



## CABINET

**Subject Heading:**

Revised Havering Climate Change Action Plan (HCCAP) 2024-27

**Cabinet Member:**

Councillor Keith Darvill: Cabinet Member for Climate Change

**ELT Lead:**

Kathy Freeman: Strategic Director of Resources

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**Policy context:**

The impacts and causes of climate change have been recognised by Havering Council. The Council has developed strategies and goals to address these impacts and mitigate the effects of climate change.

**Financial summary:**

The costs of annually reviewing the Havering Climate Change Action Plan will be contained in the existing corporate financial provision.

**Is this a Key Decision?**

This is a Key Decision.  
(a) Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more.  
(c) Significant effect on two or more Wards.

**When should this matter be reviewed?**

April 2025

**Reviewing OSC:**

Places OSC

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

People - Things that matter for residents **X**

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy **X**

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place **X**

## **SUMMARY**

This report presents the revised Havering Climate Change Action Plan (HCCAP) 2024-27 which is attached as Appendix 1. It builds on the actions introduced in the HCCAP in 2021 and provides a framework for the Council's actions to deliver on its target of becoming carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner.

This is an evolving framework, and the Council will continue to update the approach over time; as targets change, new data becomes available, and following major Government decarbonisation strategies. Havering Council has a solid data base and a robust intelligence hub which leads the coordination and development of applied data.

The HCCAP is primarily focussed on actions to reduce greenhouse gases, but interlinks closely with a range of other Council strategies such as:

- Local Plan.
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.
- Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
- Cycling and Walking Strategy.
- Air Quality Action Plan.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.
- Reduction & Recycling Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approve and adopt the revised HCCAP 2024-27 in Appendix 1.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

The Climate Change Act 2008 places national targets on the reduction of emissions by 2050. In 2019, the UK became the first major economy in the world to legislate binding targets to reach net zero emissions by 2050 and two further interim targets were created in 2021. The momentum for climate change continues to gain pace.

Havering Council established the HCCAP in November 2021 with a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner and full Council overwhelmingly declared a Climate Emergency on 21 March 2023.

The HCCAP 2021 was reviewed in a Report to Cabinet on 14 June 2023 (see Background Papers). A further summary document was produced to highlight to residents the excellent work that has been carried out so far and what the Council has achieved (Appendix 2).

## **Cabinet, 10 April 2024**

The HCCAP 2024-27 has been refreshed and revised by service manager specialists who attend the Climate Change Action Board. The group is comprised of Work-Stream Leads from across the Council.

In addition, the Green Forum, chaired by the Lead Member for Climate Change, and the Climate Change Staff Forum, have played a role in developing and informing the HCCAP.

The revised HCCAP 2024-27 (Appendix 1) is set out under nine work streams each with a number of activities and actions. Some of these are long-term actions that have carried over from the previous HCCAP, and some are brand new actions.

The plan also outlines in detail why tackling climate change is important, the priorities requiring attention, the outcomes the Council wants to achieve and the wider benefits on offer.

The Climate Change Action Board will continue to meet monthly as per the Project Board Terms of Reference. The HCCAP will continue to be updated through regular reporting at this Project Board and to the Lead Member for Climate Change. This means that the HCCAP will be a living document.

From the ongoing engagement and the delivery of the existing Havering Climate Change Action Plan themes have emerged which can be summarised as follows:

- Connecting with people to encourage, influence and enable informed decision making and behaviour change.
- Responding to the effects of climate change on Havering residents and businesses by efficient planning of mitigation.
- Celebrating the actions and efforts of the Council in responding to the climate crisis.
- Producing credible data including a road map to carbon neutrality.
- Working with the voluntary sector to unlock the power of community action.
- Managing Council services and organisation to address climate change in an efficient and cost-effective way.
- Ensuring that the local skills provision will enable residents and businesses to take advantage of the employment and business opportunities emerging in the green jobs market.

Ongoing actions within the HCCAP will continue to progress towards the Council's carbon neutral target and will incorporate these themes.

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision:**

In September 2023, London Councils carried out a study to build on our understanding of the level of public awareness around, and attitudes to, the issues arising from climate change in London. 84 per cent of Londoners said they are concerned about climate change and 68 per cent of Londoners said their level of concern has increased over the past 12 months.

## **Cabinet, 10 April 2024**

The revised HCCAP 2024-27 will support the delivery of the Council's existing actions, refresh existing activities, and deliver new ones. It will ensure that environmental impacts are given due consideration in the delivery of Council services, decision making and, where possible, will ensure that the Council maximises the opportunity to deliver benefits, especially for residents. It will seek to encourage council suppliers, partners and stakeholders to adopt the same set of principles and support them to deliver their own climate change actions. It will encourage all stakeholders including local businesses, community groups and voluntary sector organisations to work together to deliver a shared outcome, making Havering a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable environment for all. It will facilitate the delivery of specific actions in response to the ambition for its services and activities to become carbon neutral by 2040 and risks not taking effective action to address the future risks that climate change presents.

The revised HCCAP 2024-27 deals with the approach to delivering the Council's aim of managing the response to climate change and the challenges it presents as depicted in the new Corporate Plan 2024-27. The Corporate Plan states the Council will report back on progress towards delivery of the HCCAP 2024-27, including how we are reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Council activity.

The recommendations proposed within the report, if approved, will facilitate the Council's ambition to become carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner and contribute to delivering emerging strategies such as the Healthy Weight Strategy and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. By implementing the HCCAP, the Council will be in a stronger position to deliver these commitments and the priorities associated with them.

### **Other options considered:**

That Cabinet does not adopt and approve the revised HCCAP 2024-27 as set out in Appendix 1. This is not recommended as it would be contrary to the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency on 21 March 2023 and the adopted climate ambitions.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

The work already undertaken, as described in the Report to Cabinet on 14 June 2023 (see Background Papers), to reduce the Council's carbon footprint has either been funded by successful grant bids or from existing resources. At present there are no financial pressures relating directly to climate change built into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

It is possible however that future climate change initiatives may require either match funding for grants or either capital or revenue funding to move forward. When these projects are identified the appropriate financial approval will be sought before they are agreed. There is a risk that the costs associated with delivering this plan will be unaffordable in the context of the current financial challenges which the Council faces, however, this risk is mitigated to some extent by the timeframe which the Council has set (i.e. to be carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner).

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It is probable that the Government or the GLA (Greater London Authority) will introduce new legislation which the Council will be required to adopt in relation to climate change. It is expected that external funding will be provided for any such requirement but there is a risk that the Council may have to fund initiatives in the future. Having a current Action Plan strengthens the Council's submissions for external grant funding.

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

There are no immediate legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The Council has an obligation under The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) to contribute to the net zero reduction of carbon emissions in the discharge of its functions and to comply with the national targets on the reduction of emissions by 2050.

Local authorities, in keeping with policy objectives implemented by the Greater London Authority and Central Government, must also comply with the requirement to meet the air quality objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and London Local Air Quality Management Framework and to mitigate the impact of climate change in the development of their local plans under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Council has general powers of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. This enables the Council to do anything which an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints and this therefore includes taking steps to reduce Council emissions, which may be supported by the Council entering into funding agreements.

Where additional funding is to be sought from external sources, any grant funding arrangements and agreements will duly need to be assessed for implications and risks. Further, where relevant any procurement should be conducted in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules set out in Part 4.4 of the Constitution.

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

A number of the actions contained within the Action Plan at Appendix 1 have 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 designing a Council wide culture change programme which covers climate change issues. Human Resources capacity to support the delivery of the Climate Action Plan will duly need to be consulted and assessed with the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

Implementation of the Action Plan will deliver a reduction in carbon emissions and improve the borough's air quality, leading to improvements for staff and their working environment.

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- i. the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- ii. the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;

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- iii. foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment/identity.

The Council is committed to all the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants and this is taken into consideration within the climate agenda.

An EIA has been completed for the revised Havering Climate Change Action Plan 2024-27 to identify any potential areas of concern. This includes potential impacts on those residents who are at a greater risk of fuel poverty which will be exacerbated by requirements to fit electric boilers and heat pumps which may increase household bills (socio-economic) as well as those residents whose first language is not English (ethnicity). Reasonable adjustments have been identified and included in the revised HCCAP 2024-27.

### **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 wellbeing of all people who live, work, visit and play in the Borough.

According to the World Health Organization, climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century<sup>1</sup>. 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. 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. Climate change is described as having the most impact on those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged and is anticipated to widen health inequalities.

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 conditions such as asthma.

According to the 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>2</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

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thelancet.com/countdown-health-climate>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2018/11/26/the-climate-change-act-10-years-on/>

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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.

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 in 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.

In terms of risk, both extreme cold and warm temperatures have the greatest effect on older people. A study in *The Lancet*<sup>3</sup> and reported on by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine<sup>4</sup> show for people over 85, the relative risk of mortality is highest at both extreme hot and cold temperatures.

For people below aged 85 the relative risk is higher at extreme cold temperatures than extreme hot. At all ages the risk increases sharply at extremely hot temperatures, whereas the risk increases more gradually as temperatures approach extreme cold.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

There are no specific implications or risks as a result of this report.

The Climate Change Act 2008, as amended, 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 the 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050.

Havering Council resolved to ensure that Havering leads the way on environmental protection and climate change and, in doing so, established the Havering Climate Change Action Plan (HCCAP) on 10th November 2021. In this Action Plan the Council agreed to monitor carbon emissions in the borough and committed Havering Council, as an organisation, to become carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner.

This report fulfils the requirement to report on emissions and the actions taken in respect of the HCCAP.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(22\)00138-3/fulltext#seccestitle130](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(22)00138-3/fulltext#seccestitle130)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/newsevents/news/2022/both-heat-and-cold-increase-risk-death-england-and-wales-rates-vary-across>

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Having Climate Change Action Plan (Working Document) 2024-2027 (Appendix 1)

Having Climate Change Action Plan Review Summary 2021 (Appendix 2)

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) (Appendix 3)

[Having Climate Change Action Plan 2021 and 2023 Update | London Borough of Havering](#)

[Climate Change Act 2008 | legislation.gov.uk](#)