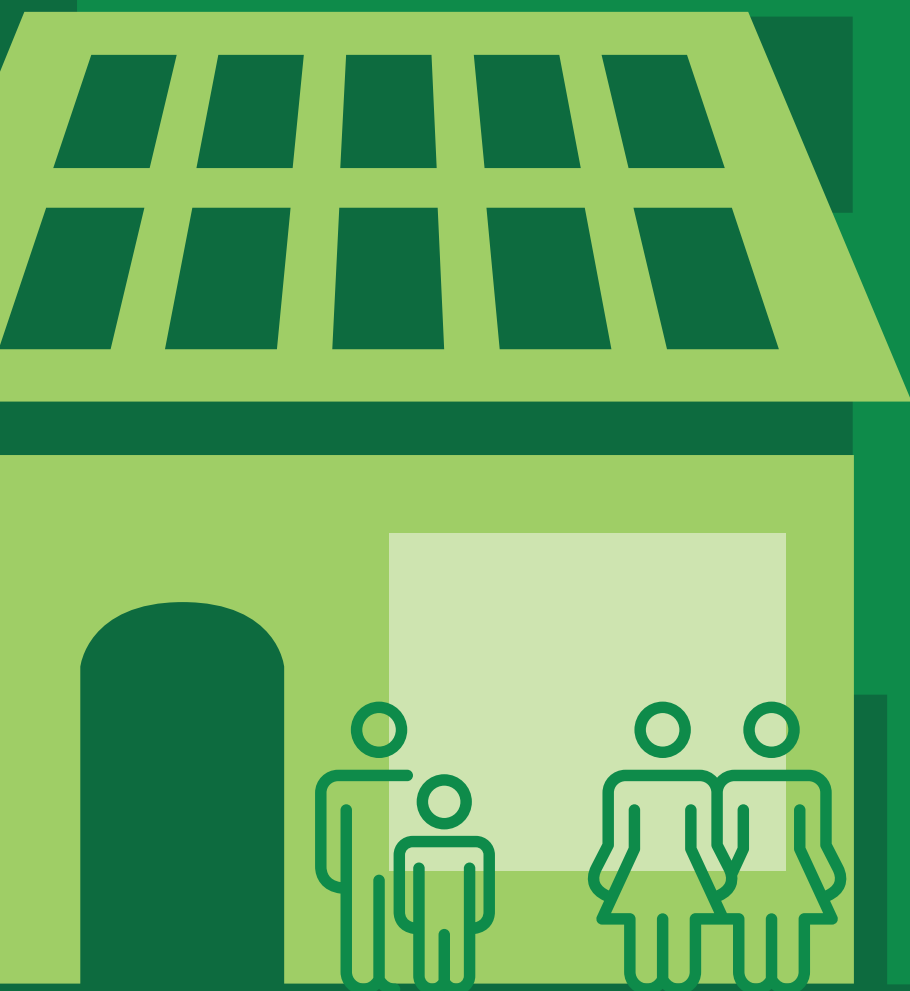


Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy



for Basingstoke and Deane 2021 to 2030



Basingstoke
and Deane

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FOREWORD



Leader Cllr Ken Rhatigan

Climate change remains arguably the largest threat to the world, despite the immediate challenge that has been presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, still live at the time of publication of this strategy. Additionally, air quality continues to cause significant health impacts.

It is vital we take local action to address this global threat, reducing emissions that cause climate change and air pollution. This is a key, cross-council issue, reflected in our current Council Plan.

I also consider that action in this area can bring significant benefits to the borough, particularly in the current context of economic recovery:

- A cleaner, greener, better place to live
- Strong business opportunities and jobs for now and the future
- Lower costs, in tackling this issue sooner rather than later

I'm pleased to set out this ambitious strategy to guide and shape actions moving forward and continue to embed this agenda within the borough.



**Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement
Cllr Hayley Eachus**

I am hugely proud that Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, which included the incredibly ambitious targets of becoming carbon neutral as a council by 2025 and carbon neutral as a borough by 2030. Although the council has made efforts to tackle climate change historically, this strategy represents a step change in ambition, to reflect this Climate Emergency.

Since the declaration we have already started taking action, however, this strategy sets out the framework and principles for action to achieve our aspirations.

Fundamental to us achieving our targets is the support and action of residents, communities and businesses within the borough and I look forward to engaging with these groups further.



INTRODUCTION

Climate change and air quality

The changing climate, as a result of human activity, is already having a huge impact on our world. An increase in extreme weather events, such as flooding, drought and heatwaves, is causing destruction, death, displaced communities, biodiversity loss and huge economic damage. Unless action is taken quickly then these events are predicted to get worse and more frequent.

Locally, within Basingstoke and Deane, the impact of climate change is also likely to have significant impacts for our residents, particularly our most vulnerable members of the community.

Additionally, air pollution has a significant impact on health, in particular through increased risks of heart and lung diseases and as contributing factor in the onset of cancer. Again, the most vulnerable in our society are most at risk, such as children and the elderly and those with existing underlying health conditions.

Climate change also has an impact on our natural environment locally and it is important that we take action to ensure our behaviours do not result in habitat loss or impact on biodiversity in the borough.

Although climate change and air quality are separate issues, the main sources of air pollution and the greenhouse gases that cause climate change are common to emissions from transport, buildings and industry. Therefore, the Council acknowledges that there are benefits and opportunities in developing synergistic policies to address air quality and climate change together:

- An integrated strategy should be more cost effective to implement than separate strategies or actions that may overlap or duplicate effort.

- An integrated strategy will avoid unintentional trade-offs or consequences of policies in one area being detrimental in the other (for example, historic policies that encouraged the take up of diesel vehicles to reduce carbon emissions which have increased air pollution).

Although the main focus of the strategy is tackling climate change, it sets out an approach to tackle these issues, as well as providing a framework for improvement in the borough for residents and visitors. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has a strong track record in tackling climate change and air quality. In just the last three years, since adopting an updated reporting tool for the 2016/17 year, the council has achieved a 19% reduction in carbon emissions, delivered under our previous 2014-2020 Climate Change Strategy. There are also no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the borough, based on a robust monitoring regime.

However, we know that more must be done to tackle climate change, internationally, nationally and locally, and to ensure that air quality remains good in the borough, particularly as the borough grows.

Alongside reducing emissions locally, to play our part in national and international efforts, it is also vital that we ensure the council and borough are resilient to expected changes as a result of climate change, including hotter summers and milder, wetter winters, along with an increase in extreme weather events. Adaptation to a changing climate is a key aspect of this strategy.

Climate Emergency Declaration

In light of the above, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 to build on work and give it renewed impetus as well as recognising the immediate threat that a changing climate means for us and future generations. In doing so the council resolved to:

- Make Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council operations carbon neutral by Dec 2025 by ensuring that 100% of its heating and electrical needs are met from renewable sources and cease the purchase and/or lease of any vehicle that is not low carbon;
- Pledge to work towards making Basingstoke & Deane net zero carbon by 2030, ahead of the current 2050 target, ensuring that reducing carbon emissions is embedded in all relevant Council decision making;
- Develop carbon reduction pathways, climate compliant strategies and plans, working with the county council, Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners in both the public and private sector to prioritise all opportunities to introduce such zero carbon and sustainable policies, action plans and targets;
- Undertake a Local Plan Update where the borough proposes policies for adoption in all areas that will drive zero carbon and sustainable development in Basingstoke and Deane;
- Ensure local people are able to contribute to the formulation and scrutiny of the strategic actions needed to address the environment and climate emergency by consulting on proposals and by organising an annual

'Tackling the Environment and Climate Emergency' meeting, hosted by the CEP Committee, in addition to the wide-range of existing opportunities for local people to make representations to the council;

- Develop an action plan and milestones to achieve emissions reductions within the council's control as well as how to work with other institutions, including the government, to achieve reductions in emissions outside of the council's direct control, covering both greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

Alongside these aims within the declaration, the council is also committed to reducing air pollution emissions as far as practicable for the protection of human health and to ensure air quality within the borough does not deteriorate.

Strategy preparation

This updated strategy has been prepared following the Climate Emergency declaration and in consultation with our residents, businesses and other organisations in the borough.

It sets out the key principles and approach for meeting the aspirations in the declaration and continuing to improve air quality in the borough through to 2030, our target date for a net zero carbon borough.

The council worked with consultants WSP in the preparation of this strategy. They undertook the underlying analysis that shaped this strategy (such as the baseline carbon footprint of the council and borough), as well as modelling the impact of proposed actions to help shape the council's initial action plan.



Policy background

National policy has begun to tackle climate change, most notably with the UK Climate Change Act 2008, that was amended in 2019 to set a legal commitment for the UK to be net zero carbon emissions by 2050. A number of other policies are now being proposed to support this aim, such as the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles.

There are also strong requirements in air quality, in particular the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Regime under the Environment Act 1995.

Other local authorities are also taking this issue seriously, with the majority of councils now having declared a Climate Emergency. This includes Hampshire County Council ([Hampshire County Council Climate Change Strategy 2020-25](#)) and several neighbouring district councils. Although this strategy focuses on Basingstoke and Deane, collaboration will be vital in achieving the aims set out. This includes with other local government colleagues, as well as local town and parish councils and communities.

Locally, BDBC also have key vision documents for the future of the borough, in which climate change and sustainability are key. [Horizon 2050](#) sets out a vision for what residents want and expect the borough to look like in 2050. The recently adopted [Council Plan 2020-24](#), informed by Horizon 2050, sets out the priorities for the council, with 'Protecting and enhancing our environment' being a key policy that cuts across the rest of the plan.

This work also dovetails with other existing strategies and work to date and moving forward, notably:

- [Transport Strategy](#)
- [Cycling Strategy](#)
- [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)
- The [Adopted Local Plan](#) and [Local Plan Update](#)
- [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#)
- [The Economic Recovery Framework](#) (in light of COVID-19)

It is worth noting that there are a number of complementary environmental strategies and areas that support efforts to tackle climate change and air quality. However, the focus of this strategy is to reduce emissions that cause climate change and air pollution issues, rather than being an all-encompassing environmental strategy. As such, it seeks to work with the strategies above, and other work on areas such as waste and recycling, rather than seeking to duplicate these areas, or address all associated issues.

Vision for Basingstoke and Deane

The council is committed to continuing to make Basingstoke and Deane a great place to live. Achieving the targets and aspirations set out in our Climate Emergency declaration and in this strategy will not only mitigate against the disastrous consequences of climate change and air pollution, and ensure a resilient borough, but will also yield a whole host of additional benefits to 2030 and beyond, contributing to the vision set out in [Horizon 2050](#).

These include:

- A cleaner and healthier place to live
- Quieter and safer roads
- Increased accessibility by different transport modes
- Tackling of fuel poverty and ensuring no increase in inequality
- Protection of biodiversity
- Creation of new jobs and economic growth/recovery

Glossary

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) – these gases trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere and prevent it escaping into space. This effect causes climate change.

The main greenhouse gas is Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) but there are other greenhouse gases – methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O) and 'F gases'. Although these gases are less prevalent than CO₂, by volume they have a greater greenhouse effect.

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) – this takes into account the impact of all the different GHGs, displaying it as the amount of CO₂ that would have the same impact. This allows the impact of all the GHGs to be expressed as single number, for simplicity.

Most people often use the phrase 'carbon emissions' as a catchall term.

Carbon neutral - Carbon neutrality, or having a net zero carbon footprint, refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount absorbed or offset.

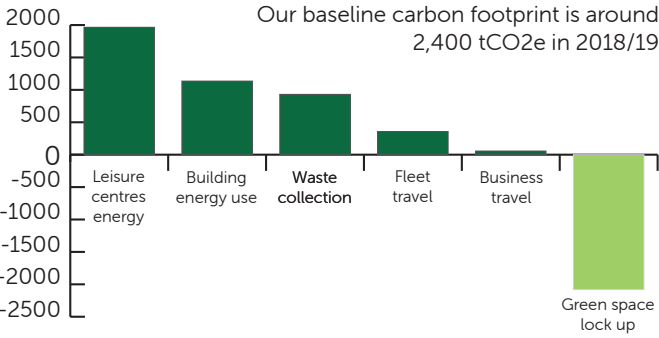
Scope of emissions – Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has used the definition of emissions from the Green House Gas (GHG) Protocol, which separate emissions into three 'Scopes':

- **Scope 1** – Direct emissions. Occur from sources that are owned or controlled by the company. For example, company owned vehicles or the burning of fuels, such as gas, on site.
- **Scope 2** – Electricity indirect emissions. GHG emissions from the generation of purchased electricity consumed by the company.
- **Scope 3** – Other indirect emissions. An optional reporting category for all other indirect emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the company. These occur from sources not owned or controlled by the company. For example, procurement and supply chain emissions.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Council operational emissions

The baseline year for the carbon footprint of council operations is 2018/19. The net council



emissions are 2,362 tonnes CO2e.

What's included?

The carbon footprint baseline of the council has been based primarily on Scope 1 and 2 emissions, but also includes some Scope 3 emissions (see above for definitions), primarily for some services delivered on behalf of the council – waste collection and leisure facility management for example. These activities represent a significant proportion of emissions and so their inclusion is important in being representative of the operations of the council.

The council also has a significant property portfolio. For the purposes of the calculation of our own operational carbon footprint, only buildings for which the council is responsible for paying the energy bills are included. These are covered by our Scope 1 and 2 emissions. In these situations the council are

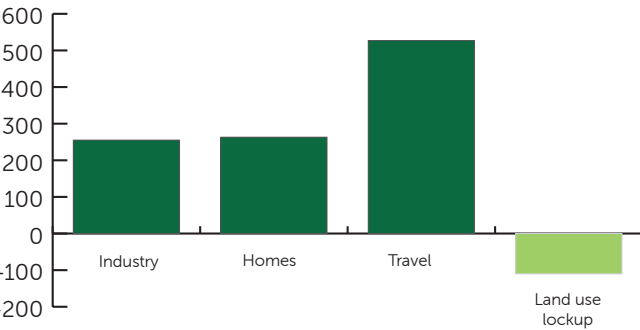
responsible for both the fabric of the building and how it is used, and so have direct control on the energy consumption, as well as the ability to reduce this. The only exception to this is our leisure facilities, where the council outsources operations of these buildings.

This baseline also includes the carbon absorbed (carbon sequestration) each year by the green spaces that the council own and manage. These make a significant impression on our net emissions baseline and accounted for absorbing 2080 tonnes in 2018/19 which reflects the borough's high quality environment and the land that we manage.

It is important that measurement of council emissions is comprehensive, but also that data is sufficiently available and measurable, in order to accurately monitor against this baseline and inform mitigation actions. This current baseline does not include our wider indirect/Scope 3 emissions such as those from our procurement activity. We recognise the importance of reducing these emissions so intend to measure these in future. However, our 2025 net zero carbon target is based on what's included in this carbon footprint baseline.

Borough-wide emissions

The baseline carbon footprint of the borough is around 999,000 tonnes of CO2. This is based on latest [national government datasets from 2018](#).



This baseline includes:

- Energy used in manufacturing and process industries
- Building emissions – from energy used to heat and power homes, industry and offices
- Vehicle emissions – including cars, lorries, buses and trains making both local journeys in the borough as well as those passing through the borough
- Carbon locked up each year in woodland, meadows and hedgerows across the borough

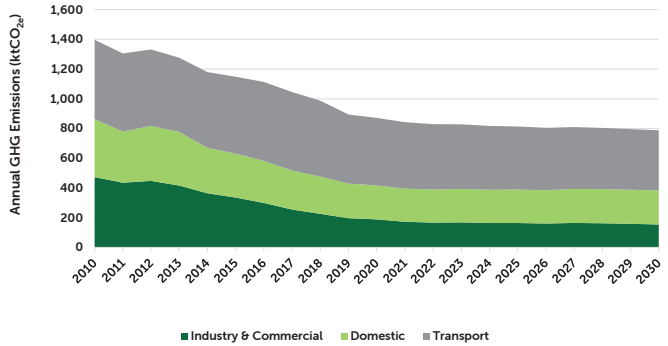
These are formal boundaries for measuring borough emissions and with scope to monitor progress against targets, albeit with a slight time lag in availability of data.

There are other important areas where the council intend to work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the borough that are not currently included. Consideration will be given how to accurately measure the baseline of these activities, in order to monitor progress in tackling these:

- The products and materials bought, consumed and thrown away by residents and business, including food
- The products and services provided by businesses in our borough.
- Emissions from agricultural processes
- Residents and businesses contribution to aviation and shipping emissions.

Direct greenhouse gas emissions in the borough have reduced by almost one third since 2010.

Most of this reduction has come from the growth in renewable energy production across the country, including a move away from coal powered electricity generation to the use of wind and solar energy through the grid. Whilst this is expected to continue in the future, delivery of a zero carbon borough will require action on some of the harder areas, especially travel and transport where emissions have varied little since 2010.



Air quality

In the borough, the main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO2) which primarily arises from the use of vehicles. Other sources include domestic and commercial heating (combustion). We use 'diffusion tubes' to measure levels of NO2 in the air at a number of locations throughout the borough. The monitoring locations change regularly, usually every 12 months. This robust monitoring process highlights that air quality is generally good throughout the borough, and allows us to place additional focus and monitoring on any areas of potential concern.

The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Regime under the Environment Act 1995. This includes a duty to:

- Review the concentrations of pollutants in the air for which national objectives are prescribed, known as an Air Quality Objectives;
- Submit an Annual Status Report (ASR) to DEFRA. Copies of our historic air quality reports can be found [here](#); and
- Where a local authority demonstrates through an ASR that an Air Quality Objective is, or will be, exceeded at a relevant location, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) should be designated leading to the declaration of an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) within 12 months.

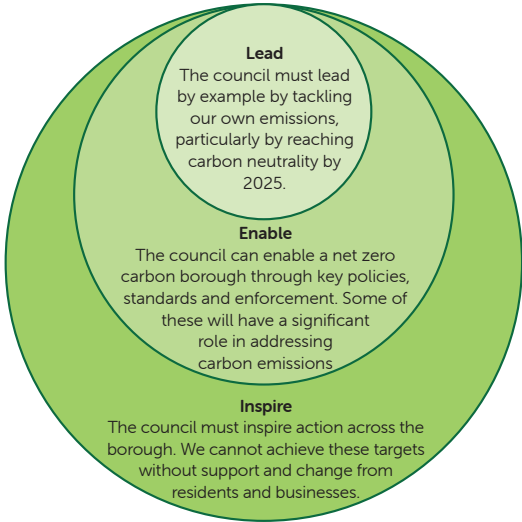
None of the air quality reports carried out have resulted in the need to declare an AQMA in the borough. However, we cannot be complacent and need to ensure that as the borough continues to grow and develop we maintain good air quality through the promotion of sustainable development.

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR TAKING ACTION:

Our approach to tackling the Climate Emergency commitments, both for our council operations and borough-wide emissions, and air quality will be focused in 6 main categories:

- **Action by all** – the need for everyone in the borough to contribute
- **Buildings** – tackling emissions from heating and powering our buildings
- **Transport** - tackling emissions from vehicles
- **Zero carbon electricity** – supporting the transition to a decarbonised electricity system
- **Waste and consumption** – reducing waste and consumption
- **Natural environment** – maximising the climate mitigation and adaptation qualities of the natural environment

Within each of these areas we have a number of principles for delivery of actions. Broadly, the council will deliver actions in three categories:



Further detail is set out below for each focus area.

Other principles for delivery:

- **Action plan** - This strategy is an overarching document that is supported by an action plan, setting out more detailed actions under these areas. The principles in this strategy are underpinned by these actions for the duration of the strategy. The Action Plan will need to be regularly updated to reflect progress to date and other developments.
- **Reporting** – we will update the Action Plan and report on progress annually.
- **Prioritisation** – where possible, actions that deliver the most significant carbon impact will be prioritised, taking into account other key work areas and availability of funding.
- **Offsetting/carbon absorption** – reduction and elimination of emissions are the priority in delivering against this strategy. However, it is acknowledged that offsetting of emissions could play an important role in meeting targets where all efforts have first been made to reduce emissions. Use of natural and local offsets that bring additional co-benefits will be preferred, where robust arrangements are in place.
- **Collaboration and other organisations** – this strategy is focused on the borough of Basingstoke and Deane, however, opportunities to collaborate with parties outside of the borough, including other local authorities, will be utilised wherever possible to improve and expediate actions. In addition, we acknowledge that responsibility or ownership of appropriate powers to deliver action in some areas may sit more with other organisations and so we are reliant on significant ambition and action by

these parties to realise our ambition. As such, we will take an approach of lobbying for change with the Government and other organisations.

- **Data** – decisions and monitoring will be based on best available data and evidence. There are limitations in some datasets, such as lags in publication of national data, and we will continue to improve data collection for the council activities. Decisions must be based on robust data but we do not want to delay beneficial actions and so will take a proportional and sensible approach.
- **Carbon budget** – As well as a target of carbon neutrality, scientists have determined total emissions limits that we must keep below between now and the end of the century to meet the global commitment in the 'Paris Agreement' of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to keep global temperature rises well below 2oC, and as close to 1.5oC as possible. This is known as a 'carbon budget'. If we are to play our part then we also have a carbon budget within Basingstoke and Deane, which is why we must take urgent action to start reducing emissions. In Basingstoke and Deane, this total requires an average annual emissions reduction of 13.1% (as calculated by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research).



Action by all:

Tackling the Climate Emergency, and making Basingstoke and Deane the borough we all want it to be, will require everyone to play their part, from residents and households, to community groups and small businesses, through to the largest organisations and carbon emitters in the borough.

Leading by example

- By promoting behavioural change of staff through education and promoting change in working behaviours
- Taking visible action and using role as a strategic convener to bring together others.

The council is serious about engaging with and supporting organisations and communities throughout the borough to tackle climate change and air quality. It's vital we empower these groups and harness the enthusiasm that exists to combat the climate emergency.

- Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Partnerships Cllr Simon Bound

Enable and inspire

- We will seek to promote change by all residents, providing support to communities that could include education, guidance, templates/tools and seeking and supporting funding opportunities.
- Promoting change in businesses – supporting them in leading by example in their own fields.
- Work to attract inward investment and job creation to support the transition.
- Continue to involve residents, communities and businesses in shaping actions moving forward.
- Lobbying for further change and support, particularly from the government, to accelerate action to tackle climate change and ensure national policy, legislation and incentives enable to local action.

Buildings:

This area relates to the energy consumption, both heat and power, of buildings within the borough, most of which still comes from burning fossil fuels. We must reduce this energy consumption and use low or zero carbon sources of heat and power.

Leading by example

- To heat and power council operational buildings using low carbon and renewable sources where possible
- Ensuring efficient occupation and use of council buildings.
- Reducing energy consumption of council buildings.

Enable & Inspire

- Setting ambitious targets within planning policy to shape new development in the borough, to also increase resilience to the changing climate.
- Leveraging influence on developments such as Manydown, Basing View and the new Leisure Park to support net zero agenda.
- Using specific influence we have for some buildings, such as community buildings/ investment portfolio to reduce building energy consumption.
- Work with partners to develop proposition for wide scale retrofit of commercial and domestic properties to reduce energy consumption. For domestic properties this will also look to tackle local fuel poverty.
- Facilitate the shift to low carbon heating sources, to include heat pumps, district heating and future

The climate emergency must be at the forefront of new development and reducing emissions from existing buildings across the borough - the council will be leading from the front in this regard.

- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Property Cllr John Izett



Transport:

Transport accounts for around half of the greenhouse gas emissions in the borough and significant air pollution, particularly from fine particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide. Tackling these emissions will require significant reduction in road journeys and move to public transport, complemented by the move to ultra-low emission vehicles by the move to ultra low emission vehicles.

Ensuring transport within the borough meets the needs of our residents while also adapting to tackle the Climate Emergency is a key priority for the council. This is a great opportunity to support these complementary ambitions.

- Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and the Natural Environment Cllr Mark Ruffell

Leading by example

- Promoting efficient travel of council staff through internal policies and incentives.
- Transitioning council fleet to ultra-low emission vehicles and reduce mileage of services where possible.

Enable and Inspire

- Building on the plans within existing [transport strategy](#), working in collaboration with Hampshire County Council and other partners.
- Facilitating and promoting a move to public transport, active transport and electrification of transport (or other ultra-low emission technologies).
- Particular targeting of air quality issue areas or high risk areas, such as schools.
- Campaigns to educate against behaviour that causes air quality issues, with enforcement used where required.

Zero carbon electricity

Although the national electricity grid has made reasonable progress in decarbonising over recent years, this will need to increase, particularly as transport and heat will become increasingly electrified. There is an opportunity for our borough to increase local electricity generation.

Leading by example

- Utilising renewable energy to power our own buildings
- Understand and utilise renewable energy potential on our own buildings and land

Enable and inspire

- Work with strategic infrastructure providers within the borough to ensure the borough is supporting national decarbonisation and the move to smart and more flexible electricity system.
- Support local and community energy, such as through sharing of best practice and identifying funding opportunities, as well as positive policies in our Local Plan Update.

Waste and consumption:

Many parts of the UK economy are dependent on single use, consuming large volumes of resources which are frequently wasted. Although recycling rates have been improving, they are still short of the ambitions of a sustainable economy. This matters to our zero carbon ambitions as materials we throw away have used energy to be processed/transported. Associated emissions and side effects are frequently generated overseas, with harmful impacts for local communities and biodiversity.

Leading by example

- Improving sustainable procurement practices and embed net zero in procurement approach, including supporting and holding suppliers to account, including working with them on how they might offset their most challenging emissions locally.
- Reducing our overall consumption of goods and waste produced as council.

Enable and inspire

- Working with HCC to promote reduction in waste across the borough and increased recycling rates.
- Supporting 'buying local' where possible.
- Facilitating transition to more circular economy, with positive impacts for local job creation and investment.
- Education on lower carbon lifestyles, such as diet.



The natural environment:

Basingstoke and Deane is an extremely green borough in terms of its natural environment, with over 90% of the borough being undeveloped. These green spaces already lock up thousands of tonnes of carbon a year, as well as providing numerous other benefits to biodiversity and society. However, there is an increasing role to factor in the carbon lock up potential of these green spaces, including managing them as effectively as possible to increase this ability, where this complements other management objectives, such as increasing biodiversity.

Leading by example

- Continuing to effectively manage council-owned green spaces, enhancing this to improve carbon lock-up where possible.

Enable and inspire

- Promote improvement of local natural environment in borough, for carbon lock up alongside wider societal and natural benefits.
- Further develop policies for natural environment role in climate change adaptation and resilience, such as through the Local Plan Update and Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Supporting natural offset within borough to local businesses, for example, through the development of local schemes.

MONITORING AND DELIVERY

Monitoring progress:

The strategic aims set out in this document will be delivered through a suite of actions. Given the timescale of the objectives of this strategy, and the need to regularly update and track delivery against them, a separate action plan is published alongside this strategy.

The action plan will also set clear targets that we expect to monitor and report against annually, alongside updating the plan as appropriate.

Progress will be reported internally through the governance structure below

We will use the latest local data wherever possible and where this exists, however, in some areas there will be a reliance on national datasets or even the most suitable proxies.

Governance and support

It is vital that tackling the Climate Emergency is embedded in everything we do as a council, both internally and externally.

To help deliver the ambitions within this strategy the council has established an internal governance framework to ensure there is sufficient opportunity for:

- Corporate input into this work
- Oversight of delivery of projects
- Regular reporting and monitoring of progress against targets

This is predominantly achieved through three groups:

- **An Officer Delivery Board** – chaired by Executive Director of Residents' Services and overseen by Portfolio Holder (Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement). The group meets every 6-8 weeks. Group also allocates responsibility for delivery of certain actions to relevant owners, depending on business unit/area.
- **A Members' Advisory Panel** – a panel made up of cross-party elected representatives. Provide support to and chaired by the Portfolio Holder. Receive updates from the Officer Delivery Board and provide oversight and additional input into development of work. Meets at least bi-monthly.
- **The Environment Champions** – a volunteer group of staff from across the council to identify and deliver actions within team and harness the enthusiasm with a bottom-up approach. They also effectively promote cultural change and action across the organisation.

Steps to embed climate change in decision-making will also be utilised. Reports now comment on climate change impacts, alongside other corporate implications, such that all decisions consider and highlight the climate change impacts.

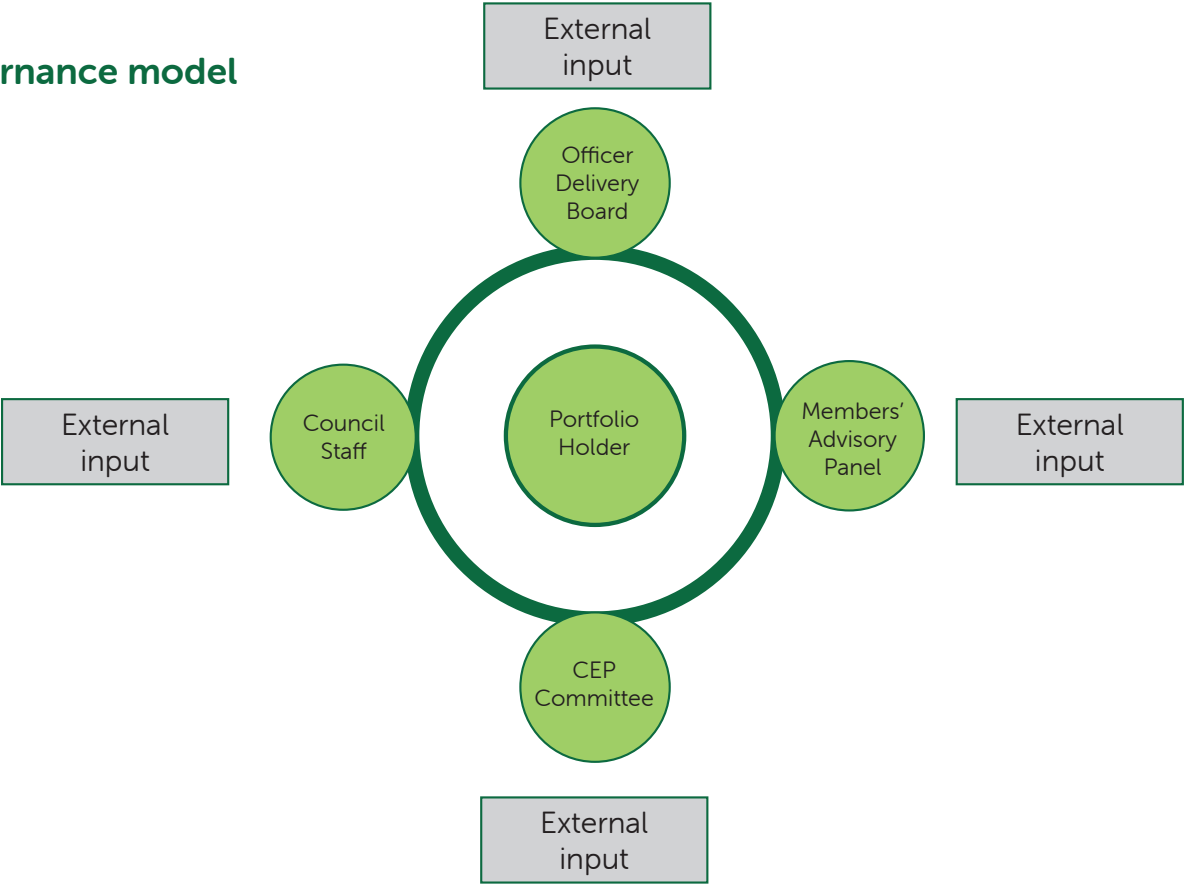
Service plans will also consider climate change when they are reviewed, which has an influence on how teams operate and what their overall aims and objectives are.

As has been stated throughout this strategy, the ambitions set out within this strategy will not be delivered without support and collaboration across the borough and beyond. As such, the council will seek to continue work with a number of external organisation to support delivery.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Basingstoke Area Strategic Partnership (BASP)
- Hampshire County Council
- Other neighbouring Local Authorities
- Town and parish councils and local community groups
- The Low Carbon Energy Forum
- Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership
- Utility companies and infrastructure providers
- Federation of Small Businesses / Sustainable Business Network / Business Improvement District / Chambers of Commerce

Governance model



CONTACT US:

We would love to hear from you!

For any comments, feedback, suggestions or questions on this strategy please get in touch on

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