some of the organisational benefits identified during the review are set out in Figure 3.

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<sup>15</sup> Climate Change Act 2008 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk))

<sup>16</sup> Net Zero - The UK's contribution to stopping global warming - Climate Change Committee ([theccc.org.uk](https://theccc.org.uk))



*Figure 3 Importance of Sustainability in Havering*

Action on the climate will also help the Council deliver on a number of other outcomes:

- Improving air quality, including through cycling, walking, electric vehicles, and removal of gas boilers
- Improving health and well-being, including through warm homes, cycling, access to green space, and sustainable diets
- Reducing poverty and inequality, through energy efficient, fuel poverty-proof homes, reskilling for green sectors, and access to clean air and green space
- Creating green growth, skills and employment opportunities for local people
- Enhancing biodiversity, by increasing and improving green space

### “Havering Acts”

The Council has always valued the green heritage of the Borough and, through numerous strategies and action plans, has acted to tackle climate change, introducing three targeted Action Plans to reduce carbon emissions. These focus on carbon emissions and the green heritage and have led to a number of notable achievements, as set out in Appendix B.

The Council now has the opportunity to double down on actions and develop a culture which will embed environmental consciousness in all decision making.

However, not all London Boroughs are spatially similar and it is important that the local context of regional and national policies is incorporated in the design of local actions. This will take account of local borough circumstances and local priorities such as:

- age profile
- geographical size
- transport connectivity
- geography of the Borough
- regeneration ambitions
- protected equality characteristics

Full Council agreed to review its policies and actions in relation to climate change and the environment.

#### **Other options considered:**

To maintain the current action plans within existing policies and strategies and not update them. This does not align with the decision of Full Council to lead on environmental policies, or the current government legislative ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2050.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks**

The net cost of decarbonising Havering is significant and, at this time, impossible to estimate. Currently there is a regional and national exercise to scope the cost of capital works which will inform the management of local finance and investment. As there is a statutory commitment to achieve net zero the government and businesses are allocating resources to meet the challenge. These are being released as discrete funding streams to Councils, businesses and residents. It is clear that innovative financing and purchasing models will be required to help deliver actions and drive down costs.

At a Directorate level, Havering is participating in a number of these opportunities and will need to continue to explore ways to supplement investments, including applying for grants from government and assisting partners and the voluntary sector to apply for funding from a range of sources.

In respect of local funding streams the range of additional funding across all work streams is difficult to estimate. Detailed costs for meeting the Council's climate ambitions will be produced at the project planning stage and presented to Members for decision. It is expected that many of these costs will be met from within existing capital and MTFs revenue budgets but this will need to be established when business cases are developed. Any additional funding and investment for 2022/23 will be considered and approved as part of the Council's annual budget setting process. The two new permanent posts identified in the recommendations will be funded from existing resources.

The Council is aware of the requirements of particular projects to decarbonise the Borough and these initiatives are being developed at a service level as part of our forward planning. As such, officers are able to incorporate many of the costs from existing budgets. Some initiatives however will require funding decisions and investment to succeed and the Council will need to recognise these costs in future budgets if it is to meet the targets set out in this report.

The Council will work closely with its partners and the Government to maximise external funding to support these initiatives.

There are however significant risks associated with the delivery of the targets in this report. These risks include:

- Additional demand for services – Population and demand increases may for example increase the number of vehicles the Council requires to deliver its services over the next few years. The Council will renew its fleet to use the most energy efficient vehicles we can afford but demand may require an increase in volume.
- Affordability – The Council has set an ambitious target of net zero carbon by 2040. Every effort will be made to achieve this target but the Council must always fulfil its statutory duties and finances may dictate that some initiatives have to be delayed or stopped if government or other external funding is not available.
- Impact – Extensive modelling has already been undertaken to establish the baseline carbon impact of Council operations. Further work will be required on a project by project basis.
- External Factors – Other external factors may impact on the Council's ability to deliver its targets. The COVID pandemic continues to have a significant impact on Council services and finances with large increases in the number and complexity of need of social care clients requiring support. This is restricting the ability of the Council to invest in other service areas. It is possible that other unforeseen events may happen which would place other unexpected pressures on the Council budget. The Council's Business Continuity Plan sets these possibilities out in more detail.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

There are no immediate legal implications of adopting the recommendations in this Report. However, given the commitments set out in the recommendations, a failure to achieve these targets may give rise to potential legal challenges. As and when more detailed plans are considered, legal advice on the implications will be provided.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

A number of the actions contained within the Action Plan at Appendix A have significant implications for the Council's workforce and on the HR&OD service that supports the Council. These implications range from additional training, learning and development to a designing a Council wide culture change programme which covers climate change issues. Wherever possible, delivery will be supported by redirecting or reprioritising existing HR resources.

### **Equalities implications and risks:**

The Council is required, when exercising its functions, to have due regard for, and take steps to, eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people. This involves ensuring that decisions,

arising from the Council's ambition to tackle climate change, remove and minimise disadvantages of groups with protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race & Religion
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation

Having an Energy Strategy to tackle carbon emissions assists households facing increasing energy prices who have limited scope to control the negative effects. Havering Council is already participating in initiatives for these households by:

- investing in the thermal efficiency of the Council owned housing stock,
- improving the energy performance of new builds through planning regulations,
- accessing Government grants and welfare support to improve the thermal efficiency of non-Council stock homes.

These actions will reduce harmful carbon emissions and improve the health of residents.

In terms of tackling carbon emissions in the Borough, evidence shows that the younger and older generations are more adversely impacted. Having a focus on reducing pollution and promoting more sustainable forms of travel through making clear the travel options allows residents to make an informed choice. It is recognised that the transition to cleaner methods of transportation might adversely affect protected groups, particularly the elderly and disabled, and service decisions will need to address these impacts.

The Environment Agency (July 2021) considered the need to address environmental inequalities as part of the "levelling up" agenda and highlighted how poorer communities have higher exposure to air pollution, flood risk and poor water quality in rivers. Therefore the efforts of the Council to respond to the externalities of climate change will contribute to the Government's levelling up agenda.

### **Health and Wellbeing implications and risks:**

Public and individual health is at the heart of everything the Council does. Tackling climate change and improving the environment is core to protecting and improving the health and well-being of all people who live, work, visit and play in the Borough. Each work stream will include representatives with public health expertise who will ensure that the health improvements of having a well-managed environment are identified and progressed.

According to the World Health Organization, climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. Climate change impacts health directly through weather extremes (heatwaves and floods) and indirectly

through disruption to natural systems, such as changing patterns of disease that impact on both human and animal health, and social systems<sup>17</sup>. Equally, protecting and improving the biodiversity of the Borough plays an important role in improving the health and wellbeing of residents.

In the UK, extreme weather events already have a significant impact on public health, resulting in increased deaths and ill health<sup>18</sup>. Climate change is described as having the most impact on those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged<sup>19</sup> and is anticipated to widen health inequalities.<sup>20</sup>

Extreme high temperatures contribute to deaths from cardiovascular and respiratory disease, especially in older people. High temperatures affect air quality by raising the levels of ozone and other pollutants in the air that exacerbate cardiovascular and respiratory disease. Pollen and other aeroallergen levels are also higher in extreme heat, which can trigger asthma.

According to UK Health Security Agency, “20% of homes are currently overheating in today’s climate, and 90% of hospital wards are of a type prone to overheating”.<sup>21</sup> These influences on health have far-reaching impacts; from interrupting children’s education as a consequence of absences from school through sickness, through to greater demands on NHS and social care services, with the elderly, those with underlying conditions, and those living in accommodation not designed or adapted to deal with climate change being among those most affected. This is of particular concern to the Council as the population of Havering is relatively old in comparison with the rest of London, with the number of people aged 85 and above predicted to increase by 31% from 7,600 in 2018 to 9,900 in 2030.<sup>22</sup>

Heatwaves may lead to water shortages which can impact across all areas of society including agriculture, in turn leading to food shortages and unstable food prices. Climate change has been observed to influence the ecology, the impacts of which can affect human and animal health.

In 2013-14 the UK suffered the wettest winter for 250 years and 11,000 homes were flooded. There have been more recent episodes of flooding, including in 2021 when heavy rainfall led to flooding across the borough including Gidea Park and Rainham, affecting homes and businesses for many months.

Floods contaminate freshwater supplies, cause drownings and physical injuries, damage homes, overload sewerage systems, disrupt medical and health services, and interrupt critical supplies of utilities such as electricity. Experience of flooding can also have profound effects on people’s mental health and wellbeing that may continue over extended periods of time.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-0597/POST-PN-0597.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2018/11/26/the-climate-change-act-10-years-on/>

<sup>19</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/371103/Health\\_Effects\\_of\\_Climate\\_Change\\_in\\_the\\_UK\\_2012\\_V13\\_with\\_cover\\_accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371103/Health_Effects_of_Climate_Change_in_the_UK_2012_V13_with_cover_accessible.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/blogs/the-restructure-of-public-health-must-not-weaken-our-climate-change-response>

<sup>21</sup> <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2018/11/26/the-climate-change-act-10-years-on/>

<sup>22</sup> Havering JSNA

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/348903/Flooding\\_and\\_mental\\_health\\_essential\\_information\\_for\\_frontline\\_responders.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348903/Flooding_and_mental_health_essential_information_for_frontline_responders.pdf)



## BACKGROUND PAPERS

None