

Subject:	Climate Assembly		
Date of Meeting:	05 December 2019		
Report of:	Executive Director, Economy, Environment & Culture		
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Ward(s) affected:	(All Wards);		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work of the council to reduce city carbon emissions, including plans to establish a carbon reduction programme with the aim of making Brighton & Hove carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.2 Approval is also sought for the creation of a cross-party member working group to oversee the implementation of the carbon reduction programme and the development of an engagement programme to include a Brighton & Hove City Assembly. A Programme Initiation Document (PID) with more details of the programme is included as **Appendix 1** to this report. Terms of Reference for the proposed cross-party member working group are included as **Appendix 2**.
- 1.3 At the 24th October Brighton & Hove Full Council meeting the Council approved a Green Group Notice of Motion (NoM) on a Green New Deal (GND). The NoM requires that certain issues be referred to P&R for decision. This report also addresses these issues.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee:
 - 2.1.1 approves the establishment of a City Assembly;
 - 2.1.2 notes the council's ongoing work to reduce carbon emissions;
 - 2.1.3 notes the establishment of a carbon reduction programme to achieve the target of Brighton & Hove becoming carbon neutral by 2030;
 - 2.1.4 notes the requirement to develop an engagement programme to inform this work, to include a City Assembly;
 - 2.1.5 agrees to establish a cross-party member working group to oversee the implementation of the 2030 Carbon Reduction Programme; and
 - 2.1.6 notes the Notice of Motion agreed at 24th October Full Council and agrees that work on these measures be taken forward as part of the Carbon Reduction Programme.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The council has long recognised the need to reduce city carbon emissions and is already committed to achieving a 42% reduction in emissions (from 2005 levels) by 2020 and an 80% reduction by 2050. By 2018/19 emissions had been reduced by 40% and we are currently on target to meet the 2020 and 2050 pledges. Per capita emissions have reduced from 5.5 to 3.1 tonnes CO₂ (2005 to 2017) despite a 14% increase in city population over this period.
- 3.2 This represents considerable progress, albeit an element of the reduction has been due to decarbonisation of the National Grid electricity supply rather than from local measures. However, it is increasingly accepted that we need to reduce carbon emissions with more urgency. The UK Government has committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050 and cities across the world have declared climate emergencies and have adopted ambitious emissions reduction targets.
- 3.3 Brighton & Hove City Council declared a climate emergency at the 13th December 2018 Full Council meeting (and debated the issue again in response to a petition at the 31st January 2019 Full Council meeting). The Council agreed to explore the adoption of a 2030 carbon neutral target. A 2030 carbon neutral commitment formed part of both the Labour and the Green Group manifesto pledges in the 2019 local election and the Groups have subsequently agreed to work together to deliver this as a policy priority.
- 3.4 The commitment is for the city to be carbon *neutral* by 2030 rather than *zero* carbon. This recognises that it may not be possible to eliminate all emissions by this date, but that residual emissions can be off-set against carbon-positive measures such as tree planting. It should also be noted that 'carbon' is used as shorthand for a set of greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. All emissions of these gases will need to be eliminated or effectively off-set by 2030.
- 3.5 **The Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Investment Fund (SCRIF).** At 28th February 2019 Budget Council it was agreed that additional resources were needed to support more ambitious carbon reduction targets, and both resource and capital allocations were made for this purpose. Policy, Resources & Growth Committee subsequently agreed to establish the SCRIF at its 21st March 2019 meeting. The SCRIF will support the development and delivery of citywide initiatives which aim to reduce carbon emissions, build resilience, protect and enhance biodiversity, and develop a circular economy.
- 3.6 **Carbon Reduction Cross-Party Member Working Group.** It is proposed that a Carbon Reduction Cross-Party Member Working Group be established to guide and oversee the council's actions to meet the 2030 carbon neutral target. Terms of Reference for this Group are included as **Appendix 2** to this report.
- 3.7 **Carbon Reduction Programme.** To meet the challenging target of 2030 carbon neutral, it will be necessary to coordinate existing and new emissions reduction work as a carbon reduction programme. This programme will be overseen by the Carbon Reduction Member Working Group. A draft PID for the programme is included for information as **Appendix 1** to this report.

- 3.8 **Public Engagement and a Climate Assembly.** There are steps that the council, public sector partners and local businesses can take to reduce their carbon emissions. However, it is evident that the 2030 target will not be met without considerable buy-in from city residents. There is consequently a clear need for an engagement programme to run in parallel to and inform city carbon reduction work. In part this engagement will involve working in partnership with the many individuals and organisations in the city that are passionate about climate change. In addition it has been proposed that we hold a local City Assembly. This type of deliberative public engagement brings together a randomly selected, representative group of citizens to learn about the challenges of carbon reduction and make recommendations for action.

Deliberative processes of this type are intended to capture the views of ‘not engaged’ citizens rather than the views of people who are already expert in and passionate about an issue. The model has recently been trialled by councils in Oxford and in Camden. The Carbon Reduction Cross-Party Member Working Group will oversee the development of a local engagement model and the delivery of a Carbon reduction City Assembly in Brighton & Hove.

The assembly model described above is typically supported/delivered by a third party organisation, both because there is considerable expertise required in working with randomised citizen groups, and because it is important that any assembly is seen to be independent from the council. Resources of £75k have been identified to support this community engagement process and the commissioning of specialist facilitation to support the City Assembly process. BHCC officers will develop a tender specification for third party support for the Assembly, subject to the approval of the Member Steering Group.

- 3.9 **Green New Deal Notice of Motion.** At the 24th October Full Council meeting a Green Group Notice of Motion (NoM) on a Green New Deal (GND) was agreed. The NoM included a request that Policy & Resources Committee commission a report on specific issues relating to the GND:

This Council further requests that Policy & Resources Committee commission a report detailing how, alongside existing work:

- poverty, inequality and accessibility can be addressed through the council’s plan to become net carbon neutral (‘net zero’) by 2030;
- the council can work with partners (e.g.: Greater Brighton Economic Board, Chamber of Commerce) and specifically through the Local Enterprise Partnership, Coast2Capital, with particular reference to the Local Industrial Strategy and regional collaboration to lobby government for a stimulus package for low-carbon, ‘green’ jobs and decarbonisation projects;
- the council can demonstrate good practice as a major employer by developing net-zero initiatives and employment opportunities;
- council can optimise the green credentials of council-owned buildings and public transport.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 There is no requirement as such for a Member Working Group to oversee the council’s carbon reduction work: for example the work could be delegated to

officers and progress periodically reported to committee. However, this is a core policy objective for the Council, and as such will benefit from a mechanism that allows for regular, informal input from members of all political groups.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 None undertaken at this point. There will be an engagement programme in support of the Carbon Reduction Programme.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Making Brighton & Hove carbon neutral by 2030 is a core policy objective for the city council. This will require the coordination of existing and new emissions reduction work via a carbon reduction programme.
- 6.2 Whilst the progress of the carbon reduction programme will be regularly reported to committee, it is essential that there is also day-to-day member oversight of and input into the programme. This will be provided by the Carbon Reduction Cross-Party Member Working Group.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 It is anticipated that the establishment and ongoing facilitation of a cross-party member working group to oversee the implementation of the 2030 Carbon Reduction Programme will result in increased administration; however the cost of this is expected to be minimal and funded from within approved resources. The purpose of the working group is to help achieve the council becoming carbon neutral by 2030, and will therefore support the effective use of resources in achieving corporate objectives.
- 7.2 The other recommendations in this report are for noting and therefore do not have any direct financial implications. Financial implications associated to actions detailed in this report and towards the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme will be assessed in accordance with the councils Financial Procedures and appropriate approvals will be sought where required,

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford

Date: 31/10/19

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 Under the Council's Constitution, committees are able to appoint task and finish member Working Groups which are time-limited (six months, with the option to extend for a further six months), in order to carry out focused pieces of work, reporting back regularly to their parent body.
- 7.4 The third party organisation will need to be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 An equalities impact assessment(s) (EIA) will be undertaken of the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme and the projects within it to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people.
- Engagement plans relating to carbon reduction will need to ensure that there is an opportunity for all communities in the city to participate, including protected groups, and particularly those groups with the greatest interest in climate change (e.g. young people).
- Approaches to a City Assembly are likely to include the randomised selection of citizen-participants to ensure that there are representative of city demographics. However there may be opportunities to include specifically participants from communities particularly impacted by climate change.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.5 The Carbon Reduction Programme will coordinate all the council's carbon reduction work and as such will significantly contribute to sustainability goals, specifically the city 2030 carbon neutral target.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.6 As the Carbon Reduction Programme develops there may be a need to update corporate and citywide Risk Registers to reflect the work of the programme in relation to risks relating to climate change, air quality, traffic congestion and other areas.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.7 Achieving a carbon neutral city by 2030 represents the local contribution to ameliorate the impacts of climate change including impacts on population health (for example the negative effects of increasing temperatures).

Individual programmes to reduce emissions will also have positive Public Health effects: e.g. reduced traffic emissions will improve air quality and lead to better respiratory health for local people; improvements to home insulation may also have direct health benefits, particularly for those who currently experience fuel poverty. More detailed analysis of the population health implications of carbon reduction programmes will be undertaken at individual programme level.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.8 Achieving carbon neutral by 2030 is a core Council policy priority. The aim is that the city of Brighton & Hove will be carbon neutral by 2030 and meeting this target will consequently require close co-working with partners in the city and across the Greater Brighton Economic area.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft 2030 Carbon Reduction PID
2. Draft Terms of Reference for the proposed 2030 Carbon Reduction Cross-Party Member Working Group

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

