

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF: Executive Member for Finance and Governance
Executive Member for Growth and Development

LEAD OFFICERS: Director of Growth & Development

DATE: Thursday, 13 February 2020

PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED: Growth and Development

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

KEY DECISION: Y

SUBJECT:

Climate Emergency Action Plan

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and set a target to be carbon neutral by 2030. This report presents for consideration a draft Action Plan to support the Council's carbon neutral ambitions.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- i. Approve the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan, enclosed at Annex 1;
- ii. Note the intention to hold a local Citizens' Inquiry on the Climate Emergency;
- iii. Note the proposal to submit the Action Plan to the Council Forum meeting in March;
- iv. Request an annual update report on progress in delivering the Action Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

A special report, published in 2018 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, warned that there is just a dozen years for global warming to be kept to a minimum of 1.5°C if substantial consequences for the planet and people are to be avoided. The report triggered a reaction around the world and led to local and national governments declaring a climate emergency and setting targets to cut emissions of carbon dioxide by between 2030 and 2050. The UK's national government and devolved administrations have done so, along with almost 70% of UK local authorities.

Blackburn with Darwen Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and set a target to be carbon neutral by 2030. The attached draft Action Plan sets out what the Council has done to date to tackle climate change and the actions it proposes to take to achieve its carbon neutral goal.

The actions are set out under the objectives for the plan, which are to:

- Make sound climate-related decisions;
- Create a resilient & attractive Borough;
- Be lean & clean with resources and energy;
- Travel lightly; and
- Capture more carbon

Some of the actions are already underway. Councillor Jane Oates has been appointed Climate Change Champion, procurement processes are being reviewed and the Council's Local Plan is being updated. Others need more development work and agreement with residents and partners. The Action Plan will evolve as costs, benefits and resources change, and new priorities emerge.

A Citizen's Inquiry into the climate emergency is scheduled for Spring 2020. This involves a representative group of local residents in discussing, hearing evidence and making proposals that will help inform the Council's Action Plan and the everyday actions of residents, businesses and partners. A third party is commissioned to run the Inquiry. They will randomly invite a large number of individuals and systematically recruit a group of around 30 that reflects the diversity of the Borough's population. The process is guided by an Oversight Committee of key stakeholders, including the Council.

Implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen by an officer working group, co-opting members from external organisations as required on a task and finish basis. The group will report to the Council's Management Board through the Director of Growth & Development. Interim progress reports will be made to the Executive Member for Finance & Governance with annual updates provided to the Executive Board.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Production of an Action Plan is a requirement of the Council's climate emergency declaration. It is a statement of what is required if the borough is to be carbon neutral by 2030. The main risk to the Plan is lack of finance needed to deliver the changes required. It is important, therefore, to work in partnership with residents, business and other sectors to find solutions, and to persuade Government of the need to both support and invest in places committed to delivering change. Production of the action plan fulfils one of the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration pledges.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Action Plan needs to be acknowledged as a key part of the Council's policy framework, informing and being informed by the Corporate Plan and its underpinning strategies, including the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the plan has financial implications that will have to be weighed against the Council's other priorities as detailed business plans for each action emerge.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Governance structures will need to be put in place to oversee the implementation of the plan.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Time, expertise and commitment will be required from both officers and members Officer to implement the Action Plan.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

10. CONSULTATIONS

None

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

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DATE:	20/01/2020
BACKGROUND PAPER:	