

Chichester District Council

Cabinet

16 April 2024

Consultation on the Second Climate Emergency Detailed Action Plan

1. Contacts

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2. Executive Summary

Cabinet is asked to approve the outline of the consultation process for the second Climate Emergency Action Plan. The wording of the consultation is being refined, but the text in Appendix 1 describes the proposals that will be consulted upon and gives an indication of the contextual information that will be provided. Appendix 2 gives an overview of the consultation process and the supporting budget.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet:

(a) approves the options for consultation as outlined in Appendix 1; and

(b) approves the consultation process and budget Option 2 - £15,000 as outlined in Appendix 2, to be funded from General Fund reserves.

4. Background

- 4.1 In 2019 Chichester District Council declared a climate emergency. This declaration led the council to adopt an action plan to reduce its own emissions and help others in the district reduce their emissions. This plan runs through to 2025. As the current plan is coming to an end, it is proposed that the council embarks on a consultation to inform the development of the second Climate

Emergency Action Plan with the aim that this will be adopted in the second half of 2025 and run from 2025-2030. The Environment Panel considered the range of proposals in Appendix 1 at its meeting of 4 March 2024. The Panel recommended the proposals and Option 2 for the budget to Cabinet.

5. Key points

- 5.1 Discussions have taken place with teams across the council on proposals for the second action plan. These projects have been included in a consultation document (Appendix 1). The consultation document also provides context to explain what climate change is, what the council has done so far and, what it will do in the final year of the current plan. At the end there is a survey which asks respondents to rank proposals in order of preference. The content of the consultation document is being developed and the exact wording and layout will change before the consultation goes live.
- 5.2 Appendix 2 covers the range of activities that can be undertaken to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage people to discuss climate change action. Two options are presented. One range of activities is costed at about £10,000 and a second option with additional activities is costed at £15,000 and is the recommended option.
- 5.3 People living and working in the district will be encouraged to respond to the survey online. The online consultation will be laid out so respondents will be able to skip over sections easily. Some content may be converted to short online videos where this would aid understanding of particular issues. It will also be shortened and simplified compared to the version in Appendix 1. There will be an article in the summer edition of Initiatives magazine with a pull-out questionnaire that people can post to the council.
- 5.4 The consultation documents will make it clear that the council cannot guarantee that projects will go ahead even if there is public support as implementation may depend on funding.
- 5.5 The document states that greenhouse gas emissions in the district will be benchmarked against the Government produced emissions data to assess if the reductions are on the right path to meet the Government's net zero by 2050 target. However, we will no longer use the word "target" as the council can only influence rather than control emissions in the district. There is no consultation question on this approach.
- 5.6 Interim targets for the council's own emissions will be created by plotting a straight line from emissions at a start date to net zero by 2050 (if that is the target date that is agreed). A similar approach could be taken with the district emissions. This is a crude approach as the Government's advisors on climate change, the Committee on Climate Change, see the rate of reduction changing up to 2050, but it would give an indication. There is a consultation question on whether the council's target date should be 2050 or earlier or later.
- 5.7 The timetable for the development of the second action plan is:

- 16 April 2024: Cabinet approval of consultation exercise and supporting budget.
- 6 May 2024: Initiatives magazine content deadline.
- April / May / June 2024: design of consultation materials, web content and detailed event preparation.
- July-September 2024: consultation period including publication of Initiatives on 8 July.
- November 2024- April 2025: Production of draft action plan in consultation with teams internally.
- May 2025: Environment Panel recommendation of draft action plan.
- July 2025: Cabinet and Council approval of the plan.

6. Proposal

- 6.1 That a public consultation is conducted using the options in Appendix 1 as the basis of online and paper consultation materials to be publicised as set out in Option 2 of Appendix 2.

7. Alternatives considered

- 7.1 A reduced programme of activities to engage people who live or work in the district was considered (Option 1 in Appendix 2). However, the enhanced programme (Option 2) is recommended. The programme of activities will serve a wider purpose than solely publicising the consultation. It will raise awareness of climate change and encourage behaviour change, essential steps in the district achieving net zero.

8. Resource and Legal Implications

- 8.1 The resource implications of the consultation are outlined in Appendix 2. The request is that this is funded from General Fund reserves. In addition, staff resources will be required. This process will take most of the time of the Carbon Reduction Projects Manager and the Specialist Environment Officer for 2024 and a significant amount in 2025. The input of Divisional Managers and other officers will also be needed. Inclusion of a project in the consultation does not commit the council to implementing the project. Therefore, there are no further resource implications to the consultation. Additional resources for the new action plan will be subject to the normal business planning process.
- 8.2 There are no legal obligations for the council about greenhouse gas mitigation arising from this report.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1 Chichester district includes coastal areas vulnerable to flooding arising from sea level rise and increased surface water flooding and areas of freshwater stress, just two of the challenges associated with climate change. Climate change is a global problem and so actions by the council to reduce emissions in the district will not solve these issues but can do so as part of a global effort to reduce

emissions. If the council does not take reasonable steps to reduce its own emissions and assist other individuals and organisations in the district to do likewise, it could be accused of not playing its part in this global crisis, damaging its reputation.

10. Other Implications

Are there any implications for the following?		
	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder		X
Climate Change and Biodiversity The action plan is designed to address climate change & some of the actions within it have intended benefits for biodiversity.	X	
Human Rights and Equality Impact		X
Safeguarding and Early Help		X
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)		X
Health and Wellbeing Fuel poverty is addressed by the plan.	X	

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – the draft consultation text.
Appendix 2 – Options for conducting the consultation and associated costings.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 None